

# Code of Conduct Policy

Updated by the Pittsburg Public Library Board of Trustees, May 8, 2024

## 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.

These rules are not all inclusive of every behavior that will be regulated on library property. The Pittsburg Public Library reserves the right to prohibit any behavior or actions which may be inappropriate or disruptive to library business.

Everyone has a right to quality library services in an atmosphere that is safe and free of disturbances from others. Conduct in the library or on library property which may lead to denial of library privileges includes, but is not limited to, the following:

## Keep the Library Safe

1. **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).
2. **Follow staff instructions including, but not limited to the following:**
  - a. Follow all library policies: available at [PPLonline.org](http://PPLonline.org).
  - b. Stay in public areas of the library unless accompanied by a staff person.
  - c. Patrons must leave the library promptly at closing times and during emergency situations.
  - d. The library reserves the right to impose reasonable limits on library equipment, resources, or staff time.

- e. Patrons must provide identification to library staff when requested. Reasons for identification include but are not limited to safety, the filing of an incident report, and library card registration.

### 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.

## **Respect the Space**

### 1. **Property**

- a. Loitering in the library, entryways, or library property thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter or exit the building or to use library resources is prohibited.
- b. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building.
- c. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, using library materials or attending meetings or library programming may be required to leave the library.
- d. Theft of library materials is a serious offense and may result in permanent exclusion from all Pittsburg Public Library resources and services, and/or arrest.
- e. Do not move furniture or fixtures, or place feet on furniture.
- f. No sitting/laying on floors, stairs, or tables.
- g. No skating, skateboarding, scooters, or roller-blading on library property.
- h. No running or disorderly conduct.

- i. No littering either inside the library or on library grounds.
  - j. Sleeping, appearing to be asleep, or camping 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) 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 grooming activities, such as bathing, shaving, laundry and/or any inappropriate activities.
  - b. No loitering in restrooms.
  - c. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.
5. **Tobacco Use**
- a. No Smoking or use of tobacco products (including smokeless) or electronic cigarettes in the library or on library property.
6. **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.
7. **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. **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. Behavior that demands repeated attention of library staff and/or disrupts service to others will not be permitted.
  - 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.
2. **Keep noise levels down** to avoid disturbing others by:
- a. Lowering voices.
  - b. Using headphones on low volume.
  - c. Silencing ringing or other sounds created by cell phones and other electronic devices.
  - d. Keep cell phone conversations brief and in a manner that does not disrupt others.  
Library staff will direct patrons to take their call outside, if the conversation reaches a noise level that a reasonable person would find disruptive.
3. **Personal Items:** Keep personal items with you at all times. Unattended bags or other personal items represent a safety and security risk and may not be left on library property. Items left unattended are subject to removal and discard.
- a. Personal belongings must reasonably fit beneath a chair.
  - b. Unfurled sleeping bags, bedrolls, pillows, and blankets are not allowed in the building. Exceptions are made for babies and toddlers.
  - c. Spreading out personal belongings unrelated to the use of library services is not allowed.
  - d. Belongings must not block aisles, walkways, entrances, or access to library equipment or collections.
  - e. Library staff will not store personal belongings.
  - f. The library is not responsible for lost items.
4. **Hygiene**
- a. Entering the library with hygiene or public health conditions, including, but not limited to, clothing odor, body odor, insects or pests, feces, 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. The request must be made in writing at least one week before a scheduled Library Board meeting.