COWEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ACCESS POLICY
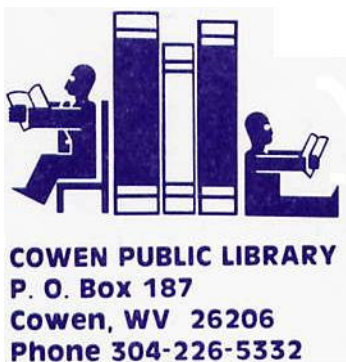
I.   MISSION

The Cowen Public Library system is a public institution whose mission is to provide the means by which people of all ages, interests, and circumstances may have access to a broad range of literature and recreational enrichment. The Board of Trustees and Staff of the Cowen Public Library system are committed to excellence in fulfillment of this mission.

II.   ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The Internet is an unregulated, ever-changing medium not under any government restrictions. The Cowen Public Library does not have complete knowledge of what is on the Internet and has limited control over the resources of the Internet. While the Internet offers a wealth of material that is enriching to our lives, it also offers material that is offensive, disturbing, and/or illegal. Internet workstation display screens are in full view of all patrons and staff, and users are not permitted to display, or attempt to display any visual images containing nudity, obscenity, and/or graphic violence. Patrons will receive ONE warning regarding this rule; another violation will result in loss of Internet and computer privileges. Acceptability of screen displays will be left to the discretion of the supervising library staff. In addition, patrons may not use the library's Internet connection for illegal purposes. Internet computers will not be used for illegal activity, to access illegal materials, or to access materials that by local community standards would be obscene. Library employees or their designees are authorized to take prompt and appropriate actions to enforce the Rules of Conduct, and/or to prohibit use by persons who fail to comply with the Internet Acceptable Use Policy as stated or implied herein.

All Internet resources accessible through the library are provided equally to all library users. Parents or guardians, not the library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and/or accessed by their children. Parents are advised to supervise their child's Internet sessions. Children under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult if they wish to use the Internet.

This policy will require parents of children under the age of <u>18</u> to bring that child to the library, read this policy and sign, in front of a library employee or designee, the permission to grant their child usage of the Internet system.

III.   <u>PROHIBITED USES</u>

Users may not attempt to add, modify, or remove any system element. Users may not attempt or assist unauthorized access to privileged or confidential system elements. User passwords, or any other information related to systems security may not be divulged, shared, or otherwise compromised. Additions or modifications to user access or privilege may not be made. Use of the library systems to evade security measures on any system is prohibited. Users may not attempt to access security-related or otherwise confidential information without the explicit authority to do so. Users may not employ library systems to falsely identify themselves, falsely represent themselves, the library, or any of its policies, services, or practices, or otherwise commit forgery or fraud. Users may not employ library systems for the purpose of libel, slander, or any other form of harassment.

U.S. copyright law (Title 17. U.S. Code) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use". Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs, or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the user; the library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

Electronic materials (including electronic mail) produced by the library employees or designees on library systems are considered to be works-for-hire and are the library's intellectual property, however, the library may not be held responsible for liable for the use of its systems for unsanctioned communications or publications, or any consequences thereof.

Misuse of the computer will result in the loss of computer privileges, potential loss of library privileges, and possible prosecution. Such misuse includes, but is not limited to, using the computer for illegal activities, hacking into the library computer system or any other computer system, damaging or attempting to damage computer equipment or software, interfering with systems operations, integrity, or security, gaining unauthorized access to another person's files, sending harassing messages to other computer users, altering or attempting to alter the library computer's settings, and violating copyright laws and software licensing agreements.
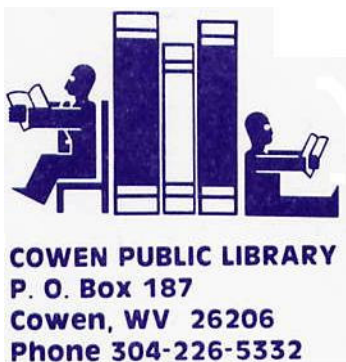
The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from the access to or use of information systems, or any consequences thereof.

IV.   <u>PROCEDURES</u>

Anyone wishing to access the computers must have a valid library card with no patron blocks.

The library staff will instruct patrons in how to log on and off and in other basic procedures but will not provide in-depth training in internet/computer use.

If you wish to download files, you must purchase a disk at this library at the cost of $1.00 each. This will protect all parties involved from a computer-generated virus. Disks that have been removed from the library may not be used again in the library.

The Cowen Public Library is not responsible for damage to a patron's disk, for any loss of data, damage, or liability that may occur from patron use of the library's computers.

The library does not offer electronic mail accounts. Patrons may download their e-mail if they know the Internet address of their private accounts.

The library will furnish paper for printing. The charge for printing is .25¢ for each page printed, even if you "accidentally" print.

There will be a one-hour time limit for access when all computers are full and a patron is waiting for access. You may reserve usage in advance. When reserving and using library computers, you may reserve the Internet up to one hour per day, two times per week. Latecomers forfeit their reserved time if they are more than 15 minutes late for their reserved session. If you cannot make an appointment, please inform the library. If you do not have an appointment and "walk in", it will be at the discretion of a library employee or designee to grant time based on appointments already made.

You may not use your own software programs on any library computer.

There will be no food or drinks allowed in or around the computer area.

Please do not ask to use the telephone during your access time. This is a public facility and we strongly discourage patrons from using the telephone unless it is an emergency. We must pay for all outgoing calls, therefore, please do not ask.

Library employees or designees reserve the right to terminate a computer session at any time, providing the patron with the reason as to this interruption.

These policies are subject to review and change by the order of the Cowen Public Library Board of Trustees at any time.