

San Diego County Public Law Library

PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

By using computer and Internet services at the San Diego County Public Law Library, each user will be deemed to have agreed to abide by this Public Internet Access Policy as adopted by the Law Library Board of Trustees on December 20, 2000, and amended on July 31, 2002 (amendments underlined).

PURPOSE:

SDCPLL INTERNET ACCESS IS FOR LEGAL RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY.

The San Diego County Law Library's primary mission is to provide access to legal information to the citizens of San Diego County for the conduct of their legal affairs. While it maintains a very small amount of materials with purely cultural, entertainment or recreational value, such purposes are ancillary to the basic work of the Library. Similarly, the Library does not consider itself a support unit for educational institutions, as heavy use by students can draw resources away from its primary mission. The Library has for years maintained special rules for the use of the Library by classes or students individually.

Access to the Internet and databases outside the Library through the Library's computers shall be solely for the purpose of researching the law or conducting one's legal affairs. Access to non-legal databases would be, for example, to obtain information that might be used in evidence in court or at other legal proceedings or to locate the whereabouts and assets of parties to a legal matter.

Therefore, with these limitations in mind, the Board of Trustees limits the use of Library computers available for public use in the following ways:

- Library staff may withhold computer use from any user seen to be conducting non-legal or non-legal-related research or to be playing games or accessing chat rooms, etc.
- Children under the age of 14 shall not use Library computers, unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
- Children under the age of 18 shall not use Library computers except in pursuit of formal class assignments, school competitions, and so forth, or for research addressing an actual legal issue and must receive prior permission from the Director of Libraries or his designee at each location.

Because of these restrictions, the current controversy regarding use of library computers by children to access pornographic Web sites is not germane to the County Law Library, so, consequently, the Board of Trustees takes no position regarding censorship or filtering of information and materials obtained through the Internet at the County Law Library.

The San Diego County Public Law Library provides Internet access to its users so they may research legal information and plan their activities accordingly. Interpretations of this policy shall be made by the reference staff.

GUIDELINES FOR ACCESS AND USE:

Acceptable Use

Internet access is provided solely for the purpose of doing legal research.

Time Limits

Research and printing time is limited to 30 minutes per session. If no one else is waiting to use the computer, time can be extended for an additional 30 minutes at the discretion of the reference librarians. Users are required to sign in on the sign-up sheets at the computer.

Printing

Printing may be done at the cost of 20 cents/page. Time utilized for printing is considered part of the 30 minutes allotted to the user.

Downloading

Downloading to the A drive is permissible. Floppy diskettes are available for \$1.00 at Access Services at the Main Library and at all the branch libraries.

Unacceptable/Prohibited Uses

Users may NOT:

- use software other than that provided and installed by the Library.
- attempt to modify or damage computer hardware or software.
- alter the existing bookmark directory in any way.
- use the computers for any fraudulent or unlawful purpose, including any activities prohibited under any applicable federal, state, or local law. Examples include unauthorized access to any computer network, libel, slander, or any form of harassment.
- attempt to circumvent or breach computer security or to otherwise compromise the operation of or access to the Library's online systems.

No more than 2 patrons may be seated at any one PC during one 30 minute session.

Users are not permitted to use the computers for non-research purposes such as e-mail, chat rooms, access lists, newsgroups, File Transfer Protocol, commercial activities including the sale or purchase of goods or services, or any other activities that do not have a legal information purpose.

Copyright Issues

Materials obtained or copied on this computer may be subject to copyright laws which govern the making of reproductions of copyrighted works. A work protected by copyright may not be copied without permission of the copyright owner unless the proposed use falls within the definition of "Fair Use" as defined under United States law. Violation of the copyright law may subject you to an action for damages and/or injunction.

VIOLATION OF THESE GUIDELINES

The Library reserves the right to ask patrons to verify that they are using the computer and Internet services for legal research purposes only.

The Library reserves the right to terminate network connections immediately for users who repeat a violation of these guidelines after a previous warning. All library staff have the authority and responsibility to enforce this policy.

Users who are observed repeatedly violating this policy and failing to use these services responsibly and appropriately may have their privileges to use the computers suspended after a hearing before the Director.

The Library does not guarantee the validity of any information accessed on the Internet, and it does not assume any responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from the use of its computers and connections to the Internet. Internet information may be inaccurate, out of date, or incomplete. Users are encouraged to consult the reference librarians for assistance in researching their legal questions.

Charles R. Dyer, Director of Libraries