

Montgomery County-

Norristown Public Library



Desk Attendant Manual

August 2019

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Orientation to the Computer Lab	4
3	Scope of the Desk Attendant Job.....	4
4	General Information for the Public.....	5
4.1	About the Computer Lab	5
4.1.1	Hours	5
4.1.2	Access requirements	5
4.1.3	Time limits.....	5
4.1.4	Printing.....	5
4.2	Other Computers in the Library.....	6
4.2.1	Locations	6
4.2.2	Access requirements	6
4.2.3	Session time limits	6
4.2.4	Printing.....	6
4.2.5	Wireless Internet Connectivity for Personal Devices	6
4.3	Common Questions from Patrons about the Computer Lab	6
4.3.1	Computer Lab Classes	6
4.3.2	Headphones	7
4.3.3	Data Storage.....	7
4.3.4	Internet Filtering.....	7
4.3.5	Patron Privacy	7
5	Computer Lab Regulations and Policies	8
6	Preparation for Check-In Desk Coverage	8
7	Checking Patrons into the Computer Lab	8
7.1	Rules of Computer Lab Access.....	9
7.2	Check-in Software.....	9
7.3	Steps to Process a Patron into the Computer Lab	11
7.3.1	Greet, assess needs, and inform	11
7.3.2	Obtain patron credentials.....	11
7.3.3	Check library card for Internet Access sticker.....	11
7.3.4	Ready the Checkout software.....	12
7.3.5	Use the hand scanner to bring up patron information	12
7.3.6	Assign a computer	12
7.3.7	Document the details	12
7.3.8	Prepare for the next patron	12
7.4	Internet Access Stickers	13
7.4.1	Two Purposes for Stickers	13
7.4.2	Cards Without Internet Stickers	13
7.5	Blocks on Library Cards.....	14
7.5.1	Blocks that do not prevent Computer Lab access.....	14
7.5.2	Blocks that prevent Computer Lab access.....	14
7.6	Filling out the Lab Daily Usage Log	15
8	Checking Patrons Out of the Computer Lab	15
8.1	Basic check-out; step-by-step	15
8.2	When a patron abandons their computer	16
9	When the Computer Lab is at Full Capacity	16
9.1	Maintain Waiting List.....	16

9.2	Determine who to rotate out and inform patron.....	17
10	Managing Patron Printing	18
10.1	General Information	18
10.2	Costs to Print	18
10.3	Monitor print jobs	18
10.4	Collect printing fees	19
10.4.1	Cash payments.....	19
10.4.2	Payment by check	19
10.4.3	Receipts.....	19
10.4.4	Patron cannot pay for prints.....	19
11	Patron Question Documentation.....	20
11.1	Daily Documentation.....	20
11.2	Bi-Annual Documentation	20
12	Assisting Patrons.....	20
12.1	Computer illiterate patrons.....	21
12.2	Assistance guidelines	21
12.3	Online privacy	21
12.4	Computer malfunction.....	21
12.5	Class Lesson Plans (Step-by-Step guides).....	21
13	General Guidelines for Managing the Lab	22
13.1	Enforcing Policy	22
13.1.1	Expectations of volunteers.....	22
13.1.2	Staff Enforcement Purviews.....	22
13.1.3	Patron Banning Guidelines	22
13.1.4	Reporting Patron Issues	22
13.1.5	Strategies for Enforcing Policy.....	23
13.1.6	Summoning Security.....	23
13.2	Telephone Answering	23
13.3	Staff/Volunteer Printouts	23
13.4	No Downloads on the Check-in Computer.....	23
13.5	Responding to Warrants	23
14	Opening the Computer Lab	23
14.1	Powering up the computers	23
15	Closing the Computer Lab.....	24
15.1	Closure Warning Messages.....	24
15.2	Automated Shutdown.....	25
15.3	Check-in Computer and Printer.....	25
15.4	Lab Daily Usage Logs.....	25
15.5	Cleaning.....	25
15.6	The Computer Lab Door	26
16	Class Preparation	26
17	Revision History.....	26

1 Introduction

The Desk Attendant job is in many ways the most important job in the Computer Lab. The person sitting at the check-in desk is the first contact the public has with our section of the library and as we all know, first impressions matter! Dealing with patrons in a welcoming, friendly and courteous manner can set the tone for their entire experience in the Computer Lab.

The Computer Lab is very fortunate to have many volunteers who serve weekly shifts in the Desk Attendant role. This manual is required reading for volunteers as well as staff as part of their training. Supplemental material and news items are posted on the Computer Lab Blog. There is an icon on the check-in computer that links to the Blog.

Some material in this manual is directed more towards Computer Lab staff than volunteers. Every effort is made to insure that a volunteer is never on duty alone in the Computer Lab and therefore, unless there is a staffing emergency, there will be a staff person present to handle things like opening and closing the lab, answering the phone, fielding computer questions, enforcing lab policy, resolving disputes, etc. The staff members in the Circulation Department have also been trained in Lab policies and procedures and can serve as back-up if Lab staff is absent.

2 Orientation to the Computer Lab

There are 16 **Public Access Computers** (PACs) in the Computer Lab. They are all configured to operate exactly alike. Patrons do not need to do anything to log on to the computers. Internet is available as well as programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, etc.

There is a section of staff computers. No one from the public should be allowed to enter this area unless invited by staff.

All PACs are connected to the black and white printer in the Computer Lab.

PACs will come on automatically in the morning at approximately 8:50 AM. Screensavers engage after 15 minutes of non-use. Power save (black screen) engages after 30 minutes.

PACs will shut down automatically at normal Computer Lab closing times, with preceding automatic 5 minute and 2 minute warning messages on the screens.

3 Scope of the Desk Attendant Job

Duties of Desk Attendant include:

- Greeting patrons as they enter the Computer Lab
- Answering general questions from patrons about Computer Lab and library computers such as hours of operation, computer occupancy and time limits, required credentials for accessing the computers and availability and cost of printing
- Informing patrons about Computer Lab Regulations and Policies as necessary.
- Enforcing Computer Lab Regulations and Policies as necessary
- Checking the Computer Lab Blog for new announcements and policy changes

- Using software to process patron credentials
- Assigning Computer Lab computer seating according to Computer Lab Regulations and Policies
- Manually documenting patron start and end times of computer work sessions
- Manually documenting other aspects of a patron's use of Computer Lab computer service
- Monitoring the flow of patrons in and out of the Computer Lab such as:
 - rotating users out when Computer Lab is at capacity
 - noticing persons who just wander in and take a computer
- Keeping an eye on monitors in use for acceptable internet viewing compliance.
- Referring user support questions to Computer Lab staff as necessary
- Documenting the numbers of user support questions handled by Computer Lab staff
- Conducting financial transactions for printing fees
- Documenting financial transactions
- Documenting print jobs and managing them to ensure accurate delivery to patrons
- Conduct closing of service at end of day or before special Computer Lab closures such as classes
- Filing completed forms at end of service and prepping for the next day of service
- Wiping down computer surfaces at the end of the day

4 General Information for the Public

4.1 About the Computer Lab

4.1.1 Hours

The Computer Lab is open the same hours as the library except for the last half hour of each day. There are occasional closures for classes. Wallet-sized Computer Lab closure slips are available at the check-in desk. There is a Computer Lab brochure.

