

Library Facility Regulations

I. Purpose and Scope of the regulations

These regulations apply to all Washington County Public Library facilities. The Washington County Public Library is a tax-supported facility, and citizens expect and deserve a clean, quiet, pleasant and safe environment. Unfortunately, the behavior of a few library visitors may destroy this environment for others. Behavior may become unacceptable when it interferes with another person's use of the library, when it could result in injury to oneself or others, when it violates the law, or when it could result in loss or damage to customer or Library property. At staff discretion, engagement in such behavior may subject the individual(s) involved to exclusion from Library premises and, in some cases, to legal prosecution. Examples of unacceptable library behavior include but are not limited to, the following:

II. Prohibited Acts

A. The following are prohibited in all facilities covered by these regulations.

1. Use of any facility or equipment therein for other than its intended use, or alteration of any equipment or facility;
2. Any action, event, or group of events that constitutes a violation of federal, state or local law;
3. The failure to comply with direction given by Library staff acting in the performance of their duties or interference with the performance of such duties or other operations of the facility;
4. Conduct intended to cause or causing the destruction, damage or theft of Library property, or the property of others;
5. Public indecent, indecent exposure, or obscenity;
6. Any action, which in the reasonable judgment of staff, constitutes an attempt to inflict or does inflict injury to other persons or damage to property, or which poses an unreasonable risk of such injury or damage, including running, fighting, wrestling, or climbing;
7. Any conduct or expression that in the reasonable judgment of staff, intimidates others or incites unlawful or otherwise prohibited conduct;
8. Any action which, in the reasonable judgment of staff, interferes with or obstructs the reasonable use and enjoyment by others of the facilities, including but not limited;
9. Use of audio or visual equipment without headphones, or in a loud or disruptive manner;
10. Noise which is unreasonable in a library environment, including whistling, loud talking, and disruptive use of cellular phones;
11. Occupation of more than one seat or study space, use of library facilities for sleeping, or the overcrowding of study tables, carrels, computers or study rooms;
12. The failure to maintain a level of personal hygiene that is non-offensive in a social environment, unless compliance is precluded as a result of a legally protected disability;
13. Use of any Library facility for commercial activities not specifically authorized and arranged through Library management, including but not limited to: Sales or soliciting, Marketing or conducting surveys, Conducting classes or other instructional activities, or tours, except to the extent that the same may be carried out in a manner comparable to use of the facility by the general public;
14. Conduct that disrupts or obstructs any program or activity that is a program of the particular Library facility;
15. Possession or consumption of food or beverages outside of designated areas;
16. Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco or other tobacco products;
17. Use or possessions of alcohol or illegal drugs, or any visible intoxication from alcohol or drugs;
18. Using bathrooms for bathing or washing clothes;
19. Possession of any animals except service animals, or as otherwise authorized by the library staff;

20. Failure to comply with any specific rules of use or conduct posted within any facility;

- B. Any requirements set forth herein may be waived or altered by the director in charge of a facility as necessary to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities desiring to make use of that facility.

III. Enforcement Procedures

- A. The Washington County Public Library staff shall enforce these Regulations. A program of progressive discipline shall be in effect for repeat or habitual offenders. Where deemed necessary or appropriate the police or other law enforcement officials may be contacted to assist with enforcement of these Regulations and applicable laws. Violations of these regulations that constitute a criminal act may result in arrest and/or the filing of criminal charges.
1. For threatening or belligerent behavior that warrants emergency assistance, library staff will immediately call 911 for police assistance.
- B. When a customer is disruptive:
1. Desk staff shall pleasantly but clearly ask the customer who is breaking standards or behaving unacceptably to stop. (Sometimes the situation warrants patiently asking 2 or 3 times.) Sometimes the behavior is severe enough that the staff will want to ask only once before proceeding to next stage. Sometimes the behavior will happen over a period of several days or weeks before it is disruptive enough and/or tracked well enough to go to the next stage. Staff will write an incident report each time.
- C. A customer whose behavior does not change or stop as a result of a request (or repeated requests) from a Library staff member shall be informed that he/she must leave the Library. If he/she does not leave promptly and quietly, the police shall be called. Staff will write an Incident Report each time.
- D. If a customer returns to the Library the same day or on subsequent days and repeats the unacceptable behavior, a supervisor or his/her designee will ask the customer to stop the behavior and inform the customer that continued incidents could result on loss of library privileges. Staff will write an Incident Report.
- E. Depending on the severity or danger of the situation, if the customer does not stop, the police may be called. If the police are not called, the customer shall be informed that the/she must leave the library. Either the police or a supervisor should tell the customer, orally or in writing, that because of his/her repeated behavior, Library privileges have been temporarily suspended, and that he/she must contact the Library Director to determine the length of the suspension. The terms of the suspension could be for up to two (2) years. Further, Staff will write an Incident Report and immediately inform the Director of the incident.
- F. Further action:
1. The Library Director will determine the terms of any suspension of library privileges for up to a period of two (2) years. The Library Director may set reasonable and appropriate conditions for reinstatement of library privileges. The police must receive a copy of the suspension notice after the customer has met with the director.
- G. Right to Appeal:
1. The customer may appeal the suspension decision to the Chairperson of the Library Board by filing with him/her a written statement of appeal, including basis of appeal, no later than seven (7) days from receipt of notice of the decision.

Approved by the Library Board August 19, 2003