

Code of Conduct Policy

Updated by the Board of Trustees, November 8, 2023

Policy Statement:

The Pittsburg Public Library strives to provide the highest level of service to all library users. The Library serves as a “limited public forum,” created for the specific purpose of providing public access to materials and resources. The Pittsburg Public Library Board of Trustees has, under the authority of Kansas law (K.S.A. 12-1227), established rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of library patrons, visitors, and staff, and to preserve and protect the Library's materials, equipment, building, and grounds.

Everyone has a right to quality library services in an atmosphere that is safe and free of disturbances from others. Failure to comply with these standards may result in loss of library privileges.

Keep the Library Safe

1. **Follow staff instructions including, but not limited to the following:**
 - a. Stay in public areas of the library unless accompanied by a staff person
 - b. Vacate the library at closing time and during emergency situations
 - c. Follow all library policies: available at PPLonline.org
2. **Follow all federal, state, and local laws, including, but not limited to, the prohibition of:**
 - a. Theft, defacement, or destruction of library building, property, or materials
 - b. Bringing guns, knives or other weapons into the library in any manner other than as allowed by local ordinance or state statute
 - c. Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - d. Sexual contact, indecent exposure, exhibitionism, lewd and lascivious acts
 - e. Harassment, or behaving in a threatening or abusive manner (including but not limited to battery, verbal threats, stalking, offensive staring, or offensive touching)
3. **Child Safety**
 - a. The Pittsburg Public Library staff is not responsible for the care and/or supervision of children. Parents and other caregivers are responsible for monitoring the activities of their children while they are in the library
 - b. Children under the age of 8 must be supervised by a parent, guardian, or caregiver the age of 16 or above at all times

- c. **Youth Areas:** Adults are permitted in the youth areas (children and young adult) of the library only when accompanied by a child/teen or when the adult needs to retrieve materials from the youth collections. If the adult is not accompanied by a child, they need to locate the youth services material and then move to appropriate adult areas on library premises
 - d. **Children left at Closing:** If a child is left unattended at the time of closing, and a parent or caregiver cannot be reached, the police will be contacted to take care of the child. See Unattended Children Policy for further details
4. **Vulnerable adults:**
- a. Any age person with mental/physical, or emotional conditions which require supervision shall be accompanied by a caregiver at all times
5. **Tobacco Use**
- a. No smoking, tobacco products, or e-cigarettes inside the library or within 25 feet of entrances, or in the library courtyard

Respect the Space

1. **Property**
- a. No loitering allowed: Persons not engaged in reading, studying, library programs, or the use of library services may be asked to leave library premises
 - b. Do not move furniture or fixtures, or place feet on furniture
 - c. No sitting/laying on floors, stairs, or tables
 - d. No skating, skateboarding, scooters, or roller-blading on library property
 - e. No running or disorderly conduct
 - f. Sleeping is not allowed in the Library or on library property (exceptions made for babies and toddlers)
2. **Library phones**
- a. Library phones are used for business purposes
 - b. Phones are only available in emergency situations or for parental notification
3. **Animals**
- a. Service dogs (defined by ADA) on a leash are welcome in the library
 - b. No other animals allowed unless authorized by staff for a library program
 - c. Leaving an animal tethered and/or unattended on library property is not allowed

4. Restrooms

- a. No bathing, shaving, laundry and/or any inappropriate activities
- b. No loitering in restrooms
- c. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms

5. Food and Drink

- a. Are not allowed in public computer areas
- b. Drinks with lids and small snack type food are acceptable in most other areas of the library. Permission for meals or other food may be granted for programs and meetings
- c. Patrons must clean up after themselves and throw away all garbage in trash receptacles

6. Wheeled Devices

- a. Bicycles, wheeled conveyance, and shopping carts must be parked in designated bike racks outside the building. They are not allowed inside the building, behind bushes, or within the library courtyard
- b. These restrictions do not apply to ADA assistive devices or baby strollers if being used to transport, as a mobility device, an adult or child

Respect other People

1. **Keep noise levels down** to avoid disturbing others by:
 - a. Lowering voices (including phone conversations)
 - b. Using headphones on low volume
 - c. Silencing ringing or other sounds created by cell phones and other electronic devices
2. **Behave in a manner** that does not interfere with another person's ability to use and enjoy the Library or prohibit staff from providing services. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Verbal abuse or use of profanity or other abusive language whether oral or written towards patrons or staff
 - b. Monopolizing library equipment, resources, or staff time
 - c. Selling, panhandling, or soliciting in the building, on the grounds, or in the parking lot
 - d. Petitioning, campaigning, or proselytizing in the building, on the grounds, or in the parking lot
 - e. Taking photos or video of others without their consent or as authorized
 - f. Inappropriate displays of affection

3. **Personal Items:** Keep personal items with you at all times. The Library is not responsible for lost items. Items left unattended are subject to removal and discard
 - a. Personal belongings must reasonably fit beneath a chair or table
 - b. Unfurled sleeping bags, bedrolls, and blankets are not allowed in the building. Exceptions are made for babies and toddlers
 - c. Belongings must not block aisles, walkways, entrances, or access to library equipment or collections
4. **Hygiene**
 - a. Entering the library with hygiene conditions, including, but not limited to, clothing odor, body odor, insects or pests, or with unsanitary belongings that interfere with the use and enjoyment of the library by other library patrons or with the functioning of library staff is prohibited
 - b. Library visitors must be fully clothed, including shirt and shoes, at all times. Exceptions are made for babies and toddlers

Penalties: All Library visitors must comply with a reasonable staff request to cease behavior that interferes with the effective functioning of the Library and the use of the Library by others.

- Anyone not behaving within these guidelines will, after warning by library staff, be asked to leave the premises for a specified amount of time and their library privileges may be revoked
- A person who persists in the disapproved conduct and who refuses to leave the building and grounds when requested will be removed by the local police
- In cases of disruptive behavior visitor identification including name, address, and phone number, may be requested
- Recorded video from security cameras may be used to help verify the infraction or persons involved
- Individuals who are irrational or considered a threat to any library patron or staff member will not be given the courtesy of a warning but will be handled directly by the local police
- Permanent suspensions may result in extreme cases involving illegal behavior or repeated suspensions with no positive change in behavior
- The above consequences may be applied cumulatively

Appeals: Patrons have the right to appeal to the Library Board for reinstatement of library privileges.