4.1.2 Access requirements

A Library Card in good standing or an Access Granted pass is required to use the Computer Lab computers. Patrons cannot use anyone's card but their own. Cards are not transferrable to other family members.

4.1.3 Time limits

Patrons are guaranteed one-half hour on Computer Lab computers and may return as many times as they want in the same day.

4.1.4 Printing

All PACs in the building have black and white printing. Printing costs \$.15 per page for text and \$.50 to \$1.00 for pictures or dark page backgrounds, depending on if they fill a full page or half page.

4.2 Other Computers in the Library

4.2.1 Locations

There are 15 other PACs in the library; 11 on the first floor and 4 in the Children's Department.

4.2.2 Access requirements

Patrons must know their library card number and their PIN to log on. PINs are set at the Circulation Desk.

Patrons step up to a computer and if the screen says **Available** they can log on to use it. There is no attendant.

Only one person at a time is allowed on the computers.

4.2.3 Session time limits

Session time limits vary throughout the building. Some computers are "express" computers and have shorter session times. However, session time is renewable by the patron on all the computers as long as the computer has not been reserved. There is a limit of two sessions per day per barcode.

4.2.4 Printing

All PACs in the building have black and white printing. Printing costs \$.15 per page for text and \$.50 to \$1.00 for pictures or dark page backgrounds, depending on if they fill a full page or half page.

4.2.5 Wireless Internet Connectivity for Personal Devices

Patrons can use their own personal computer or device in the building to access **free wireless** connectivity to the internet. They must get a guest pass from the Circulation Desk or know their library card and PIN number. PINs can be set at the Circulation Desk.

Occasionally Computer Lab staff is asked to troubleshoot when patrons encounter difficulties getting connected to wireless. Pertinent information is as follows:

- The wireless network is named **MNL Public WiFi**
- Once connected, patron must agree to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy page.
 - On some devices, this page will appear automatically a few seconds after connecting to the network.
 - On other devices, you must manually open a web browser and navigate to the library's webpage (www.mc-npl.org) in order for the page to appear.
- For liability reasons, do not touch patrons' personal laptops or devices.

4.3 Common Questions from Patrons about the Computer Lab

4.3.1 Computer Lab Classes

Please refer all questions about classes to the Lab staff.

4.3.2 Headphones

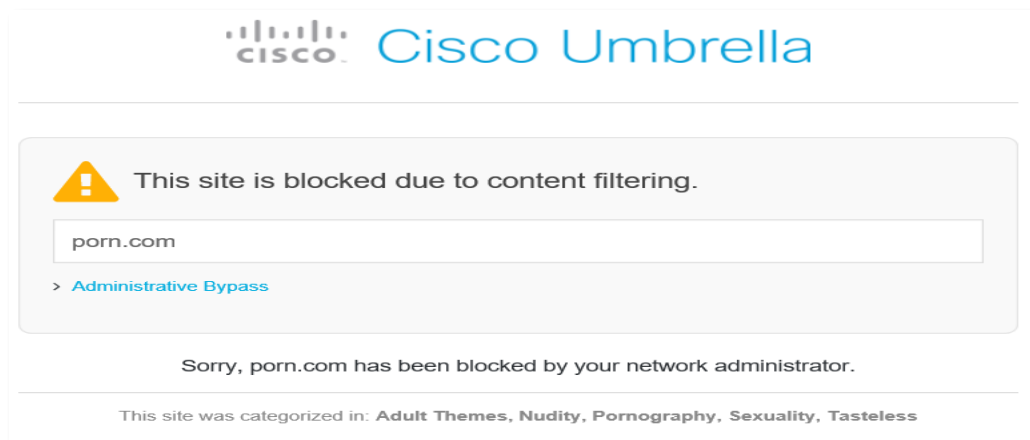
Sound is only available through headphones that get plugged into a jack that comes out from the monitor stand. Patrons need to supply their own headphones. Earbuds can be purchased for \$1.00 in the Children's Department.

4.3.3 Data Storage

We do not sell any removable storage media. There is **temporary** storage on Computer Lab computers in a directory named Temporary Patron Drive. Files should be manually deleted by the patron before they leave.

4.3.4 Internet Filtering

Our Internet filter, Cisco Umbrella powered by OpenDNS, protects minors from encountering unwholesome web pages and protects our computers from web pages that contain malware and viruses. But sometimes, it interferes with legitimate web browsing. If a patron tries to access a site which the filter considers inappropriate, a screen will pop-up indicating the category of material being blocked and the website address being blocked.



If a patron objects to the blocking of a website, make a note of the website address which is indicated in the "blocked" message.

Lab staff does not have authority to bypass the block.

Tell the patron a request will be made to the Network Administrator to unblock the website. The turnaround time for this is usually within 24 business hours.

4.3.5 Patron Privacy

Occasionally a patron may inquire, either in person or over the phone, if a certain individual is or was in the Computer Lab. This is **private information**. For privacy and safety reasons, we **do not look** through the Lab Daily Usage Logs and give out any information.

Persons who inquire in person may walk into the Computer Lab to look for an individual and speak to them briefly if they are there.

For phone inquiries, we explain that for reasons of privacy and safety, we cannot give out that information, but we can pass along a message to an individual if they are here.

5 Computer Lab Regulations and Policies

- All volunteers and Computer Lab staff should be thoroughly familiar with the Computer Lab Regulations & Policies.
- There is a laminated paper copy taped to the cabinet top that the printer is on. It is also on the Computer Lab Blog.
- There are copies in English and Spanish hung on the walls around the Computer Lab.

6 Preparation for Check-In Desk Coverage

When arriving in the Computer Lab for your shift, once you are settled into the check-in desk, you should do the following:

- 1) Verify that the entries on the **Lab Daily Usage Log** sheet correspond to the actual patrons currently in the Computer Lab
- 2) Verify that you have a current **Fee Collection Record** sheet
- 3) Verify that you have a supply of blank **Lab Daily Usage Log** sheets
- 4) Verify that there is a sufficient stock of paper in the **printer tray**.
 - a. Desk attendant may top up the paper tray with paper if needed, but please be gentle to avoid damage to printer equipment.
- 5) Paper is kept under the check-in desk
- 6) Toner is kept in the Disk Cabinet (should only be changed by staff).
- 7) Read the **Blog**, which contains additional information about the operation of the Computer Lab. It can be accessed via a shortcut on the desktop. Notable sections include:
 - a. **PAC Support:** Has a list of frequently encountered issues and how to work around them and
 - b. **Documents and Signage:** Has copies of any sheet or form that we may be out of.

7 Checking Patrons into the Computer Lab

In general, the check-in process includes:

- Greeting the patron and, in the case of first-time users, offering guidance about credentials for access to Computer Lab computers and availability and cost of printing
- Asking for a library card or an **Access Granted** pass
- Using software to check the patron's library standing when a patron presents a library card*
- Manually recording where the patron is seated and the time he checked in

* When a patron presents a completed Access Granted pass, that person may be seated immediately since the Circ. Dept. has already checked the patron's library standing.

