

## Code of Conduct

Salem Public Library encourages the use of its facility for learning, enrichment, and the legitimate use of the Library's resources and services. In order to preserve that opportunity, we ask patrons to be respectful of each other and behave in a manner that does not disrupt other patrons or staff. Any behavior that disrupts the orderly use of the Library is prohibited.

This includes, but is not limited to, any behavior that interferes with:

- the use of Library property, materials, and services by other patrons;
- the ability of Library employees to conduct Library business;
- the safety of Library patrons and employees; and/or
- the Library's materials, facilities, or property.

Examples of prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Leaving unsupervised or unattended children who are unable to care for themselves
- Loitering in the building or on the grounds
- Making unreasonable noise including, but not limited to, loud talking, singing, other loud or disruptive noise, or noise from cell phone or audio/visual equipment usage
- Using profane, obscene, or abusive language
- Making racial, ethnic, religious, gender, or sexual orientation epithets
- Harassing patrons or staff, including without limitation deliberate or repeated language or behavior that is intimidating, hostile, and/or offensive, or that adversely impacts staff work performance or patron use of the Library
- Intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing property belonging to the Library, another patron, or staff
- Running or engaging in horseplay
- Lying down or sleeping, including giving the appearance of sleeping
- Littering
- Abusing or improperly using furniture, equipment, or materials
- Soliciting and/or panhandling Library patrons or staff, including but not limited to soliciting money and/or donations, and/or selling or attempting to sell merchandise to Library patrons or staff
- Posting or distributing literature without permission
- Gambling
- Blocking entrance to and exit from the building; monopolizing/obstructing space, seating tables, or equipment to the exclusion of others.
- Trespassing, violating an eviction, entering library property when banned, or remaining on Library property after having been restricted or directed to leave

- Fighting, challenging someone to fight, physical abuse, or assault
- Petitioning or attempting to collect signatures within the library or intimidating/harassing users or, in any way, obstructing the library's entrances, walkways, driveways or parking lot while attempting to petition or solicit signatures.
- Engaging in or soliciting a sexual act, or indecent exposure
- Improper dress including bare feet, no shirt, and uncovered swimsuits
- Vandalizing Library facilities or equipment
- Being under the influence, selling, using, or possessing alcohol or drugs.
- Bathing, shaving, or washing clothes on the premises
- Health or hygiene conditions that constitute a nuisance to library patrons or staff, such as strong or offensive body odor
- Bringing animals other than service animals to the library
- Smoking, using tobacco, or using electronic nicotine delivery systems or similar products, such as e-cigarettes, in the library or within 50 feet of the public entrance
- Using roller blades, roller skates, skateboards, spiked shoes, cleats, or other sports equipment in the Library or on Library property
- Entering unauthorized workspaces or work areas or other non-public areas
- Taking photographs and/or recording videos of Library staff or patrons without their permission
- Possessing weapons of any kind, either concealed or in plain view, in the Library, unless the person in possession of the weapon is a law enforcement officer
- Violating the Library's Internet and Electronic Resources policy, or otherwise misusing computers
- Violating other Library policies and/or guidelines
- Violating federal, state, and/or local law
- Engaging in other acts disruptive to patrons and staff

In addition, patrons must comply with all federal, state, and local laws. Suspected illegal activity will be reported to the police. Violations of law may result in a patron being expelled from the Library, arrested, prosecuted, and/or other legal action, as appropriate. The examples listed above are not a complete list of violations, but instead are intended to provide guidance. The Director and other Library staff are authorized to determine what constitutes disruptive behavior.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO RECORDING**

The Library is a limited public forum and does not permit taking photographs and/or recording library staff or patrons without their permission. Additionally, any photography or recording activity which is determined by library staff to be disruptive to patrons or staff or inconsistent with the library's mission is also prohibited.

## **STUDY ROOMS**

The Library's quiet study rooms are limited to eight (8) patrons in the large room, five (5) patrons in the smaller upstairs room, four (4) patrons in the juvenile study room.

## **EATING AND DRINKING IN THE LIBRARY**

The Library permits light snacks and beverages. For purposes of this policy, beverages encompasses any nonalcoholic beverage, such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, juice or milk. In addition, a light refreshment is considered to be an edible item that may be served between meals. Examples – small bags of chips, doughnuts, sweet rolls, or pieces of fruit.

