



POLICY NO: 300.4

SUBJECT: Patron Behavior

## 1. Introduction

The Northfield Township Area Library is open for specific and designated civic, educational and cultural uses, including reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, and using Library materials. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the Library facilities in an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and excellent service, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted this Patron Behavior Policy. The purpose of the Library Patron Behavior Policy is to assist the Library in fulfilling its mission as a community resource enriching life, stimulating intellectual curiosity, fostering literacy, and encouraging an informed citizenry.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all buildings – interior and exterior – and all grounds controlled and operated by the Library and to all persons entering in or on the premises, unless otherwise specified.

## 2. Rules for a Safe Environment

- A. Violations of Law Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation is prohibited.
- B. Weapons Carrying pistols, guns or other weapons is prohibited, except if such gun or pistol is (1) specifically permitted or (2) exempt from local regulation by law.
- C. Alcohol; Drugs Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.
- D. Under the Influence Persons noticeably under the influence of any controlled substance or alcoholic or intoxicating liquor are not allowed on Library property.
- E. Use of Library Buildings and Grounds
  - 1. Use of skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, or other wheeled form of recreational equipment is not allowed in the Library or on Library premises.
  - 2. Library patrons must park bicycles or other vehicles only in authorized areas.
  - 3. All doors and entrances must remain obstacle-free.
  - 4. Animals or personal transport vehicles are not permitted in the Library other than those required by persons with disabilities, those used in law enforcement or for Library programming.



5. Smoking inside Library facilities is prohibited. Smoking is also prohibited within 20 feet of the building entrances. Smokers must use exterior ashtrays and refrain from littering with cigarette butts.
6. Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times inside the Library and on Library property.
7. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches, and lighters, is prohibited inside the Library.
8. Patrons shall not be permitted in any areas designated as "staff only" or in the basement unless otherwise permitted by the Library Director.
9. School groups using the Library must have approval of the Library Director and must have a teacher and other appropriate staff present to ensure that the students use the Library in conformance with these rules.
10. Patrons may use the Library's telephone for emergencies only.

### **3. Rules for Personal Behavior**

A. Personal Property Personal property brought into the Library is subject to the following:

1. The Library personnel may limit the number of parcels carried into the Library.
2. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.
3. The Library does not guarantee storage for personal property.

Personal possessions must not take up seating or space if needed by others.

B. Food and Beverages Food and drink is prohibited inside of the Library building.

C. Unauthorized Use Patrons must leave the Library promptly at closing time. Further, any patron whose privileges to use the Library have been denied may not enter the Library. Any patron whose privileges have been limited may not use the Library in any manner that conflicts with those limits placed on the patron by the Director, his or her designee, or the Library Board.

D. Engaging in Proper Library Activities Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, and using Library materials shall be required to leave the building.

E. Considerate Use The following behavior is prohibited in the Library and in the Library Building.



1. Spitting;
  2. Running;
  3. Putting feet or legs on furniture;
  4. Using obscene or threatening language or gestures.
  5. Climbing trees
- F. Panhandling or Soliciting Panhandling or soliciting Library staff or patrons for money, products, or services inside the Library or on Library property is prohibited. Sales of products or services that are incidental to Library programming may be permitted if approved in advance by the Library Director.
- G. Interference with Staff Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties in the Library or on Library property. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes or forces the attention of staff for an inappropriate period of time, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.
- H. Campaigning and Similar Activities Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, and canvassing are prohibited on Library premises.
- I. Sales Selling merchandise on Library property without prior permission from the Director is prohibited.
- J. Distributions; Postings Distributing or posting printed materials/literature on Library property not in accordance with Library policy is prohibited.
- K. Restrooms Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, sleeping, shaving, hair cutting or trimming, bathing, and sexual activity is prohibited.
- L. Harassment Staring, photographing, following, stalking, harassing, arguing with, threatening, or behaving in a manner that (1) can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while in the Library or on Library property or (2) interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job is prohibited.
- M. Loud Noise Producing or allowing any loud, unreasonable, or disturbing noises that interfere with other patrons' use of the Library or which can be reasonably expected to disturb other persons or have the intent of annoying other persons, including yelling, cheering, talking (with others or in monologues) or noises from electronic, entertainment, and communication devices, such as cell phones, headphones, and radio, is prohibited



- N. Body Odor Offensive body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume, or cologne that causes a nuisance is prohibited.
- O. Cell Phones Cell phone use is prohibited in the Library. Those patrons desiring to use cell phones must use the phones outside of the Library buildings. Cell phones shall be placed on silent mode upon entering the Library.

#### 4. Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property

- A. Care of Library Property Patrons must not deface, vandalize, or improperly remove Library materials, equipment, furniture, buildings, or Library grounds .
- B. Internet Use Patrons must abide by established time limitations and all other provisions of the Library Internet Use Policy.
- C. Equipment Library phones and staff computers are for staff use only.
- D. Authorized Lending Library materials may only be removed from premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
- E. Restrooms Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.

#### 5. Disciplinary Process for Library Facilities

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to Library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. Incident Reports Library Staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges: Unless otherwise provided in this Policy, (see Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
  - 1. *Initial Violation:* Library patrons observed violating this policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If he or she refuses, police may be called.



2. *Subsequent Violations:* The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security: Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical or other harassment, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
1. *Initial Violation:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges. The Incident Report shall specify the nature of the violation.
  2. *Subsequent Violations:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director or the Director's authorized designee, may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- D. Reinstatement: The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Director or the Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated.

## **6. Right of Appeal**

Patrons may appeal a decision to limit or revoke privileges by sending a written appeal to the Library Board within 10 working days of the date the privileges were revoked or limited. The appeal should be sent to the President of the Library Board. The decision of the Library Board is final.