7.1 Rules of Computer Lab Access

- Everyone over age 3 must have a library card or a pass, even if they are just accompanying someone and not expecting to occupy a computer of their own.
- The limits of occupancy are no more than **two people** per computer.
- There are color stickers on each library card which help determine how to seat children in the Computer Lab. (See section 5.4 Internet Access Stickers for details).

Note: Children under age 3 must be secured in a stroller or carrier or sit in their mother's lap or in a folding chair.

7.2 Check-in Software

Note: If you have the first shift of the day, the Check-in machine must be powered on. Then log into the computer. The correct Userid is the default: MCLINC/MNLCIRC1. Using lowercase, enter the password: circ.

The software used to process patrons into the Computer Lab is **Polaris ILS**. There is a shortcut on the check-in machine desktop.

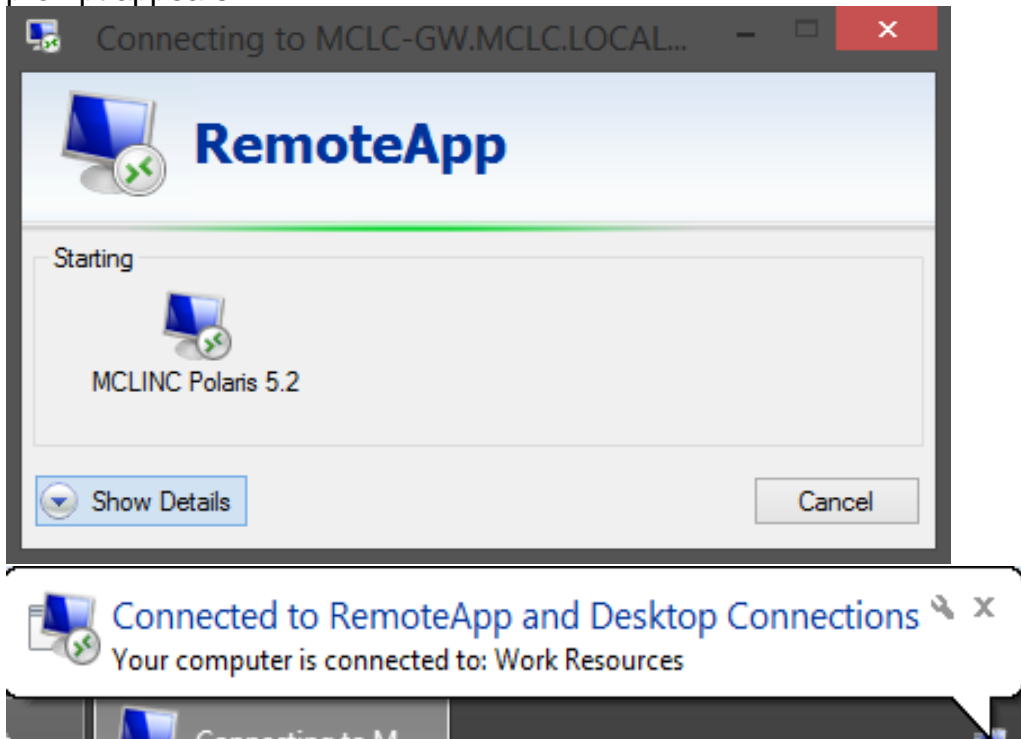
Also on the desktop is an icon called Polaris Check-in Software Credentials. Click this icon to open a Word document that contains the login credentials needed to log into Polaris. Instead of manual typing in the credentials, you can copy them from the document and paste into the Polaris login prompts.

If Polaris is already open, you will see a tool bar at the top of the desktop display as well as a window named Check Out. Otherwise:

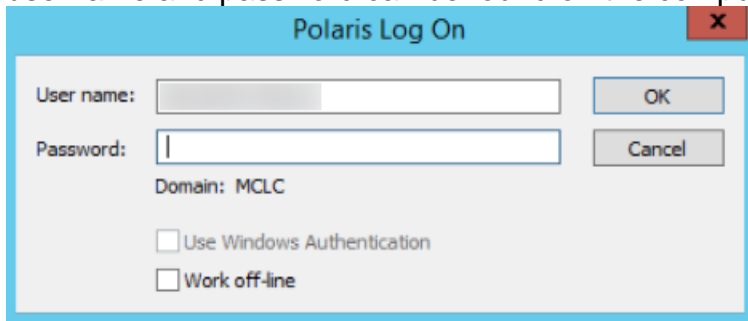
- 1) Open **Polaris ILS**.



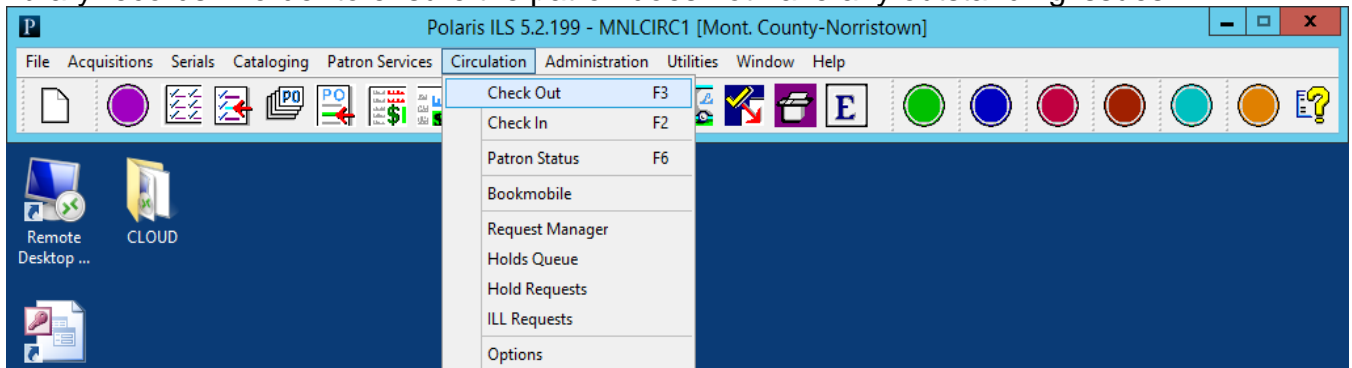
- 2) You will see the following window and notification for 10-20 seconds before the next login prompt appears



- 3) The **Polaris Log On** prompt will display next, with the wrong username entered.
- 4) Clear the User name field. Enter the username and password into the textboxes. The username and password can be found on the computer's Desktop.



- 5) Click on the **Circulation** menu and then select **Check Out**. This will give you access to the library records in order to ensure the patron does not have any outstanding issues.



Note: The check-in computer is left on Thursday nights for updates. If you come in Friday morning, restart the check-in machine in order to ensure that all the updates were processed.

7.3 Steps to Process a Patron into the Computer Lab

7.3.1 Greet, assess needs, and inform

Acknowledge and welcome patrons when they enter and ask them if they would like to use a computer. If they have never been in the Computer Lab before, describe what they need for credentials (library card or pass) and where they can obtain them (Circulation Desk) if they don't have them. Let them know that we have black and white printing at .15 per page for text, with higher fees for pictures, and strongly recommend they check with staff before printing anything.

