

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Purpose: To establish guidelines for the protection of staff and all who use the library

Reviewed/Revised: December 2015, November 2022

Related Documents: Library Incident Report Form

STAFF OBLIGATIONS

Library staff may require a patron to leave the premises, call law enforcement, or ultimately ban a patron from the library for noncompliance with the following Code of Conduct guidelines, for exhibiting other publicly inappropriate or illegal behavior, or for a patron who engages in any activity which materially disrupts the use of library facilities, collections, or services by patrons or materially disrupts the ability of library staff to perform their duties. When possible, library staff should strive to resolve a violation in a reasonable manner before taking action against noncompliance.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Alcohol/drugs: Alcohol or illegal drugs may not be brought into the library, nor may persons under the influence of either use the library.

Animals: Only animals trained (or in training) as service animals are permitted in the library. A service animal is defined in the American Disabilities Act (ADA) as a dog, or in some cases a miniature horse, individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the animal must be directly related to the person's disability. If a particular service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or if it is not housebroken, that animal may be excluded and be asked to be removed from the library.

Support, therapy, comfort, or companion animals are not considered service animals under the ADA. These terms are used to describe animals that provide comfort just by being with a person. Because they have not been trained to perform a specific job or task, they do not qualify as service animals under the ADA and are not allowed in the library.

Disorderly conduct: Harassment of library staff or other users or other behavior that disrupts library use is not acceptable. Disorderly conduct includes (1) brawling or fighting; (2) disturbing an assembly; or (3) engaging in offensive, obscene, abusive, boisterous, harassing, or noisy actions or using offensive, obscene, or abusive language which may harass or arouse alarm, anger, or resentment in others.

Dress: Shirts must be worn at all times, and no bare feet are allowed.

Food/beverages: Food and beverages are not allowed in the main library area. Food and beverages are allowed in the meeting room, entryway, and staffing areas.

Loitering: Entrances and doorways must be kept clear at all times.

Noise: The library is a busy environment and as such a certain amount of ambient noise is to be expected. Unreasonably loud talking or other loud sources of noise are not allowed. Cell phone conversations are prohibited, but occasional exceptions may be made by library staff.

Smoking/chewing: Tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) cannot be used in the library.

Sporting equipment: Use of sporting equipment, including riding skateboards and skates, is prohibited.

Theft/damage to property: Intentional damage or attempts at theft will be prosecuted according to Minnesota Statutes 609.541. Clipping coupons, cutting articles out of magazines, removing pages from any books or magazines, hacking or altering computer settings, writing on, scratching and/or defacement of materials, furnishings, or equipment in any intentional manner constitutes theft or damage to property.

INCIDENT REPORTING AND BAN PROCEDURES

1. A patron who engages in any activity which violates the library's Code of Conduct policy shall cease such activity immediately upon verbal request by library staff. Library staff will record instances in which patrons disrupt the library in an Incident Report form. Staff will notify the Library Director immediately (or as soon as feasible) of the incident and the action taken.
2. If, following a verbal request to cease, the patron fails or refuses to comply or responds to the request in an abusive or aggressive fashion, the patron will be required to leave library premises immediately for the balance of that calendar day. If the patron fails to leave, the police will be called for an escort. Whenever possible, the Library Director will notify the patron in writing of this first violation of the code of conduct and warn that a second violation will result in a ban of up to one (1) year.
3. Parents or guardians of minors will be notified in writing after each recorded instance in which a minor is required to leave the library and advised of the consequences of any further recorded instances. If a minor is asked to leave the premises three (3) times during a thirty-day (30) period, they will be banned from the library for the period of thirty (30) calendar days.
4. In cases of egregious violations of the code of conduct, an immediate request to leave the premises and/or notification of police will result. In those instances, when it is apparent that the patron's behavior constitutes an imminent serious threat to Library property, other library patrons, or staff, the Library Director may choose to bypass the preceding steps and legally ban the patron for one (1) year.
5. In the event a patron banned from the library attempts to enter library premises during any such period of exclusion, the police will be notified and requested to issue a Trespass Notice.

Whenever possible, patrons with revoked privileges will be notified in writing. A patron whose privilege(s) has been limited or revoked may appeal the limitation or revocation of the privilege(s) by filing a written appeal with the Library Director within ten (10) days from the date of issuance of the written revocation. The appeal will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees, whose decision is final. Parents or guardians wishing to appeal the revocation of privileges for a minor may do so following the same procedure. The Library Director will contact the patron making such an appeal by letter and inform the patron of the decision of the Board.

When a patron's banned period ends, the Library Director will send a letter to the patron informing the patron of the date the patron may return to the library. The letter will include the Code of Conduct policy. If, upon to return to the library, the patron violates the code of conduct, the patron will be banned again for a period of one (1) year.

Banning denies the patron access to the building, grounds, and services of the library, including all virtual assistance.