

**POLICY ON USE OF LIBRARY FACILITIES & MEETING ROOMS**

Library facilities are provided to house collections and other information resources and to provide access to electronic resources and the Internet. Facilities also provide space for people to use these resources, for staff to assist customers and for public meetings, where possible. Access to the Washington County Library is available to all interested people, even if they are not county residents.

Use of meeting rooms will not be restricted or denied to individuals using them for their intended purposes if they comply with policies describing appropriate conduct.

Meeting and/or conference room space is provided in some libraries and may be used by groups or individuals for meetings other than those where commercial business would be transacted including direct sales of goods or services to the public. The Library Director may grant exceptions to this restriction. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to the Library Director in writing thirty days in advance. Reservations for space are required.

**POLICY ON ACCESS TO MATERIALS, RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

To make the materials, resources and services selected by the Library widely and equitably available to all, the following policies apply:

1. The Washington County Library does not discriminate in providing access and will not restrict the use or loans of our materials, resources, and services based on the origin, age, background or views of people wishing to use the library. The Washington County Library reserves the right to determine what information will be distributed or displayed in its branches and the conditions for such display.

Parents or guardians have the responsibility to guide and direct the use of library facilities, materials, resources, equipment and services by their children or wards. Parents or guardians may restrict access to videotapes and DVDs in the adult collection for their children who are 17 years of age or younger.

Parents may have access to the titles of material checked out by their children if they share the same address and if the parent appears in person at the library with valid identification showing proof of address. A child may request that the library restrict a parent’s access to this information upon formal written notice to the Washington County Attorney. The Washington County Attorney may approve such request if determined to be in the best interest of the child. (See M.S. 13.02, subd.8)

2. The Washington County Library complies with the requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and filters Internet access to visual depictions of sexually explicit and obscene materials at all public and staff computer workstations. These filters can be disabled at the request of an adult 17 years of age and older as required by the CIPA.
3. Anyone who lives at a property or owns property that is taxed by Washington County for support of the County Library may register with the County Library. Washington County Library cards will be issued to all registered users. Under contractual agreement with the cities of Stillwater and Bayport, their residents who hold valid city library cards are considered Washington County Library cardholders; no

additional registration is required.

4. Washington County Library offers its services to all Minnesotans consistent with terms of the State Borrowers Compact. Anyone with a valid library card from another Minnesota public library that is a member of a Minnesota regional library system may register the card with Washington County Library.
5. Residents of other states or of a Minnesota jurisdiction that does not participate in a Minnesota regional library system may also obtain user privileges by purchasing a library card annually.
6. Washington County Library does not charge fees for providing library-selected materials, resources, information or for staff assistance. WCL offers interlibrary loan service through MnLINK and OCLC to assist users in obtaining materials or resources not normally selected, acquired or made available by the library. The Library will pass on to users any fees charged by the lending library for these materials or resources.
7. All charges, including those for repairs, replacements and recovery costs for lost items, will be determined by the Washington County Board of Commissioners as part of the County Fee Schedule.

### **POLICY ON INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES**

The Library provides access to a variety of resources to meet the information and recreation needs of individuals and the community. Materials are selected and made available for use in libraries, by loan or by distribution or via the WCL Website ([www.co.washington.mn.us/library](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/library)). The Library provides Internet access for the public at computer workstations. The Library also purchases a broad range of electronic resources, including databases and reference materials, and has trained staff to assist customers in their use.

1. The Library ensures the availability of current information on needed subjects by continually selecting new resources for addition to collections and by reviewing existing resources for retention. Because of budget and space limitations, the Library cannot acquire and retain every useful title but will consider the merits of the title considered as a whole in relation to the Library's mission and policies. A wide variety of resources are provided to meet the diverse interests and needs of county residents. Some of these resources may be controversial and any given title may offend some library users. The Library will not censor in its selection practices and selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval by individuals.
2. The Library's priority is to acquire and retain resources that have broad current and potential user demand. Specialized resources and curriculum materials are considered for acquisition if they also are of general interest. Staff selectors use their professional training and experience to make decisions about adding and retaining resources and consider many factors including:
  - a. User requests and other indications of need and potential user demand
  - b. Coverage of the subject in Washington County Library collections
  - c. Availability of resources from other libraries and other sources
  - d. Quality of the work indicated through reviews
  - e. Reputation of the author
  - f. Depth and comprehensiveness of treatment of subject matter
  - g. Timeliness and reliability of information