7.3.2 Obtain patron credentials

In order to check in the patron must hand the attendant either:

- A **Library Card*** with an Internet sticker on it. (See section 5.4.2 for what to do if they do not have an Internet sticker).
 - Patrons using their **key chain** library card must **remove** the card from their key chain and leave the card with the desk attendant. Do not remove it yourself or keep a keychain at the desk. (However, you may remove it for the patron if they have serious physical limitations but first alert staff. In the extremely rare case where a card cannot be removed from a keychain, then scan the card and write the barcode on the Lab Daily Usage Log. Give the card on the keychain back to the patron, and place a paper marker in the slot corresponding to the PAC assigned to the patron.) All key chain cards should have Internet stickers on them. Volunteers can alert Computer Lab staff if a key chain card lacks a sticker.
 - Some patrons have apps on their smart phones that store their library barcode. While this barcode image is scannable using the Polaris software, we still need the actual physical card in the Computer Lab. We need it as collateral for the Computer Lab session and also in order to see the internet sticker.
- An **Access Granted** pass with all the sections filled out.
 - AG passes are usually issued for only one day but in some special cases may have longer durations.
 - Passes that are valid for more than one day are returned to the patron when they leave
 - One-day passes are not returned to the patron. They are held aside in case the patron wants to return that day.

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library
Access Granted to Computer Lab

Patron Name: Andie Philips

Barcode #: 22398001231234

Patron Signature: Andie Philips

Expiration Date: 1/6/2018 Staff: LP

ADULT TEEN JUV

Patron has signed internet form: YES

**Note: Library staff does not need a card or a pass in order to use a computer.*

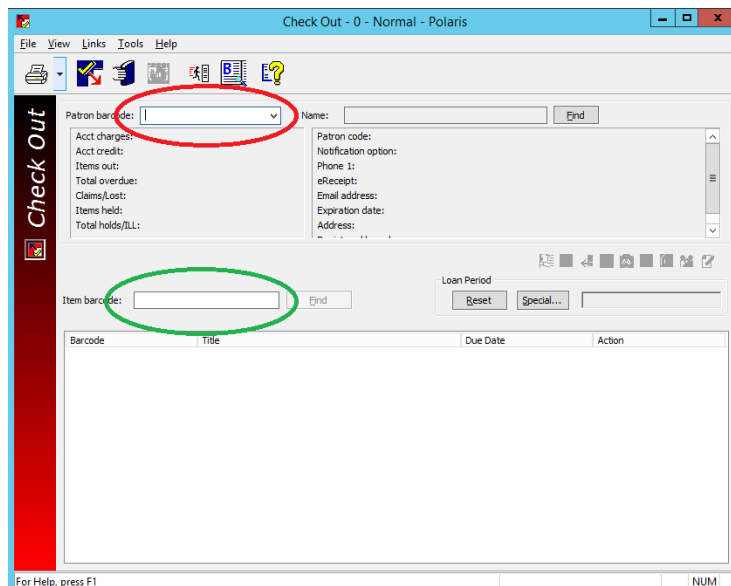
7.3.3 Check library card for Internet Access sticker

Be sure to check the card for the Internet Access Sticker. In the case of a pass check that **Yes** is circled. (See section 5.4 for details on stickers).

7.3.4 Ready the Checkout software

Make sure the Polaris **Checkout** function is ready – the blinking line must be in the box in the upper-left, circled in **red** in the image (See section 5.2 for how to open the Checkout function if it is not already open).

To clear a patron code, make sure the cursor is in the Item Barcode line in the middle of the window (circled in **green** in the image).



7.3.5 Use the hand scanner to bring up patron information

Point the hand scanner at the barcode and click. The red laser should capture the entire barcode if your aim is true. Proper scanning will make the patron's name appear in the check-out form on the screen. (See section 5.5 for what to do if a **Patron Blocks** message appears)

7.3.6 Assign a computer

Once the patron's card has been scanned and no pertinent block appeared, tell the patron which number computer they can sit at* and place their card in the appropriate slot in the wooden rack.

Note: It is very important not to let any patron sit at a computer until after you have scanned their card and determined they do not have a block which would prohibit them from entering the Computer Lab.

*Some patrons like to choose their own computer, which is fine. However, computers 15 and 16 are the easiest for our patrons with **mobility issues** (for example, people with canes, crutches, or wheelchairs) to use as they are nearest the door and have additional width between the chair and check-in desk. Please hold these computers, if possible, for these patrons. Refer all other patrons to the other available computers. Once computers 1 to 14 are occupied, you may then assign 15 and 16. If an able-bodied patron *insists* on being seated at 15 or 16 remind them they may be displaced if a person with mobility issues needs to be seated.

7.3.7 Document the details

Fill out the Lab Daily Usage Log sheet while the patron's record is still open. (See Section 5.6 **Filling out the Lab Daily Usage Log** for protocols for filling out the log sheet)

7.3.8 Prepare for the next patron

Clear the Checkout form by tapping the **Enter** key. If you get an error message or other dialog window, close it. The blinking line should be in the Item Barcode box when you are trying to clear the record.

7.4 Internet Access Stickers

7.4.1 Two Purposes for Stickers

- 1) They indicate that the patron (or their guardian) has completed the required *Access to Electronic Resources at MC-NPL Registration Form*.
- 2) The *colors* of the stickers are used to control access to Computer Lab computers and to computers in the Children's Department.
 - a. In the Computer Lab, **children** under the age of 13 (orange stickers and yellow stickers) may not use a computer by themselves; they must share a computer with an **adult** (blue sticker), not a **teen** (green sticker).
 - b. In the Children's Department, **children** aged 8-12 (orange sticker) are allowed to use a computer by themselves, but not children under 8 (yellow sticker).



