

SAFETY POLICY

While on library premises, persons shall be engaged in library-related activities and use appropriate behavior. Any behavior which is disruptive to library use is deemed to be inappropriate. Library users are required to follow the Patron Code of Conduct. The library is not responsible for any personal thefts or injuries that occur on library premises.

STAFF SUPPORT

Library staff who have acted on their best judgment in confronting a person will be supported by the Director and Library Board of Trustees.

Any staff member who observes or receives complaints of inappropriate behavior may:

- Handle the problem directly with the patron. Staff should use their judgment as to whether the situation requires assistance from another staff member.
- Immediately telephone the police if the situation is of a severe, violent or emergency medical situation.
- Contact the Director if the situation is of a nature that the staff member chooses not to confront patron.
- At any time contact the police if the patron is not responding to staff requests to conform to the Code of Conduct.

In all cases the Director should be notified as soon as possible when a staff member confronts a library user who violates the Code of Conduct. The Director will be responsible for notifying the Library Board if necessary.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Incident reports must be completed and submitted to the Director within 24 hours of any incident which requires staff to contact outside assistance such as police, and in other situations in which the administration and staff should be informed because of possible repercussions. Copies of all reports will be kept on file with the Director, and a log of banned and problem patrons, including the date, details of offense, and period of expulsion will be kept at the Circulation Desk. This information will be available for staff and police to review in case of repeat offenders. In addition to written reports, staff members are encouraged to talk through upsetting incidents to share in a confidential setting their knowledge of possible problems with other staff who might be involved.

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT - MINOR OFFENSES

The following shall be deemed "inappropriate" and considered to be minor offenses:

Sleeping; excessive and disruptive conversations; eating or drinking from open containers in a public area of the library, except while participating in library programs; monopolizing unreasonable numbers of library materials at any given time; unauthorized canvassing, selling, soliciting, or engaging in any other commercial activity; violating Internet and computer policies; excessive staring at patrons or staff; preventing staff from normal, reasonable activities; being in a state of intoxication; smoking; bringing any animal into the library, except working animals which assist the disabled; and other activities not listed as Major Offenses which are inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying, use of library materials, and other similar conduct normally associated with the use of public library facilities.

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TREATMENT OF MINOR OFFENSES

- 1 warning for first infraction of any offense. Patron will be made aware of Code of Conduct and asked to comply.
- Second infraction within 30 days results in removal from the library premise for 1 day. Parents of children under 18 will be notified in writing when their child commits a second infraction and has been removed from the library.

Third infraction within 60 days or continuous repeat infractions may result in banning from the library premises for not less than 2 weeks or more than 6 months at the discretion of the Library Director.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR – MAJOR OFFENSES

Any persons violating the following rules will be immediately removed from the building, the police will be contacted, and the person may be banned for a period of up to 6 months at the discretion of the Director:

Stealing, defacing or damaging library property; abusive, indecent, profane or intoxicated conversation and/or behavior; committing any crime, misdemeanor, or violation of a municipal ordinance; and knowingly entering non-public areas of library.

BANNING PROCEDURE

After it is determined that a person should be banned:

- a. Director will consult with staff involved in the incident and provide a written decision
- b. The written decision will outline the period during which the patron will be banned from the library and will specify the reasons for the determination. The patron may be banned for a period from 2 weeks to 6 months at the discretion of the Director, depending on the nature and the seriousness of the offense which required removal, the extent of damage or disruption caused, any history of prior infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.
- c. The patron and all staff will be notified in writing of the reasons for and length of the banning. A copy will also be sent to the police and to the Library Board Chair.
- d. The Director may review or reconsider the decision upon written request of the patron and may shorten or terminate the banning period if information submitted by the patron warrants such modification. The Director will respond in writing and notify the individual of the determination of the appeals process.

REPEAT OFFENDERS

Any person who enters or remains on library premises after having been notified by an authorized individual not to do so, and any person who enters or remains on the library premises during the period in which he or she has been banned from the library, will be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing.

In the event that a person whose banned period has expired or been lifted, but who continues to exhibit any of the same behaviors upon readmission to the library, such person will be permanently banned from the library with no further possibility of reinstatement.

PATRON CODE OF CONDUCT

The following actions are prohibited on library property:

- Annoying, harassing, or threatening another person
- Physical, sexual or verbal abuse of other library users or of library staff
- Carrying weapons of any type unless authorized by law
- Stealing, defacing, or destroying library property
- Interfering with the free passage of others
- Behaving in a disorderly, loud, or disruptive manner
- Playing audio equipment loudly enough to disturb others
- Soliciting/selling/campaigning
- Interfering with others' use of the library through poor personal hygiene
- Leaving children second grade or younger or vulnerable adults unsupervised or unattended
- Bringing animals or vehicles into the library except as required for young children or persons with disabilities
- Skateboarding/roller-blading
- Remaining inside the library when it is not open to the public
- Violating any federal, state, and/or local laws and directives

SPECIFICS TO PATRON CODE OF CONDUCT

UNATTENDED MINORS:

Children in the second grade or younger must be accompanied at all times by a parent or guardian. The child's parent will be contacted if the child is left unattended. The library reserves the right to turn over to the proper authorities minors (under age 18) left unattended for extended periods of time or left after library hours.

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Adults in the Children's Room not involved in appropriate use of children's library materials and observed by staff to be spending an unnecessary and unusual amount of time in the Children's Room, will be asked to use other areas of the library. If the person does not comply or repeats, consequences will follow those under "TREATMENT OF MAJOR OFFENSES/ INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR."

THEFT AND VANDALISM / ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

The police will be called when a patron attempts to steal or maliciously destroy library and/or personal property belonging to staff and/or patrons. The library will prosecute anyone who steals or maliciously destroys library property. When other illegal activities (e.g, indecent exposure) are committed by a patron, the library will prosecute.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

An emergency situation can be defined as any situation in which a person's actions present an imminent danger to the life or safety of him/herself, others or to library property. Such incidents may include assault and other crimes of violence, or the threat or attempt to commit such crimes. Library staff will call the police immediately if such behavior should occur. In the case of an emergency medical situation, library staff will offer assistance and contact emergency personnel if necessary.