

## **Camden County Library District Policy Manual**

### **Section 2. Operating Policies Subsection 17. Patron Behavior Policy**

#### **Patron Behavior Policy**

The purpose of a patron Behavior Policy is to ensure that the library has a pleasant and productive environment for its users for study, research, and recreational reading. All patrons shall have a fair and equitable opportunity to the quiet use and enjoyment of the library's services, materials, and facilities without being subjected to unreasonable interference or disturbance by others.

The library is responsible for establishing rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of library patrons, volunteers, and staff, as well as preserving and protecting the Library's materials, equipment, facility, and grounds. For the comfort and safety of our patrons, volunteers, staff, and the protection of Library property, the following actions are examples of conduct not allowed:

Engaging in activity in violation of Federal, State, local, other applicable law, or Library policy.

Viewing of material that may be disturbing to others within viewing distance.

The possession or use of weapons is prohibited on Library property and in the course of Library related activities except for law enforcement and/or security personnel while in engaged in official duties. Weapons include any pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, or other firearms, BB or pellet gun, Taser or stun gun, bomb, grenade, mine, or other explosive or incendiary devices, ammunition, archery equipment, dagger, stiletto, switchblade knife, or knife exceeding five (5) inches in length, nunchaku and metal knuckles or other similar weapons that are capable of causing death or bodily injury and is commonly used with the intent to cause death or bodily injury, and any concealed weapon. Exception: a weapon or firearm may be transported into a parking area with a person's personal vehicle if the weapon or firearm and its ammunition remain locked in a case out of plain view within the parked vehicle. "Case" is defined as a glove compartment or console that completely encases the weapon or firearm and its ammunition, the trunk of the vehicle, or a weapon/firearm carrying box, shipping box, or other containers. The weapon/firearm may only be removed for the limited purpose of storage or retrieval from within the trunk of the vehicle. A weapon/firearm must first be unloaded before removal from the vehicle.

For the safety and security of our patrons and staff, the Library prohibits hazardous materials and substances from being brought onto the Library premises except for Library business. This includes a substance or combination of substances which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may cause or contribute to

an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness or pose a present or potential threat to human health, safety, welfare, or to the environment when improperly stored, transported, used or disposed of or otherwise managed. Those substances considered to be hazardous materials shall include, but shall not be limited to:

Any explosive or flammable material which might endanger the health of patrons, staff, or the general safety of the Library. Some examples of items in this category would include: any kind of ammunition or munition or related mechanisms, gases and gas containers, flammable liquid fuels, any kind of firework, paint containers, and materials. Any chemical or toxic substance, such as acids and alkalies, corrosive or bleaching substances, disabling or incapacitating sprays, radioactive materials, nuclear weapons, poisons, infectious or biologically hazardous materials, e.g., contaminated blood or other bodily fluids, bacteria and/or viruses.

Being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, and/or selling, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal drugs.

Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, volunteers, or staff, including stalking, staring, lurking, offensive touching, engaging in or soliciting any obscene acts, such as sex acts and indecent exposure.

Failing to provide proper supervision of children.

Distribution of leaflets, survey taking, collecting signatures on petitions, solicitation, fund-raising, proselytizing, and similar activities in the library as described in the Solicitation Policy. If engaging in these activities on library grounds, patrons may not be disturbed by such activities as they enter or exit the building.

Mutilation of library materials by marking, underlining, removing pages, removing electronic detection devices, or in any way defacing library property. This includes, but is not limited to, furnishings, walls, machines, elevators, etc.

Removal of library materials without Library staff authorization.

Tampering with or intentionally damaging library computer hardware, software, printer, operating systems, or other associated equipment.

Entering unauthorized areas, remaining in the building after closing, or when requested to leave during emergency situations due to disruptive behavior.

Disruptive behavior such as fighting or challenging to fight, pushing, shoving, throwing things, rowdiness, running, excessive noise, vandalism, or such behavior is not in accordance with the normal use of the library.

Creating disruptive noises, such as loud talking, screaming, or banging on computer keyboards.

Gambling

Littering

Bringing in garbage, articles with a foul odor, or articles which, alone or in their aggregate, impede the use of the library by other users.

Using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others.