7.4.2 Cards Without Internet Stickers

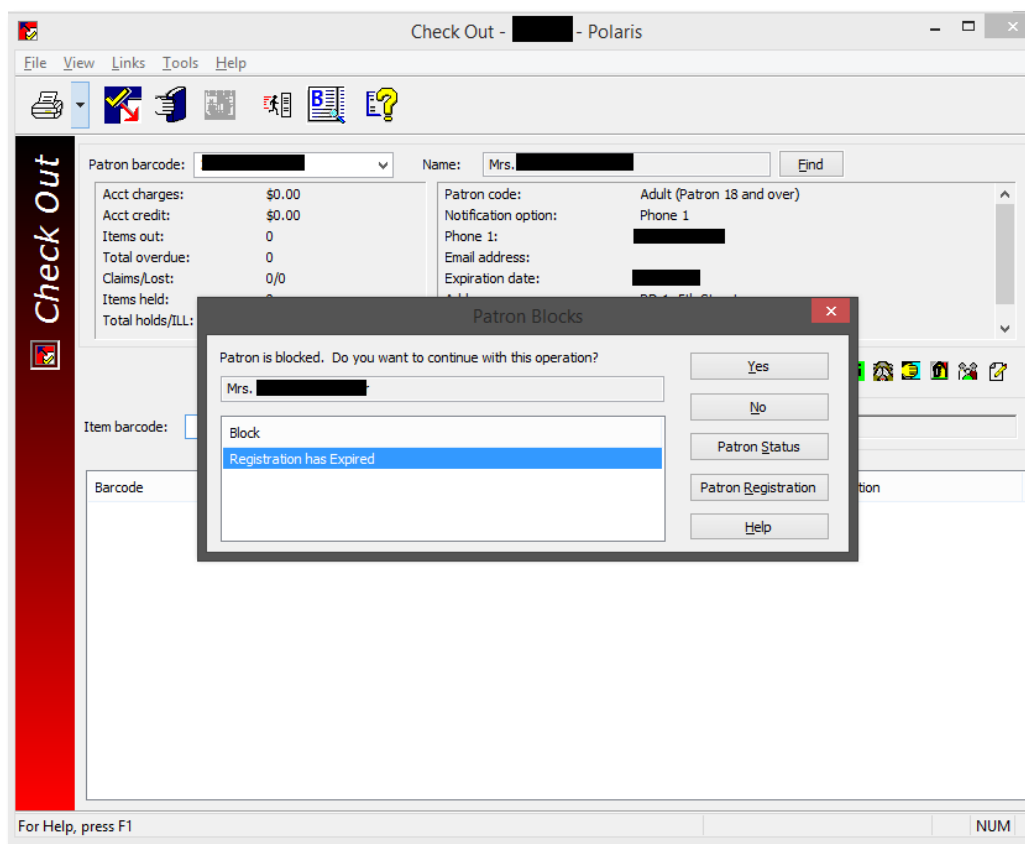
If the patron's card does not have an Internet Access sticker or if on the Access Granted pass Yes is not circled, the patron does not have permission to access the Internet.

The sticker may have never been issued, in which case, they need to go to the Circulation Desk. Sometimes, on well-used library cards, the sticker has worn off. When a patron gets an internet sticker on their card it is documented in their library record, so it is possible to use Polaris to look that up. Volunteers can ask Computer Lab Staff to do so.

Once it is determined they have internet access, there are spare stickers near the check-in desk which can be put on the cards. If you place a sticker on the card, be sure to use the correct colored sticker. Now you may grant them entry into the Computer Lab. Otherwise, direct them to the Circulation Desk.

7.5 Blocks on Library Cards

A patron may have blocks on their account. Blocks will appear in a popup window when their card is scanned (pictured below). Most blocks prevent the patron from using the Computer Lab, but some do not.



7.5.1 Blocks that do not prevent Computer Lab access

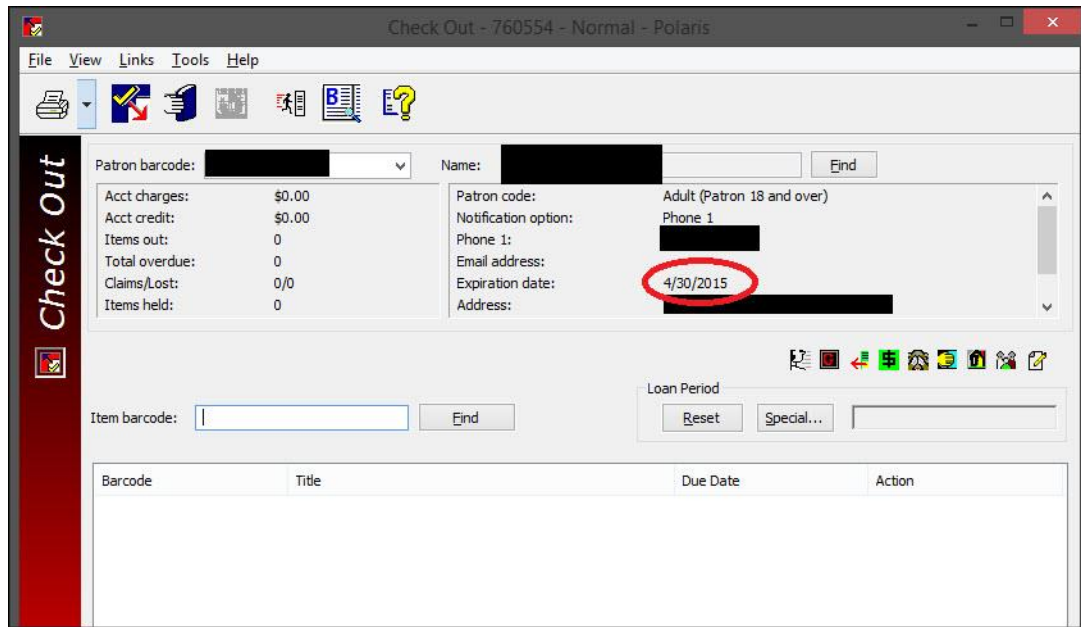
- “One item at a time”: This means that the patron may only check out one library book at time. They may still use the Computer Lab.
- “Patron used Computer Lab without ID on xx/xx/xx”
- “Patron asked us to hold library card”: Some patrons like to leave their cards at the library instead of carrying it around with them.
- “Card in drawer”: This means that the patron left one of their library cards at the library. They can pick it up at the circulation desk.

7.5.2 Blocks that prevent Computer Lab access

- Anything to do with money owed for overdue fines or prints, lost cards, etc.
- When the patron has Overdue Items
- “Registration has expired”: Patrons must renew their card every two (2) years*

If a patron has one of these blocks, there is a **script** we try to stick to, so that patrons do not question us inappropriately about the issue(s) on their card. Say to the patron, “**There is an issue with your card that needs to be addressed at the Circulation Desk before you can use the Computer Lab.**”

**Note: When an expired card gets renewed, it takes 24 hours for the software to delete the block. Therefore, the block will still appear if the patron uses the Computer Lab on the same day that his expired card is renewed. However, the expiration date will update. When you get a block that says Registration has expired, you can see the patron information on the screen. Look for the Expiration date to be sure it is truly expired.*



7.6 Filling out the Lab Daily Usage Log

- Fill out a line for the patron in the Lab Daily Usage Log, including the **time** they check in (in military time as displayed in the check-in machine system tray), if they are an **adult (A)**, **teen(T)** or **juvenile(J)**, their **name**, and if they used a **library card (LC)** or an **Access Granted (AG)** pass.
- When two patrons share a computer, enter both patrons on separate lines in the Lab Daily Usage Log and note it is being shared by putting an asterisk (*) before the computer number.

8 Checking Patrons Out of the Computer Lab

8.1 Basic check-out; step-by-step

It is important to follow these steps in order. Take your time and don't be rushed. Patrons are more patient than you think.

- 1) When the patron comes to the desk to leave, **ask** them which computer they were on.
- 2) **Look up** the check-in entry in the Lab Daily Usage Log and note if they need to pay for prints. If so, conduct the transaction for the prints.
- 3) **Enter** the time of the check-out into the log.
- 4) **Remove** their library card from the wooden rack.
- 5) **Scan** their library card to be sure it belongs to the person who is checking out.

- 6) **Return** their library card.
- 7) Do NOT return their Access Granted pass (unless it is valid for more than 1 day).
- 8) Clear the checkout form by pressing enter on the keyboard.

