

# Dependent Persons Policy

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Policy Reviewed:

## Policy Purpose

While the West Liberty Public Library is concerned for the safety of children or dependent adults on library grounds, the library does not act in loco parentis (in place of parents). A parent, legal guardian, teacher, custodian, or caregiver is responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of children or vulnerable adults during their library visits.

## Definitions

Dependent persons include children under the age of 18 and dependent adults. Dependent adults are defined by Iowa Code 235B.2.4 as a person eighteen years of age or older who is unable to protect the person's own interests, or unable to adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet essential human needs.

Dependent persons are subject to library rules and policies concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor. A dependent person capable of following these rules and policies and does not require staff assistance beyond standard library services is welcome to use the library independently; however, responsibility for dependent persons using the library rests with the parent/guardian. Any dependent person who cannot follow these rules and policies and requires staff assistance beyond standard library services must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, teacher, custodian, or caregiver. If a dependent person is left unattended in the library, staff will attempt to contact the appropriate caregiver before contacting the relevant authorities.

- During library hours, when the safety of an unattended child or vulnerable adult is in doubt, library staff will attempt to contact the caregiver before calling the appropriate authorities. In the case of an immediate safety concern, staff will contact 911 immediately and then try to contact the caregiver. Staff will stay with the person until help arrives.

Library staff members are not responsible for children interacting with or leaving the library with persons who are not their appropriate caregivers.

## Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults After Hours

In the event a dependent person is still at the library after the library closes to the public, the Librarian in Charge and one other staff member will wait thirty minutes, and then the appropriate authorities will be called to take charge of the situation. Attempts will be made during that thirty minutes to reach a caregiver or parent, but in no instance will staff take anyone home. If staff are concerned for the safety of a child or vulnerable adult at any time, they may contact the appropriate authorities immediately.