Cell phone and other electronic device usage that impinges the rights of others is considered disruptive behavior. Talking on cell phones is prohibited, except in designated areas. Staff may allow talking on cell phones in certain areas, such as at computers if the situation warrants it. This would be typically done only for technical support while working on a computer. Permission must be granted for this to occur and will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Granting of such privileges once not grant this privilege in future library visits.

Patrons will be asked to silence their phones at the start of each program.

Smoking, the use of chewing tobacco, and electronic smoking devices is prohibited.

Entering the library with an uncovered beverage. Coffee cups with lids, water or soft drink bottles with a screw-on top, soft drink cans, and drink containers with a lid and straw are examples of acceptable covered beverages in designated areas.

Consumption of food outside of designated areas.

Concealing library materials for the exclusive use of an individual or group.

Refusal to abide by library regulations regarding the return of materials and payment of fines or fees.

Shaving, bathing, laundering clothes, loitering, sexual activities, or any other non-customary use of public restrooms are prohibited. Non-customary use includes occupying the restroom more than five (5) minutes at the inconvenience of other patrons at locations where only one (1) restroom is available.

Entering the library with equipment that presents a hazard. This includes, but is not limited to: bicycles, grocery carts, motor vehicles, etc.

**In addition:**

The Library has designated areas that are primarily for the use of children/teens under the age of 18. Adults, age 18 and older, are prohibited from those areas unless they are the parent or legal guardian accompanying their minor child or legal ward; they are offering tutor services

to a child/teen or selecting materials for a child/teen.

The Library has designated programs that are primarily for children under the age of 18. Adults, age 18 and older, are prohibited from attending these programs unless they are accompanying their child or permission is granted from library staff (i.e., as for training purposes).

Patrons who are disturbed by another patron's actions must notify staff immediately. Staff is instructed to have the offending patron cease the disturbing behavior.

The Library reserves the right to inspect the contents of all bags, purses, briefcases, and backpacks, etc for library materials.

Children nine (9) years and under may not be left unattended as provided in the Unattended Child Policy section of General Policies.

Users are not permitted to leave personal belongings when they leave the building. The Library is not responsible for any loss of user's personal belongings through theft or otherwise.

Bulky items that take up excessive space are not permitted in the library or on library grounds.

Animals, other than specifically trained animals used as aids by persons with disabilities, are not permitted in the library.

Roller skates, rollerblades, skateboards, heelies, and heeie-type shoes, cleats, and other similar equipment may not be worn in the library or used on library property.

Patrons whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to others may be required to leave the building.

Patrons must have proper clothing and must wear footwear.

Furniture may not be rearranged.

The Library reserves the right to impose time limits upon continuous use of library equipment.

**Persons who violate the above rules are subject to the withholding of library privileges as follows:**

**First Offense:** One (1) warning, then are asked to leave the library for the remainder of the day.

**Second Offense:** Library privileges will be suspended for one (1) week.

**Subsequent Offense:** Library privileges will be suspended for a time period to be determined by the Library Director.

Egregious offenses, such as breaking Missouri or Federal laws on Library property, may immediately escalate the length of the suspension, as determined by the Library Director or, in their absence, Business Manager, IT Manager, or PR/Marketing Manager.

Any staff member has the power to ask a person to leave the premises for one (1) day. Branch managers and department heads have to power to suspend privileges for one (1) week. The Library Director may suspend privileges for up to one (1) month or the next Board Meeting, whichever is longer, and request the Board of Directors to suspend privileges for longer than one month. The authority to suspend privileges for longer than one (1) month lies solely with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may place conditions on the requirements for readmission to District properties.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, any person may, without prior notice or warning, be immediately removed from the Library if his or her presence or conduct on the premises poses an immediate and imminent danger to any person or property.

Persons whose library privileges are withheld for more than one (1) month pursuant to the above rules may appeal to the Board of Library Trustees by communicating within thirty (30) days after the library's mailing of notice of withholding of privileges. The Board shall receive and review the appeal at the next regularly scheduled meeting and respond in writing within ten (10) days following the meeting.

The word "teen" may be used interchangeably with the phrase "young adult" in some locations.

This policy is not all-inclusive of all prohibited activities. Staff has the right to make judgments on what constitutes a violation of the policy.

The Board of Library Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

**I have read and fully understand the Patron Behavior Policy and have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.**

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**Name**

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**Date**

Approved July 19, 2021