8.2 When a patron abandons their computer

At times patrons leave without collecting their cards, but other times they leave for extended periods of time expecting to return to their computer. We offer the following information should you suspect that a machine has potentially been abandoned.

- The general rule is that a patron should not be away from their computer for longer than ten minutes without checking out. This does not mean you should ask every patron that notifies us they are stepping out if they will be longer than ten minutes. However, you should keep an eye on their computer and volunteers should alert staff if the screen saver has come on.
 - If you see the screen saver it means there has been no activity on the computer for 15 minutes.
 - If you see a totally black screen it means there has been no activity for at least 30 minutes.
- Depending on various factors, the staff person may either sign the patron off the computer, taking the card to the Circulation desk to be filed or they may try to page the patron to return for their card. If belongings are left at a computer, the belongings may be taken to Lost & Found in the Circulation office next door.

9 When the Computer Lab is at Full Capacity

The Computer Lab operates on a first-in-first-out basis. If all computers are in use and someone new wants to come in, you need to make room for them. We use the Lab Daily Usage Log to determine which patron has been in the Computer Lab for the longest period of time, and then they are rotated out to make room for a new person.

Note: Everyone is guaranteed a half hour in the Computer Lab, so if the person who has been in the Computer Lab the longest hasn't been here for a half hour, he cannot be rotated out until the half hour is up.

9.1 Maintain Waiting List

- Take the new patron's **first name** for the waiting list (on a special form) and inform them the wait time is usually 5 minutes.
- Tell the patron you will page them when there is a computer available
- They can have a seat just outside the Computer Lab if they want.
- We do not allow people to wait in the doorway or inside the Computer Lab.
- Do not take the patron's card or pass until it is time to check him in.

9.2 Determine who to rotate out and inform patron

- 1) Check the Lab Daily Usage Log to find out who has been in the Computer Lab the longest and let them know we need them to relinquish their computer due to a waiting list.*
- 2) If you are too busy to get up or uncomfortable confronting them, a Computer Lab staff member can do so.
- 3) When you inform the patron in person, you may use the following verbal script:

“John, I'm sorry to disturb you, but we've become very busy and we need your computer. Please finish up your work and check-out within the next **5 minutes**.”
- 4) If the patron questions the need to vacate, you may say that we have a waiting list and that we guarantee only a half hour. You can mention to them they can come back again that day, just not right away. Be polite with a patron that is asked to leave but be firm.
- 5) On the Lab Daily Usage Log, **note the time** that you contacted the patron about vacating their computer.
- 6) **Watch the time** and if the patron has not complied within **5 minutes**, tell them of the need to vacate their computer immediately. Volunteers can ask Computer Lab staff to do this if they are uncomfortable. We should all do our best to insure compliance with the 5-minute guideline so that patrons do not get used to lenience on that issue.
- 7) When there is room for the new patron, you can page them by picking up the phone and dialing 8-0 and then waiting for a beep. You will then be on the Public Address system and can call them back into the Computer Lab. Be straightforward on the PA system;

“John, there is a computer available for you in the Computer Lab, John”.
- 8) Once a patron has been asked to give up his computer, he may not return to the Computer Lab for 1/2 hour. During times of typically high volume (lunch time, dinner time, etc.), this rule should be adhered to strictly. If you have asked someone to leave and things slow down to the point where you have 3 or 4 open computers, you may let someone back in in less than a half hour. If you do so, please make it clear to the patron that we are making an exception since it is not too busy. The responsibility for returning is up to the patron. They are not added to a waiting list.

**Note: There is one exception to the above process. When a student from one of our computer classes is in the Computer Lab practicing class materials, please do not bump them off for the waiting list.*

10 Managing Patron Printing

10.1 General Information

- The first and most crucial step to managing patron printing is to be sure the patron knows to ask for help before printing. That way, we can cut down on unwanted prints and arguments over paying for them
- All the Computer Lab computers, including the staff computers, are connected to the printer at the check-in desk.
- The printer only prints in black and white. Paper is kept underneath the check-in desk and toner is in a cabinet. Volunteers can replace paper if they wish but in general anything to do with the printer should be handled by staff.
- We do not print anything on special paper, cards or envelopes that patrons might bring in. We can only use the library's paper.
- We do not do double-sided printing. The Computer Lab's printer only prints one-sided.

10.2 Costs to Print

- A print with text on a white background costs \$.15 per page.
- To simplify the charges for toner intensive prints (pictures, grey backgrounds), we have only two prices:
 - \$.50 for a picture or a grey background that fills a half-page in size (except for maps or satellite photos that print in conjunction with driving directions)
 - \$1.00 for any picture or a grey background that fills more than a half page
 - Volunteers should feel free to consult with staff when they are unsure how much to charge.

10.3 Monitor print jobs

- When the desk attendant hears a print job coming out of the printer, he must examine the prints immediately in order to determine the source.
 - When patrons print from the internet, the browser will add a footer to each printed page which will indicate the number of the computer the print job is from and the time it was initiated.
 - Prints from other software on the Computer Lab computers will not include this identifying footer so the desk attendant must be proactive in determining the origin. Typically this involves saying aloud, "Is someone printing"? or "Did someone just print"? Patrons usually respond by raising their hands.

- Once the source of a print job is identified, the desk attendant looks up the patron's entry in the Lab Daily Usage Log and documents each print the patron made:
 - Text prints are denoted by one hash mark per page
 - Toner intensive prints are denoted by writing "1 graphic @ 50¢" (or \$1.00).

10.4 Collect printing fees

The desk attendant collects fees for printing and makes change using the cash box and enter the transaction on the **Fee Collection Record**.

10.4.1 Cash payments

- We cannot accept denominations larger than \$20 bills - patrons *may* be able to pay for their prints at the Circulation Desk using larger denominations
- \$20 bills may be checked with the detector pen for counterfeitness by drawing a short line on the bill with the pen.
 - Yellow/clear color: Bill is good
 - Brown/gray color: Bill is suspect
- If volunteers see the cash box is running low on change or bills please alert staff.

10.4.2 Payment by check

- Other than cash, the only other form of payment accepted for printing fees is a personal check.
- Checks should be made out to "MC-NPL"
- Enter the check number on the **Fee Collection Record**

10.4.3 Receipts

On the rare occasion that a patron wants a receipt for his printing:

- Do not enter the fee onto the **Fee Collection Record**.
- Ask the patron to pay for his prints at the Circulation Desk so he can get a receipt
- On the Lab Daily Usage Log, mark that the prints were paid for at the Circ. Desk.

10.4.4 Patron cannot pay for prints

Sometimes a patron will print and then not have any money or enough money. In this case:

- Volunteers should alert a staff member and they will take care of it.

- If patron printed and has no money, the staff member will inform patron that prints must be paid for at the time of printing. A “**block**” will be placed on patron’s card that will require payment for the prints before any other library services can be rendered.
- If patron does not have enough money, accept what the patron has and place a block for the balance. Balance needs to be paid at the Circulation Desk.
- If a staff member is not immediately available volunteers should:
 - Write down the barcode of patron and how much they owe.
 - Accept a partial payment if they have any money.
 - Tell patron their card will not be able to be used until the balance is paid, which must be done at the Circulation Desk.

