

Public Code of Behavior Policy

Policy Created: 3/2021

Policy Reviewed: 3/2022;

Policy Purpose

The Library welcomes all residents and visitors and is dedicated to free and equal access to information, knowledge, and independent learning for our diverse community.

The Library seeks to provide its patrons, staff, and volunteers with a safe and pleasant experience in an atmosphere conducive to connecting, studying, reading, creating, and learning. The library recognizes its unique position and responsibility to educate, inform, and enlighten the community through free resources, programs, and services that enable everyone to participate fully in our democratic society as members of a knowledgeable and educated citizenry.

With public service as the highest priority, the Board of Trustees has established the rules and regulations governing the library's use such that all persons may enjoy its benefits. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all library patrons can expect to

- Receive courteous service;
- Be treated fairly and equitably by all library staff;
- Contact staff for reference, readers' advisory, and information services during operating hours;
- Have questions, comments, and concerns addressed promptly;
- Suggest new materials, programs, and services;
- Have staff make the library operate in the best interests of the taxpayers; and
- Have a safe, clean, and comfortable building.

Definitions and Expectations

Individuals visiting or using the library's facilities or services must comply with the following Public Code of Behavior. The library will uphold all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances regarding public library behavior.

1. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the public library while in the building.
2. Patrons may not interfere with the library's use by other patrons or interfere with staff performance of their duties. Interference includes, but is not limited to,
 - a. Use of loud, abusive, threatening, or insulting language or behavior, including language or behavior that offends, threatens, or insults groups or individuals based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other traits;
 - b. Inebriation;
 - c. Activities or behavior that may result in the injury or harm to any library patron or staff member, including challenging another person to fight or engaging in any fight; and

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- d. Photographing library users, volunteers, or staff without the Library Director's prior permission.
3. Patrons may not sexually harass other patrons or staff. Harassment includes
 - a. Making inappropriate personal comments or sexual advances;
 - b. Using obscene or lewd language or gestures;
 - c. Staring at or following a patron, volunteer, or staff member in a manner that reasonably can be expected to disturb the person; and
 - d. Exposing others to sexual internet content.
4. Solicitation is not allowed on library property. This includes selling, begging, or circulating petitions among patrons, volunteers, or staff members, except as otherwise allowed by law.
5. Patrons may consume food in designated locations and covered beverages throughout the library unless otherwise indicated or if a patron is using library equipment (laptops, gaming controllers, computers, etc.). Patrons are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
6. Other than service animals necessary for disabilities, bringing pets or animals into the library is not allowed, except as authorized by the Library Director for programming purposes.
7. Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times. Exceptions for children under 5.
8. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to other persons shall be required to leave the building and may return when the problem has been corrected. Offensive body odor, poor hygiene, or overpowering perfume or cologne may require a patron to leave the building until such a time as the condition can become resolved.
9. Use of skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, or hoverboards is not allowed in the library or on library property.
10. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches, or lighters, is prohibited on library grounds. Smoking, vaping, or use of e-cigarettes are not permitted within the library or on library property.
11. Any other behavior that could reasonably be expected to disturb other users or interfere with the library staff's performance of their duties is prohibited.
12. While the library encourages use by everyone, it cannot assume responsibility for the care and supervision of any patrons who are disabled or impaired to the extent that they cannot independently follow library rules or be safe without a caregiver. Patrons who require personal supervision or assistance must provide this care themselves. If a patron in the library requires such care and is without it, the library will attempt to contact a caregiver but may contact social services or the police.

Scope and Consequences

The above-enumerated rules are not intended to be a complete list of violations but are intended for guidance only. Library staff is authorized to expel persons who, advised of the regulations above, fail to comply with them. Such personnel also reserve the right to take appropriate actions against any other behavior which can reasonably be deemed offensive to library patrons or staff. Enforcement of these rules will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff designated by the director may temporarily suspend patron privileges for up to twenty-four hours, including restricting access to the library property, services, or programs for patrons who violate the public code of behavior. Return to the library will be discussed with the suspended patron and the Library Director.