3. As a source of information about the community, we acquire and make available various publications and information produced by local agencies.
4. Collections include a variety of print and non-print materials formats, such as DVDs, CDs, downloadable books, etc. Decisions to acquire or retain formats are made after considering the potential for and/or demonstrated use; effectiveness in communicating content; and projected durability.
5. Resources are reviewed regularly by Library staff for retention and may be reviewed on request to determine how well an item continues to meet Library objectives, potential for continued use, physical condition and space available to house the item. Some or all copies of items with reduced potential for use may be disposed of through sales or donations to other agencies.
6. Users may request that the Library Director reconsider items held in the Library Collection. The Library Director or designee(s) will review the material in a timely fashion. The Library Director will respond in writing to the user with the disposition of the user's request for reconsideration. Users may appeal the Director's decision to the Library Board. Appeals must be made in writing to the Library Board. The Library Board will provide a hearing at a regularly scheduled Board meeting and will make a decision on reconsideration within 60 days of the hearing.
7. The "Library Bill of Rights" and its interpretations, adopted by the Council of the American Library Association, are incorporated into this policy on library resources as appendix "A" or can be found at the ALA website:  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.cfm>

### **POLICY ON RESPECTFUL CONDUCT**

The Washington County Library and its staff value and promote libraries that exemplify respectful treatment of everyone. Library customers have the right to expect friendly and competent library service provided in a safe and inviting atmosphere. Library staff members have the right to provide library services without fear of abuse or threatening behavior from people using the library or on the library grounds. To achieve that end, everyone is expected to act in a manner that will not disturb others, interrupt library service, or interfere with the use of the library by others.

Washington County Library abides by state and local laws defining and restricting disorderly conduct and nuisance behavior. Causing a nuisance as defined in Minnesota Statute § 561.01 is prohibited. A nuisance is anything that is 1) harmful to the health of a person; 2) offensive to the senses of a person; or, 3) an obstruction to the free and unrestricted use and enjoyment of the library property by other persons. Disorderly conduct as defined in Minnesota Statute § 609.72 or local ordinance is also prohibited. A person is engaged in disorderly conduct as defined in Minnesota Statutes who "1) Engages in brawling or fighting; or 2) Disturbs an assembly or meeting, not unlawful in its character; or 3) Engages in offensive, obscene, abusive, boisterous, or noisy conduct or in offensive, obscene, or abusive language tending reasonably to arouse alarm, anger or resentment in others."

Library customers have the right to use library materials and facilities that are readily available and that are in good condition.

## WASHINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICIES

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The following rules are intended to exemplify the principles of respectful behavior and to ensure that the library is a welcome place for everyone:

- Everyone is invited to use the books, magazines, PCs, and other library materials in the library. Most library materials may be checked out with a valid library card registered in the County
- Return library materials on time and in good condition so that others can use them too. (MN Statute 609.541)
- Relinquish books, other library materials, or PCs when you are asked to do so by library staff.
- Respect the rights of other people in the library.
- Cell phone and pager ringers should be silenced when in the library. Speak quietly when conversing on the phone or in person, and keep conversations short. When possible, hold conversations outside the library or in areas where you will not disturb others and you can expect privacy.
- Be quiet in designated study areas.
- Do not harass others, either by words or by actions.
- Do not view computer screens or observe people who are using the computers.
- Do not bring animals, other than service animals, into the library unless for an approved program,
- Do not use any form of tobacco in the library.
- Users may eat, or drink non-alcoholic covered beverages in the library, except in areas near computers and other equipment.
- Do not bring alcohol or illegal substances into the library or on library property. Persons under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances will be asked to leave the premises.

These rules and guidelines are intended to facilitate the comfort and the protection of everyone who uses the library. The library staff may require the user to leave the premises, call the police, or ultimately bar the user from the library for non-compliance.

The Library may ban users from some or all library services and privileges based on violations of library policies. This loss of library use may be applied for a set or indefinite period of time. When loss of privileges is recommended by staff for 6 months or more and that recommendation is accepted by the Library Director, the Library Director will notify the user in writing of the reasons for termination of library privileges including the time period for which these restrictions apply. The individual will be informed that he/she may appeal the Library Director's determination to the Library Board. All such appeals must be made in writing and in a timely fashion. The Library Board will consider the written request and may take action to review or reconsider the action, including using mediation to resolve the issues involved.