11 Patron Question Documentation

Whenever a patron asks a question or receives assistance in the Computer Lab, the number of questions asked gets tallied.

11.1 Daily Documentation

Desk attendants should monitor staff interaction with patrons, either at patron work stations or their own desks, and mark **one hash mark** for each **encounter** at the bottom of the Lab Daily Usage Log. After each patron interaction the staff member will let the desk attendant know whether to add any more hash marks to that encounter. If the staff member gets distracted or forgets, please follow up and ask if more than one question should be documented.

11.2 Bi-Annual Documentation

Twice a year, during the months of May and October, tallies are kept not only of the number of questions asked by patrons, but where the questioners reside.

Answering a question is a service the library provides, and since we depend on municipal support from various Montgomery County communities, we keep records of the number of questions that residents of specific municipalities ask.

There are special forms to assist this documentation. The process will be explained in detail by Computer Lab staff whenever what we commonly refer to as “Township Sampling” time rolls around.

12 Assisting Patrons

The Computer Lab is a self-service Lab. For the most part, we anticipate that users are able to support themselves. Occasionally a patron will need help for one of these reasons.

12.1 Computer illiterate patrons

Occasionally completely computer illiterate patrons will come in and expect hands-on help to accomplish a specific task on a computer. In the event that the patron knows little-to-nothing about using a computer, depending on the complexity of the task they wish to accomplish, you can get them nudged in the right direction with some minor support but explain to them that you cannot sit with them and “hold their hand” for any length of time. If they need to go to a website for a job, for example, you can get them to the site and possibly steer them in the direction of what they need to click on, but if they can’t even use the mouse themselves, they cannot expect you to do it for them. Consider suggesting that they bring someone along to help them or take our computer classes.

Occasionally we have college student volunteers in the house who can be summoned for one-on-one help. Check with Asha or Mary in the Circulation Department for availability.

12.2 Assistance guidelines

If the patron knows how to use a computer and needs some brief help on something, you are welcome to assist to the best of your ability. If the issue is beyond you, try to get one of the other staff members to help or simply tell the patron that you aren’t sure either. Getting the patron on track quickly and possibly helping them again a time or two is preferable to one-on-one for more than 10 minutes.

12.3 Online privacy

It is not at all advisable to help a patron fill out any kind of online form that requires personal information, passwords, credit cards, etc., not even an email application.

12.4 Computer malfunction

Sometimes the error is a human error but there might be an occasional problem with the computer; viewing a particular webpage, or performing an infrequent task, or a hardware issue like the screen going blank. Feel free to move the patron to another computer if it is likely to help. Keep in mind, though, all of our computers are the same, so unless something is malfunctioning, what is not working on one computer should not work on the others either.

12.5 Class Lesson Plans (Step-by-Step guides)

Sometimes, a patron will request substantial help with the Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). In these situations, it is sometimes helpful to recommend the Computer Lab’s class lesson plans. The lesson plans are written in a “step-by-step” style, making it possible to consume the material without an instructor.

Copies of the lesson plans are available for patron use inside the Lab. They may not be taken outside the Lab. They are located in the top drawer of the check-in desk. If a patron borrows a lesson plan, make a note of it on the Lab Daily Usage Log so it may be collected from the patron before they leave the Lab.

13 General Guidelines for Managing the Lab

13.1 Enforcing Policy

13.1.1 *Expectations of volunteers*

Computer Lab staff are primarily responsible for enforcing Computer Lab Regulations and Policies. However, we rely on volunteers to be especially mindful and supportive of the policies regarding using the Computer Lab computers such as:

- Limit of two persons per computer
- Proper credentials required to enter even if just “with” someone
- Children in the lab - under age 13 must share computer with an adult
- Printing fees and patron responsibility for paying

13.1.2 *Staff Enforcement Purviews*

Computer Lab staff will handle the thornier issues such as:

- Cell phone use violations
- Inappropriate internet viewing
- Patron disruptions
- Patrons complaints or disputes
- Mistreatment of Computer Lab equipment

13.1.3 *Patron Banning Guidelines*

As mentioned previously, there are official patron banning policies that were approved of by the library board. They, along with the Computer Lab Regulations are posted in many places in the Computer Lab. Over time, the Computer Lab, in consultation with the Head of Circulation and the Executive Director, has adopted guidelines for enforcing certain of the banning policies, specifically the following:

- Viewing pornographic images: first three offenses issue a verbal warning; fourth offense is a ban of 30 days from using library computers; fifth offense constitutes a ban of 6 months from using library computers.
- Uncooperative behavior: first three offenses issue verbal warnings. A fourth offense results in a ban of 30 days from using library computers. Examples of uncooperative behavior include repeated incidences of refusing to vacate computer, failure to turn down headphones when asked, and chronic disregard for cell phone policy.
- Fraudulent library card usage – For first offense, issue a letter of explanation and a block on card requiring use of I.D.

13.1.4 *Reporting Patron Issues*

Violations of Computer Lab policies should be brought to the attention of a Computer Lab staff member who will ensure the infraction is documented. Give the staff member a short description of the violation, the patron’s name and bar code number if possible, and the date.

13.1.5 Strategies for Enforcing Policy

In the event that an issue should arise, kindly inform the patron of the policy. It is not your job to justify the policy. Be patient, as eloquent as you can be, and stay calm, especially if the patron becomes belligerent. Bear in mind that back-up personnel to the Computer Lab staff can be found in the circulation department. There are also security guards on duty to help enforce our rules.

13.1.6 Summoning Security

The security number for use when paging is 22. Dial 80, wait for beep, and say, "Twenty-Two to computer Lab". This will signal to security that you need immediate assistance in the Computer Lab.

13.2 Telephone Answering

When the phone rings and the light flashes red; the call is internal. A green light indicates the call is external. When answering, state our department (computer Lab) AND your first name. When calls come in for Andie, please ask, "May I tell her who is calling", so she can greet them professionally.

Occasionally we will get inquiries as to whether a certain patron is in the Computer Lab or was in the Computer Lab. We never reveal that information. It is a matter of privacy and safety. The only thing we respond with is that we will pass a message if the person is there, but we do not verify that they are.

13.3 Staff/Volunteer Printouts

Due to excessive paper usage, staff must pay for more than 5 personal printouts per day.

13.4 No Downloads on the Check-in Computer

Do not install or download programs onto the check-in computer. These programs can include **spy-ware**, which make the PC run slower and interfere with the check-in processing.

13.5 Responding to Warrants

If a policeman questions you about a Computer Lab matter, locate a staff person from Circulation or Reference to assist you. Do not give out any information whatsoever until you have a witness.

14 Opening the Computer Lab

14.1 Powering up the computers

Under normal circumstances, the patron computers will power on automatically every day at 8:50 AM. The staff computers will do the same. The check-in computer will not. If, for some reason, the computers have failed to power on, it is safe to do so manually.

The check-in computer needs to be manually powered on. When you see a colorful screen with the current time (the Windows 10 login screen), click the mouse. The next step requires you to enter a name and password. The name is **mnlcirc1** and the password is **circ**. A minute or two later, the computer will finish loading and then you can start Polaris, which is the check-in software you need. Use the procedure in section 7.2 to open Polaris.

