
SECTION 4: LIBRARY USE RULES

The Austin County Library System is supported by the taxes of the people of Austin County who expect each of our facilities to be clean, comfortable, and safe. The library is intended for reading, studying, writing and listening to written or electronically transmitted materials, and attending library or community sponsored programs and meetings. To this end, the library has established these rules to protect the rights and safety of library customers, staff and volunteers, and to help preserve and protect the library's materials, equipment, facilities, and grounds.

Patrons must abide by the standards of behavior set forth in these rules with consideration of the situation and age-appropriateness.

4.1. Service to Patrons with Disabilities

The Austin County Library System adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that assure equal access to employment opportunities and access to all library facilities, activities, and programs. The Austin County Library System offers the same services to patrons with disabilities as to all other segments of the population

4.2. Children

The Austin County Library System libraries are public facilities that offer services to a wide range of citizens, and children. Children under the age of ten should never be left unsupervised in any area of the library. If a parent/responsible adult who is at least 17 years of age cannot be located, staff will call the local Police or Austin County Sheriffs' Department to report an abandoned child.

Older children who are disruptive or misbehaving will be asked to leave the library. If the child cannot safely leave the library to return home on his or her own, staff will allow the child to remain at the library until a parent can be contacted or will contact the Austin County Sheriffs' Departments depending on the severity of the situation.

4.3. Food and Beverages

The customer may only consume beverages that have been provided by the library staff in the library and that are consumed in a designated area. An exception will be made for patron with infants.

Austin County Library System Policy Manual

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The following policies govern how we use our library.

4.4. Smoking and Burning Materials

Patrons may not smoke or use a tobacco product in the library or ignite a flame, burn incense, or light a candle.

4.5. Restrooms

The Austin County Library System libraries strives to provide safe and accessible restrooms in both library locations. Both libraries offer one all-gender / handicap-accessible / family restroom without a diaper-changing station. Only one adult may use this restroom at a time.

4.6. Personal Belongings

A customer may not leave a personal belonging unattended in any of the Austin County Library System libraries. A customer who brings a personal item in the library assumes the risk of loss or theft of the item. The library is not responsible for a lost, stolen, or misplaced personal item, whether the item was attended or unattended by the owner.

4.7. Patron Conduct

So that all may have a safe, fair, and pleasant opportunity to patronize the libraries in the Austin County Library System and enjoy all the libraries have to offer, please observe the following while in the library:

- No smoking or using tobacco products
- Keep your personal belongings with you at all times
- Mute your cellular phone
- No soliciting, petitioning, distributing written materials, or canvassing for political, charitable, or religious purposes without prior approval of the library director
- Footwear and shirts are required.
- Children under 11 years must be accompanied by an adult, and cannot be left unattended.
- Children age 10 and older may use the library unattended by an adult, and are subject to other library rules and policies concerning conduct.
- Unauthorized use of library cards is not permitted.
- Any behavior which is disruptive or hinders others' use of the facilities or library staff's ability to do their jobs is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Using threatening or obscene language or gestures
 - Conduct that creates unreasonable noise
 - Using audio or video devices without headphones

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The following policies govern how we use our library.

- Damaging, destroying, or tampering with library property
- Moving library furniture without permission
- Public intoxication
- Sleeping in the library
- Verbal, physical, or sexual harassment of patrons or staff

Patrons who violate any of these guidelines will be given notice of this policy. A violation may result in a patron's expulsion from the library, suspension of library privileges, or criminal prosecution or other legal action, as appropriate.

4.8. Internet Policy

The Austin County Library System provides computers for public use. Online library catalog computers access the library's holdings and provide access to other resources, including the Internet. Computers and software programs are provided to permit patrons to improve computer skills, test new computer programs, and enhance self-learning through self-improvement and testing software. Software is purchased according to the material selection policy to support specific areas of library service. Programs are selected, updated, and discarded according to the material selection policy. Computers provide access to the Internet, the library catalog, and to the Texas State Library (TexShare) online databases.

Patrons can schedule a session for general computer orientation with a library staff member by setting up an appointed time. During the general orientation, library staff will explain correct operating procedures and discuss rules for use of the computers. All users are required to check out a computer at the circulation desk using their own library card. Library staff cannot provide training on computer technology or software; however, online tutorials and self-instructional videos may be available for some software programs.