Especially for Children

**Children are an important part of the Washington County Library community. The Library encourages children of all ages to visit the library, enjoy our storytimes and other programs, learn from the information available, ask questions, borrow books and other materials, use the computers, enjoy their time in the library, and become lifelong library users. Children (and parents) must respect the rights of the other customers. Library staff members are not babysitters, and, despite their best efforts, public places may not always be safe places for unsupervised children.**

**To ensure a positive library experience, everyone is expected to act in a manner that will not disturb others, interrupt library service, or interfere with the use of the library by others. The following rules are intended to facilitate respectful use of the Library:**

- For their safety, parents or guardians are expected to make arrangements to pick children up before the library closes.
- Children who are being disruptive will be asked by staff to follow the rules. If the disruptive behavior continues staff will inform the parent/guardian that his/her child is disturbing others. If the parent/guardian refuses to cooperate or is unable to control the child, he/she and the child will be asked to leave.
- If the child is unsupervised, staff will obtain the child's name and will either contact the parent or guardian to pick up the child, or allow the child to call the parent or guardian to pick them up.
- A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian of all disruptive or unsupervised children explaining the rules.

The library staff may require the user to leave the premises, call the police, or ultimately bar the user from the library for non-compliance with these rules, which may include issuance of a writ of trespass by local law enforcement.

### **POLICY ON INDEPENDENT PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

We support state policy encouraging the consolidation of public libraries at the county level as the most effective way to ensure equitable access by all public library users to a full range of library services.

### **POLICY ON INTERNET USE**

Washington County Library provides access to a variety of resources to meet the informational and recreational needs of individuals and the community. Access to the Internet is one of these resources.

Washington County Library expects that individuals will use the Internet responsibly, obey local, state and federal laws and follow library policies and rules. Violators of laws or regulations may be subject to local, state or federal prosecution. Library access to the Internet may be denied for individuals who do not follow library policies and rules.

Responsibilities of Washington County Library are to:

- Select electronic resources such as library catalogs, databases, indexes and Internet sites that appear on the Library web pages.
- Offer guidance in the use of these selected electronic resources; offer basic classes in the use of the Internet.
- In accordance with the federal Childrens Internet Protection Act (CIPA), use a technology protection measure on all workstations that provide access to the Internet to block or filter visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors as defined in the Act.
- In accordance with the federal Childrens Internet Protection Act (CIPA), disable the technology protection measure upon request of individuals age 17 and older. (Individuals must provide proof of age.)
- Suspend Internet access for individuals who do not follow library policies and rules.
- If demand for Internet access is high, set time limits, or restrict downloading of files.

It is NOT acceptable to use Washington County Library Internet access to:

- Violate local, state or federal laws and regulations including those relating to obscenity, child pornography and materials harmful to minors.
- Display or print material that is obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors.
- Gain unauthorized access to resources or entities or to invade the privacy of other individuals.
- Engage in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates a disruptive or hostile environment for other individuals or staff.
- Degrade or disrupt equipment or Library network performance.

Children's use of the Internet:

A child's use of the Internet in the library is the responsibility of that child's parent or guardian. Parents or guardians should develop family-based rules for their child's use of the Internet, including rules about sharing of personal information using e-mail, participating in chat lines, etc.

Washington County Library follows the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Section 13.40 relating to the privacy of library data. In addition, recessed monitors are used to provide privacy to individuals using the Internet in the library.

Washington County Library recognizes that resources on the Internet may not be accurate or reliable; may be controversial and may offend some users. Only individual users can determine what is appropriate for them. The library has selected electronic resources such as library catalogs, databases, indexes and Internet sites that appear on the Library web pages. Resources available on the Internet change quickly and frequently. Inclusion of a site on the Library web pages does not constitute an endorsement, warranty or guarantee.

Washington County Library assumes no responsibility for any damage, direct or indirect, that users or anyone else may suffer through accessing the Internet via Washington County Library. All users of Washington County Library Internet access assume all risk and agree to hold the Library harmless from any claims, losses, damages, obligations, or liabilities relating to:

- Infringement of U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, United States Code).
- Use and/or accuracy of information obtained from the Library's catalog or web pages.
- Damage to non-library software or hardware, or loss of data resulting from use on the Library's network.