Note: The check-in computer is left on Thursday nights for updates. If you come in Friday morning, restart the check-in machine in order to ensure that all the updates were processed.

Refer to **When First Arriving, Checking-in, and Sending Messages** sections of this guide for additional information.

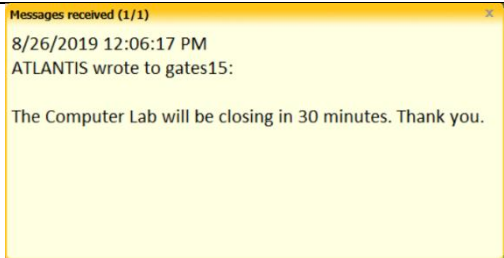
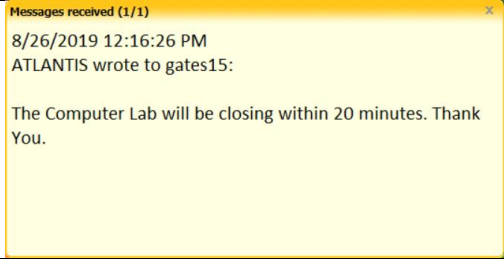
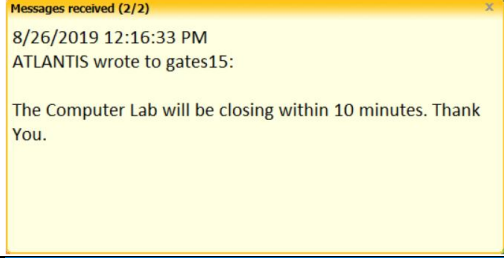
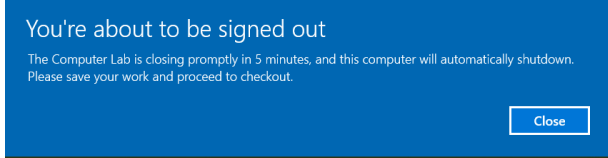
15 Closing the Computer Lab

15.1 Closure Warning Messages

The Computer Lab closes ½ hour before the library does. Beginning ½ hour before Lab closing time, several automated messages will appear on each computer to remind patrons that the Lab will be closing and that the computers will automatically shut down (see table below).

To supplement these messages, at 5 minutes to closing, the desk attendant or staff person will make a **verbal announcement** to the effect of: “The computers will be turning off in 5 minutes. Please make sure to save your work.”

If patrons inquire, tell them that this is an automatic process and you cannot make exceptions for them.

Time before Lab closing	Message	Picture
30 minutes	The Computer Lab will be closing within 30 minutes. Thank You.	
20 minutes	The Computer Lab will be closing within 20 minutes. Thank You.	
10 minutes	The Computer Lab will be closing within 10 minutes. Thank You.	
5 minutes	You're about to be signed out. The Computer Lab is closing promptly in 5 minutes, and this computer will automatically shutdown. Please save your work and proceed to checkout.	

2 minutes	You're about to be signed out. Windows will shut down in 2 minutes.	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p>You're about to be signed out</p> <p><small>Windows will shut down in 2 minutes.</small></p> <p><small>Shutdown will start on Monday, August 26, 2019 1:12:28 PM.</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Close</p> </div>
-----------	--	--

15.2 Automated Shutdown

The computers will automatically shut down at the Lab's closing time.

If patrons inquire, tell them that this is an automatic process and you cannot make exceptions for them.

15.3 Check-in Computer and Printer

The Computer Lab has a black and white laser jet printer, which is **never turned off**.

After the patron computers have all shut down, on the check-in computer, sign off of Polaris ILS and close all windows including the Command Center window. Then shut down the check-in computer.

*Note: Do **not** shutdown the check-in computer on Thursday evenings, but do turn off the monitor.*

15.4 Lab Daily Usage Logs

The Lab Daily Usage Log sheets need to be filed. Whoever puts the completed log sheets away for the day should check that all computers have a log-off time filled in. You can look to see when the computer was logged in next and make the previous log-off a minute earlier.

Put the pages in order from the first sheet to the last and staple them together.

Count the number of questions answered on the bottom of each page then add the totals together. Write it in a circle at the top of the front page and Label it "questions". The log sheets are filed in a folder marked "Lab Daily Usage Logs Need Entering" which is on the right side of the top drawer in the file cabinet beneath the printer. Someone will ultimately record how long each computer was in use and by how many people, which is why keeping accurate check-in information is important.

If the library or Computer Lab should close during your shift, due to weather or other emergency, write on the first page of the Lab Usage Log, what time period the Computer Lab closed. Late openings should also be noted.

If more than one **Fee Collection Record** sheet has been used for the day, staple them together. Place the sheet(s) on the middle staff desk.

15.5 Cleaning

With all patrons out of the Computer Lab and all of the computers turned off, only a few other things remain to be done in the final half hour. The most obvious of these is **cleaning**. In the cleaning supplies cabinet, there should be a container of disinfecting wipes that are used to wipe down the desktops, the keyboards, the mice, the keyboard trays, and the chairs. Do **not** clean the monitors with disinfecting wipes, as monitors require special cleaning solutions. Do

not leave the container of wipes with the lid open, as they will DRY OUT and will be useless. Be sure to cap the wipes when you are finished.

15.6 The Computer Lab Door

In the past, it was important to close the Computer Lab door for the night during the summer, in order to prevent the Computer Lab's air conditioner from malfunctioning. But this is no longer necessary. It can remain open at all times.

If you need to close the door for whatever reason, make sure you can turn the handle before closing it, as the button on the inside of the door can bang into the cabinet, causing it to become locked. If the door closes while locked, the door's key is located in circulation.

16 Class Preparation

The computer Lab periodically closes for class. Stay informed by checking the class schedule, as patrons will often ask, "Is there a class today?" This information is also found on the white board and on the door to the Computer Lab.

When a class is pending, the Computer Lab will close half an hour before the class starts. It is the duty of the check-in desk attendant to warn the patrons at the 30, 15, and 5-minute points prior to this closing using the Command Center program. The Computer Lab gives itself 30 minutes of preparation time while closed, so the first notification for a 6:00 class would be at 5:00 since we would close at 5:30.

Once the Computer Lab is closed, the staff will begin setting up for class.

After class, if the Computer Lab can reopen, Lab staff will use scripts to restart all computers and reset resolution on the computers. An announcement is made on the PA system that the Computer Lab has reopened.

17 Revision History

8/26/2019:

- Removed references to the Command Center app and the sending of messages from the check-in desk
- Removed section about providing custom "How-To" guides for patrons
- Added section on loaning computer class lesson plans to patrons
- Improved heading formatting so section numbers are automatically generated
- Section 4.2.2: Reservation computer is no longer there
- Section 4.2.2: Only one patron may be at a computer
- Section 4.2.5: Wi-Fi no longer requires barcode and PIN
- Section 6: We no longer post news items to the Blog
- Section 7.2: Polaris login steps have changed
- Section 10.4.1: Added counterfeit pen colors
- Section 15.1: Lab closure messages are now automated
- Section 15.1: Added table that lists the closure messages