

Policies

STANDARD OF CONDUCT FOR LIBRARY PATRONS

**Approved: 11-10-82. Reviewed and modified 2-17-99. Reviewed and reaffirmed 3-17-04; reviewed and modified 5-21-08, 6-17-09, 6-16-10, 2-15-12, 4/15/2015; 06/19/2019; temporarily replaced by COVID-19 Restrictions/Protocols version 05/20/2020; 10/18/23
Review Date: 2028**

- All patrons are expected to respect the rights, property, health, and safety of others using or working at the library in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number. The library is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive place and as an institution promotes and supports literacy, learning and innovation.

Examples of Inappropriate Behavior:

- Noisy Behavior:
 - Loud talking & whistling
 - Disruptive use of cellular phones
 - Use of MP3 players/iPods, or other personal electronic devices that disturbs others
- Behavior disruptive or a hindrance to public use of the library or posing a potential health hazard:
 - Harassment or physical, sexual, or verbal abuse of library users or staff, which may include initiating unwanted conversations, impeding access to the building, and swearing or profanity directed at others.
 - Rowdy behavior such as fighting on library property, running in the building, and throwing objects.
 - Excessive socializing and/or excessive public displays of affection.
 - Failure to meet a reasonable standard of personal hygiene.
 - Failure to wear shirts/blouses and shoes. Swimsuits must be covered.
 - Sleeping in the library or on library property.
 - Misuse of library furnishings, e.g., placing feet on furniture, or sitting on chair backs, counters, tables, or on the floor, unless permitted in a program or activity space.
 - Blocking aisles with backpacks and personal belongings, or storing them in locations other than chairs and counters.
 - Exceeding posted seating limits for tables and study rooms.
- Abuse/vandalism of library facilities, materials or equipment, including attempting to access computer programs or computer system software restricted to staff use.

Examples of Inappropriate Behavior (continued):

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- Failure to follow rules and regulations:
 - Any unlawful behavior, such as theft, gambling, exhibitionism/flashing, loitering (including refusal to leave the library promptly at closing), possession, sale or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances on library property.
 - Possession of firearms, explosives, or any item deemed a dangerous weapon, as specified in the Code of Ordinances for the City of Merrill. Weapons will be allowed on library premises at the library director's discretion, if used for programming and/or informational and educational purposes.
 - Use of tobacco products on library property.
 - Irresponsible behavior related to food or beverages (permitted in all areas except the Local History and Genealogy Room); patrons may be held responsible for damage caused to library property arising from such behavior, and may consequentially lose library eating or drinking privileges.
 - Distributing literature, taking surveys, asking patrons or employees to sign petitions, or similar activities.
 - Soliciting in the library or on library grounds, except as allowed under Meeting Room policies.
 - Bringing animals, except those used to aid people with disabilities, into the library unless part of a library-sponsored program. Animals may not be left unattended on library property.

Parents or other legal guardians are responsible for the behavior of their minor children in the library. Also see the library's "Unattended Children in the Library" policy.

Procedures to be used by staff in enforcing this standard:

Library staff will intervene in situations that present a danger to the safety of people or property, interfere with the rights of others, constitute disturbing or inappropriate use of the library, and/or involve the commission of illegal acts.

1. Request that the patron(s) immediately discontinue any inappropriate behavior.
2. If the disruptive behavior does not improve, speak to the patron again.
3. If the disruptive behavior still does not improve after having spoken to the patron(s) a second time, contact a supervisor.
4. If a supervisor is not available, explain to the patron that s/he/they must leave or the police will be called.
5. Call the police.

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When an individual's inappropriate conduct is serious or repeated, the library Director may, at his/her discretion, restrict that individual's access to the library and/or suspend or revoke library services to the person. Individuals who violate federal or state laws or local ordinances may be prosecuted.