Users agree to observe all copyright and licensing laws and will not duplicate any computer programs or documentation unless expressly labeled as being "in the public domain" or "shareware." No personal software or files may be loaded or stored on library computer hard drives. Any files left on the computers will be deleted. Users will have to supply their own recording media (portable storage devices) when needed.

Attachment 9: Electronic Information Networks Registration and User Agreement will have to be signed by patrons.

Conditions of Library Computer Use:

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To ensure that these electronic resources are provided fairly and equitably, the following conditions shall apply:

- Public computer workstations will be available during the library's normal hours of operation until 15 minutes prior to closing.
- All computer users, using their own library card, must register at the circulation desk.
- Computers are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- The library reserves the right to set time limits for individual sessions of use so monopolizing of Internet resources is minimized. Time on the workstations is limited to one (1) hour if someone is waiting.
- Gaming and music is limited to 30 minutes.
- One person per computer. Exceptions can be made by the library staff member on duty.
- Users shall not attempt to upload, install, set up, run, or execute any program or software not authorized by the library on any of the library's computer workstations or systems.
- This prohibition does not, however, restrict users from uploading text documents, such as resumes, other types of forms or documents to send to another device.
- Users may download information to a portable storage device. However, the user is cautioned regarding computer viruses. The library is not responsible for damage to the user's disk or computer, for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the library's Internet service.
- Library staff can only give limited assistance and cannot tutor the patron on the use of a program or computer.
- Computer workstation printing will have the following fees

Computer Print-Out Fees

Black and White Copies:	\$0.15 per 8.5"x11" sheet
Color Copies:	\$0.25 per 8.5"x11" sheet \$0.50 per Legal size sheet
Color Photos:	\$1.00 per page

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4.9. Wireless Access

Wireless connectivity is available at the Austin County Libraries at no charge. However printing is not available for computers using the wireless network.

Patrons with a notebook or laptop PC equipped with a wireless network card are permitted to configure their own computers for access to the Internet. Library staff is not authorized or trained to configure personal computers for patrons and the library assumes no responsibility for any alterations or interference with a laptop's configuration, operation, or data files resulting from connection to the wireless network.

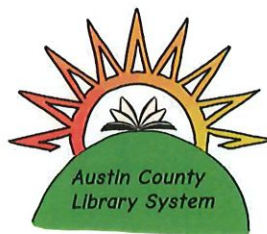
Patrons using the library's wireless access are governed by the same policies as those using the library's workstations.

4.10. Library Programs

The Austin County Libraries offers programs for citizens of all ages. Programs may be developed and presented by library staff, volunteers, or may be co-sponsored by a Friends of the library group and other community organizations. Preschool story time, and other programs for children and young adults will be planned, staff time and budget permitting. Each year the library director will establish a budget for hiring performers and purchasing materials for children's programming.

Programs for adults may be scheduled throughout the year as interest warrants. No funds are available to pay speakers or performers. Presenters may not directly solicit business before, during, or following a program, although cards and brochures may be left on the display table for attendees to pick up. No fees may be charged to attend any library sponsored or co-sponsored program.

Library programs are generally open to anyone wishing to attend. Persons attending library sponsored or co-sponsored programs are expected to adhere to the library's policies on patron conduct.



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ELECTRONIC INFORMATION NETWORKS REGISTRATION AND USER AGREEMENT

Registration and User Agreement

1. I have read the policies concerning the use of the Austin County Library System's Internet computer and agree to abide by the policies.
2. I agree to pay any repair or replacement costs of equipment or software damaged by myself or by minors for whom I am responsible.
3. I understand that copyright laws restrict duplication of copyrighted software, and I will follow all copyright laws.
4. I understand that if I fail to abide by the Austin County Library System's Internet policies, I will lose eligibility for use of this service.
5. I understand and acknowledge that the Internet contains material of a controversial nature including pornography, obscenity, inflammatory or dangerous material, and that Austin County Library System has no control over the Internet and assumes no responsibility for the content, quality, accuracy, currency, or appropriateness of any Internet resources.

Signature _____

Print Your Name _____

Library Card Number _____

Date _____

Patrons under the Age of 18

As the parent or legal guardian of _____, I give permission for my child to use the Internet computer(s) at the Austin County Libraries. I understand that I am responsible for monitoring my child's appropriate use of this service, that I am responsible for any damage that may occur, and that I have read, understand, and agree to the above statements.

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature _____

Date _____