

Patron Behavior Policy



DarienLibrary

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Purpose

In an effort to provide a comfortable and safe environment for all Library patrons, the Board of Trustees of the Darien Library has established a Library Patron Behavior Policy. The Policy is designed to provide clear and reasonable guidelines governing patron behavior within the Library and on the Library premises.

Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior includes behavior within the Library or on Library premises that interferes with the use of the Library by other patrons, creates a risk of injury to other patrons or Library personnel, interferes with the work or affects the work environment of Library personnel, or creates a risk of damage to Library property. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

1. Use of profanity, abusive or threatening language
2. Threatening gestures or unwanted physical contact
3. Possession of weapons of any kind, except by law enforcement officers
4. Damaging, defacing or theft of any Library property or materials
5. Possession or use of alcohol except as authorized at Library functions
6. Possession or use of illegal drugs, narcotics, or controlled substances
7. Use of tobacco or nicotine products, including e-cigarettes, within twenty-five (25) feet of Library doors
8. Viewing pornographic material
9. Leaving children under the age of eight (8) unattended in the Library (please see Appendix A)
10. Unreasonable noise levels including shouting, loud talking, or disruptive conversation, allowing ringing cell phones or engaging in loud cell phone conversation outside designated areas
11. Lack of personal hygiene that interferes with the use and enjoyment of the Library by other patrons or interferes with the work of Library personnel
12. Bringing animals into the Library, except registered service animals or those who are part of a program
13. Leaving unattended animals on Library property

Enforcement

Violation of the Policy may result in escalating responses ranging from limitation or revocation of the patron's Library privilege(s), to a patron's removal from the premises, or criminal prosecution if the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law. Library staff may ask to examine users' handbags, briefcases, or other packages to help assure compliance with checkout procedures; the Library reserves the right to confiscate unattended backpacks, duffle bags, etc. Repeated violations of the Policy will warrant increasingly severe consequences.

The Director or her authorized designee, upon staff recommendation, may limit or revoke entirely the patron's Library privileges (up to and including denying the patron access to the Library premises on a permanent basis as determined in the sole discretion of the Director or her authorized designee). Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing and shall be effective upon being sent to the patron's address on file with the Library. A patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked may appeal the limitation or revocation of the privileges by filing a written appeal with the Director within ten (10) days from the date of the issuance of the written revocation. The appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees, whose decision with respect to the appeal and any related matters is final. Prior to any Library privileges being reinstated,

the Director or her authorized designee will make a determination, in their sole discretion, as to whether such reinstatement is appropriate. If such reinstatement is determined to be appropriate, the patron will be required to attend a meeting with the Director to review this Library Patron Behavior Policy, and agree to a course of conduct and subsequent consequences should the Policy be violated again. The Director will document this agreement in writing before the patron's privileges may be reinstated.

The Director or her authorized designee may contact law enforcement if a patron refuses to comply with a request to leave the Library premises, or if conduct is suspected to violate a local, state, or federal law.

Appendix A: Unattended Children Policy

Children under the age of twelve (12) must be accompanied by an adult while on Library premises. Children under the age of eight (8) must have a parent or caregiver with them at all times. Legal guardians and/or caregivers above the age of fourteen (14) may assume responsibility for a child while in the Library.

Unattended adults (adults without a child) are not allowed in the Children's Library.

Adopted by the Darien Library Board of Trustees on May 16, 2022.