Snacks and beverages should be enjoyed responsibly, remembering to recycle or discard wrappers, bottles, and trash and to leave a clean area for other patrons when you leave. If a patron is disruptive while enjoying a snack or beverage, then Library staff and/or security will direct that the patron refrain from that snack or beverage inside the Library. Library patrons may also be asked to remove the item from the library. The Director and other Library staff are authorized to determine what constitutes a snack or beverage and to take appropriate disciplinary action if needed.

Eating and drinking is not permitted at any computer in the library or in the Ohio Room. All beverages must have a nospill lid.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

The Library is not responsible for lost or stolen items. It is recommended that patrons do not leave personal belongings unattended.

## **OUTREACH SERVICES**

Library patrons receiving outreach services are subject to this Code of Conduct and enforcement of this Code of Conduct. In addition, if any situation arises in which a Library outreach employee feels that a particular environment or situation is unsafe, then the Library may immediately discontinue that outreach service. (Individuals will have the opportunity to request a review of this decision with the Director of the Library or his/her designee, see Appeal Process below.)

## **EMERGENCIES**

In the event of an emergency, patrons shall comply with instructions from Library personnel. It is illegal to carry weapons of any kind, either concealed or in plain view, in the building unless the person in possession of the weapon is a law enforcement officer.

## **VIOLATIONS**

The Board of Trustees authorizes the Director, other Library staff, and Library security officers to enforce this Patron Code of Conduct consistent with this policy. The rules of public behavior will be made available to patrons in the Library and will be made accessible electronically as well. Patrons who violate this Code of Conduct will be given notice of their violation. A violation may result in a patron's expulsion from the Library, restriction from the Library, suspension of Library privileges, and/or arrest and criminal prosecution or other legal action, as appropriate. When necessary the Library will work with law enforcement authorities to prosecute actions for criminal behavior against the Library, its patrons, and staff. Although the Library reserves the right to require anyone violating the Code of Conduct to leave Library property, the Library generally will follow these steps when a violation occurs:

1) Library staff and/or security officers will verbally bring to an individual's attention any act or omission that violates this Patron Code of Conduct or related Library policies and ask the individual to change his or her behavior to conform to the rules.

2) If such change is not evident or forthcoming, Library staff and/or security officers will direct the individual violating this Patron Code of Conduct or related Library policies to leave Library property (which includes both the building and the premises) for a period of at least one week. In some situations, a violation may result in an individual being directed to leave Library property (Step 2) without the patron having been given a verbal warning under Step 1, including, for example, in situations when a patron's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption (for example, when engaging in a physical fight, etc.), or based on the severity or frequency of the violation. (Individuals will have the opportunity to request a review of this decision with the Director of the Library or his/her designee, see Appeal Process below.)

3) Failure to leave Library property (which includes both the building and the premises) when directed may result in intervention by the police and/or security officers and a possible charge of criminal trespass per Section 2911.21 of the Ohio Revised Code. In this situation the patron will be barred from library property for a period of at least six (6) months.

4) If any person who has received a six (6) month suspension again violates any of the above rules, he/she will be barred from the library building and property for a period of one (1) year.

5) Chronic offenders (those who are asked to leave the premises on three separate occasions) will be barred from the library building and property for one (1) year.

6) The Library Director may issue suspensions in excess of one (1) year when patron behavior warrants.

7) The library will attempt to give written notice of the violation and restriction, either in person at the time of violation or by mail if possible to the patron. With respect to juveniles, any such notice of restriction will be sent to the juvenile's parent or guardian. Individuals who have been so restricted will be required to meet and discuss the violation with the Director before being readmitted, with juveniles being required to bring a parent or guardian to any such conference.

8) The Director, other Library staff, and/or security officers may, in their discretion, call the police for assistance as needed. The Library reserves the right to enforce this Code of Conduct consistent with

safety, health, legal, and other relevant considerations, and the Library will comply with all applicable laws. In addition, patrons must comply with all federal, state, and local laws.

Suspected illegal activity will be reported to the police. Violations of law may result in a patron being expelled from the Library, arrested, prosecuted, and/or other legal action, as appropriate.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

A patron who has been expelled or restricted from the Library, or whose Library privileges have been suspended, will have the right to a review of this decision by a Panel of three, consisting of the Director of the Library and his/her designees. To schedule a review, a patron should contact the Director at (330) 332-0042 (x251) or in writing at 821 E. State St., Salem, Ohio 44460 within five weekdays from the date of the notice of restriction or other action and request a meeting to discuss the restriction or other action. The Panel will schedule a meeting in order to review the restriction or other action. Juveniles who have requested a review are required to bring a parent or guardian to the meeting with the Panel. Pending the review/appeal process, a restriction or other Library action will remain in effect.