

Verona Public Library
Public Computer and Electronic Device Use Policy

I. Introduction

The Verona Public Library offers computer workstations, a wireless network, and a variety of electronic devices to ensure free public access to the Internet as an informational, educational, and recreational resource.

II. Access to Public Computers

(A) To use the public computers or laptops, a library card and PIN (personal identification number) are necessary. If a patron does not have their card present, staff may provide patrons with their card number if the patron presents a valid photo ID. Visitor passes are also available for the computer lab.

(B) Computer use is limited to four hours per day. Library staff can override the time limit and additional time may be requested if no other patrons are waiting to use a computer.

(C) Computers are available during regular operating hours until 15 minutes before the library closes. Unreserved computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Patrons may make reservations up to seven (7) days in advance. Reservations may be made in person, over the telephone, or online on the library website. Patrons have a 15-minute window to log in to their scheduled reservation.

(D) Patrons under the age of 8 must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver to use a computer.

(E) Printing is available at the computer lab for a nominal fee. Wireless printing is also available for all devices. Instructions for printing are available at all library service desks and the library website.

III. Access to Electronic Devices

(A) Patrons under the age of 8 must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver to check out an electronic device, with the exception of stand-alone children's educational game computers which are not connected to the internet.

(B) As with all other library materials, the user assumes responsibility for the item and is liable for any damage or loss of parts. Replacement costs for electronic devices are visibly marked on the device package. Some individual parts, such as charging cords, may be replaceable separately for their own value.

(C) Netbooks and circulate for 28 days. Video Game Consoles circulate for 14 days. Users must return devices listed in this policy to the Verona Public Library Service Desk for check-in. Devices should not be returned in the book return or at other libraries.

(D) Electronic devices for in-library use must be returned before closing on the day of checkout. If they are removed from the library building they will be deemed stolen.

(E) Devices will not be checked in immediately. Library staff will inspect the device before check-in.

(F) Patrons cannot place holds through LINKcat on electronic devices such as laptops and Netbooks, but library staff can place holds for patrons. Additionally, any device can be held until closing time of that day. Pickup for all holds of devices will be at the Service Desk.

IV. Rules for Using Library Computers, Wireless Network, and Devices in the Library

(A) Patrons should save all information on personal removable media (flash drives) or cloud storage. Hard drives on public computers are automatically cleared when rebooted to ensure patron privacy.

(B) Inappropriate computer use will not be tolerated within the library. The library will take disciplinary measures including but not limited to loss of library privileges or computer use. Illegal uses of computers may also be subject to prosecution by local, state, or federal authorities. Rules regarding inappropriate computer use include but are not limited to the following:

1. Patrons shall not send, receive, or display on computer screens any text or graphics that may reasonably be construed to be obscene. Verona Public Library staff shall notify and fully cooperate with law enforcement if they become aware of any use of its computers or electronic devices in any connection with child pornography, exposure of sexually explicit material to children, or the solicitation of sex with minors.
2. Patrons shall not transmit, post, upload, or otherwise make available defamatory, harassing, abusive, or threatening material or language that encourages bodily harm, destruction of property, or harasses another.
3. Patrons shall not libel, slander, or maliciously offend other users.
4. Patrons must respect the privacy of others and shall not misrepresent oneself as another user. This includes logging in with another patron's library card account.
5. Patrons shall not attempt to crash, degrade performance of, damage, modify, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems and networks, hardware, software, files, passwords, or data that belongs to the library or other users.

(C) The Verona Public Library shall not be responsible for any injuries or damages to possessions of individuals or groups resulting from the use of computers or electronic devices. This includes but is not limited to credit card charges, identity theft, or other potential damages.

(D) The library is not responsible for patrons who use the library computers to engage in any activity that infringes or misappropriates the intellectual property rights of others, including patents, copyrights, trademarks, service marks, trade secrets, domain names, or any other proprietary right of any third party.

(E) Access, use, or dissemination of information via the Internet in the library is the responsibility of the user. The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.

(F) Public computers are provided with the understanding that it is primarily self-service and that most learning will occur through self-instruction instead of library staff intervention. Patrons who use their own devices are responsible for troubleshooting those devices.

V. Computer or Device Use by Children

The Verona Public Library assumes no responsibility or liability for the use of the Internet by children. It is the responsibility of the user (or the parent, guardian, or caregiver) to determine what is appropriate. The public library, unlike schools, does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of a parent). Library staff assume that children and young adults who are unattended have parental permission to use library resources, including the Internet.

VI. Internet and Wireless Network

(A) The library strives to serve all people and considers its endorsement of the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read documents to apply to the use of electronic information. The library also upholds public access to information in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

(B) The availability of networked information via library terminals does not constitute the library's endorsement of the content of that information. The Verona Public Library does not represent or warrant information found on the Internet to be accurate, authoritative, factual, timely, or useful for patrons' purposes.

(C) The Verona Public Library has no means or statutory authority to assure that only constitutionally protected material is available on the Internet. The authority to determine what is illegal content rests with the courts as defined in Wisconsin and federal statutes.

(D) Wireless access is a free public service provided by the Verona Public Library in the building and on the library grounds. By choosing to use this free wireless service, patrons agree to abide by the Public Computer and Electronic Device Use Policy and refrain from illegal activities. The Library's wireless network is an unsecure wireless network.

VII. Appendix of the Public Computer and Electronic Device Policy includes:

- “Freedom to Read Statement”
- “Freedom to View Statement”
- “Library Bill of Rights”

This policy replaces any previous policies regarding public computer, Internet, wireless access, e-reader, and electronic device use.

Library Board Approved on October 1, 2008.
Revised April 13, 2011
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Revised March 1, 2017
Revised May 1, 2019
Revised January 5, 2022
Revised December 4, 2024

THE FREEDOM TO READ

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
The Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961; June 28, 1967; and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.