



To: Students and Employees

Valley College Copyright Compliance Policy

Purpose

Valley College (“the College”) is committed to complying with U.S. copyright law (Title 17, United States Code) and educating students, faculty, and staff about the responsible use of copyrighted materials. This policy establishes expectations for the lawful use, reproduction, and distribution of copyrighted works and outlines consequences for violations.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and users of Valley College information technology systems and resources.

Copyright Overview

Copyright law protects original works of authorship, including but not limited to:

- Literary and academic works
- Music and audiovisual materials
- Software and digital content

Unauthorized use of copyrighted materials may infringe upon the rights of copyright holders.

Prohibited Conduct

The following activities are prohibited unless expressly permitted by law or license:

- Copying, downloading, or distributing copyrighted material without authorization
- Using peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing programs to share copyrighted content
- Uploading or transmitting copyrighted materials through institutional systems without permission
- Installing or using unlicensed software on College-owned or managed systems

Fair Use

Limited use of copyrighted material may be permissible under the “fair use” doctrine (Section 107 of U.S. copyright law). Fair use determinations must be made on a **case-by-case basis** considering:

1. Purpose and character of the use
2. Nature of the copyrighted work
3. Amount and substantiality used
4. Effect on the market value of the work

Individuals are responsible for ensuring their use qualifies as fair use.

Institutional Responsibilities

Valley College will:

- Maintain policies to discourage copyright infringement
- Respond to **DMCA notices** and take appropriate action

- Provide education and information regarding copyright compliance
 - Offer or identify legal alternatives for accessing copyrighted content
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Legal Alternatives

Students and employees can legally access music, movies, television, books, and software through licensed streaming and download services, authorized retailers, and College library resources. The College periodically reviews these legal alternatives and makes this information available to students.

Monitoring and Enforcement

The College reserves the right to monitor the use of its information technology resources in accordance with applicable laws and institutional policies.

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Loss of network or system access
- Disciplinary action under student or employee conduct policies
- Suspension, termination, or dismissal

Users who repeatedly infringe copyright will have their access to College network and information technology resources terminated in appropriate circumstances.

Legal Consequences

Unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may subject students and employees to civil and criminal liabilities.

Copyright infringement may subject individuals to:

- Civil penalties, including statutory damages
- Criminal fines and/or imprisonment in cases of willful infringement

Copyright infringement may result in civil penalties, including actual damages or statutory damages of \$750 to \$30,000 per work infringed, up to \$150,000 per work for willful infringement, and court costs and attorneys' fees. Willful infringement may also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense. See Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505, and 506.

Reporting Violations

Suspected violations of this policy should be reported to the Campus Director or designated copyright officer.

Copyright Officer

The Campus Director, or designee, serves as the College's copyright officer and provides guidance on copyright compliance.

Related Policies

- Student Code of Conduct
 - Acceptable Use / IT Policy
 - Disciplinary Procedures
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Additional Resources

For more information on copyright law:

- <https://www.copyright.gov>
 - <https://www.copyright.gov/help/faq>
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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.