

Staff Use of Computers, Internet, and E-mail Policy

It is the policy of Kitsap Regional Library that Library computers, Internet access, and e-mail are intended for business use only. Illegal use will not be tolerated and will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

It is acknowledged that the World Wide Web is a vast storehouse of knowledge and that library staff members have wide-ranging work-related necessity to visit many different sites, whether as reference librarians, researchers, purchasers, or users on other library business. The more knowledgeable staff members are about the content and use of the Web, the better such staff members will be able to serve each other and the public in addressing their information needs.

However, staff must limit their use of the Internet and the World Wide Web to business-related activity during their scheduled working shift. Personal use of electronic mail is restricted to incidental and occasional use. Library-provided e-mail, including messages, is considered library property. Library employees with more extensive e-mail needs (including listserves of a personal nature) are expected to obtain their own private account and not use this account on paid time. Examples of disallowed use are: Internet shopping, chatting, auctions, advertising for personal gain, gaming, or other private activity. This should not take place on paid time.

Employees are reminded that, as a technical issue, e-mail is neither private nor secure. It can be read at any location along its travel path. It may be read by systems administrators in the normal course of performing their duties. Employees should treat e-mail as if it were on a library letterhead and posted on a public bulletin board. Even if information has been deleted, it may be recoverable.

E-mail should not be saved for indefinite periods. It should be deleted. E-mail messages may constitute public records when they are created or received in the transaction of public business and retained as evidence of official policies. E-mail messages that are public records must be identified, scheduled, and retained just like records in other formats. They should be printed and filed the same way a document on library letterhead would be treated. Working drafts, notes, and ephemeral e-mail need not be printed and should be deleted regularly.

To protect library computers and prevent liability, staff members may not download programs from the Internet, nor load software from disk onto library computers without supervision of computer room staff. This

includes programs, screen-savers, utilities, etc. These programs could contain viruses and are also subject to copyright restrictions. In addition, employees may not store information of a personal nature on library computers, including pictures, sound files, movies, or programs. Please also see SOFTWARE POLICY (Page 24, Library Polices handbook) ¹

¹ Adopted upon second reading by the Kitsap Regional Library Board of Trustees on April 28, 2004.