

2304.00 BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT

To maintain an atmosphere appropriate for work, study, and enjoyment for all Library patrons and staff, the Library Board of Trustees has established the following policy on behavior and conduct in the Library and on Library property. This policy will be courteously, but firmly, enforced by Library staff and by the Mentor Police Department as warranted.

Public Libraries are 'limited public forums' and as such are permitted to restrict activities that are not consistent with the nature of libraries, and to impose content-neutral, reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions.

Mentor Public Library welcomes children and vulnerable adults to use its facilities and services. The Library does not act in loco parentis (in place of parents) and library staff members cannot supervise children or vulnerable adults in the library. The parent, or legal guardian, is responsible for ensuring that children and/or vulnerable adult are provided with adequate care and supervision while in the Library.

Children under the age of seven (7) along with children and vulnerable adults who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves must be attended at all times by a parent, legal guardian, teacher, custodian, or caregiver. If attended by a custodian or caregiver, the custodian or caregiver must be able to provide adequate care and supervision and must be at least 16 years of age.

The proper authorities will be notified if children under the age of seven (7) or children or vulnerable adults who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves are left unsupervised or unattended. A child who creates chronic problems may be required to bring a responsible adult who will remain with the juvenile at all times.

Appropriate Library activities include doing homework, writing reports, researching, browsing for materials, reading, thinking, attending programs, and using Library equipment such as computers and copiers. These activities are to be conducted in a manner so as not to disturb others. Group study by four at one table and quiet tutoring of one or two students are permitted. Group study by, or tutoring of, more students at one time, or any group work which creates enough noise to disrupt other patrons will not be permitted. The Library offers the use of meeting rooms for small group activities per our meeting room policy. However, not all areas of the Library are open to the public.

Prohibitions on Conduct

No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct on the premises of Mentor Public Library, when using Library facilities, or when participating in Library programs either on or off-site. Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Running, horseplay, or engaging in physically dangerous activities or behavior.

- Littering, including leaving wrappers, papers, and/or crumbs anywhere on Library premises.
- Swearing, engaging in excessive or disruptive conversations, yelling or talking loudly, or using personal electronic equipment at such a volume or making ongoing noise that is unreasonably disturbing to other Library users.
- Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a crime or a violation of the City of Mentor ordinances.
- Engaging in any physically intimidating or assaultive behavior, or any threats of violence or unlawful activities.
- Possessing, selling, distributing, consuming, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance.
- Refusing to follow the reasonable directions of Library staff, including but not limited to, failing to take shelter in an emergency as directed by staff.
- Engaging in any behavior that a reasonable person would find to be disruptive, harassing, or threatening in nature to Library users/patrons or staff including stalking, prolonged staring at, or following another with the intent to annoy or intentionally behaving in a manner that could reasonably be expected to annoy or disturb others.
- Engaging or attempting to engage in any sexual contact, activities, or conduct.
- Selling, soliciting, surveying, distributing written materials, panhandling, or canvassing Library property (inside and outside).
- Petitioning is permitted on the sidewalks and other outdoor public areas around the library as long as the activity does not interfere with patrons accessing the library entrance or library services. Petitioners are not permitted to block access to the library, harass patrons, gather signatures inside the library or intimate that the Library endorses or supports the cause.
- Eating or drinking while using Library computers or in spaces designated as free from food. Light snacks may be enjoyed responsibly in designated areas.
- Sleeping, napping, or dozing in or on Library premises at any time.
- Failure to wear appropriate covering of one's body, including the failure to wear shoes or other soled footwear.
- Entering or remaining upon Library premises with bodily hygiene so offensive that it constitutes a nuisance to others.
- Moving furniture without the express consent of the Library staff or use of furniture in any manner that may damage the furniture, including placing feet on the furniture.
- Using Library materials, furniture, equipment, or facilities in any manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof, or the theft or intentional damaging of Library materials, furniture, equipment, or facilities, or the property of any patron or Library user.

- Interfering with the safe and free passage of Library staff or patrons on the premises, including but not limited to the placement of objects in hallways, aisles, flooring or elsewhere in a manner that impedes the free passage of such persons about the Library.
- Leaving items unattended on Library premises at any time. Items may be removed from the Library premises if they reasonably appear to be abandoned or have been left unattended for 30 minutes or more.
- Bringing any animal into the Library except service animals.
- Entering non-public areas of the Library without permission.
- Improperly using Library restrooms or facilities for purposes such as bathing, shaving, or changing clothes.
- Overnight parking is not permitted without the approval of Library administration.
- Overnight sleeping on any library property is not permitted.
- Photographing or videotaping, or otherwise recording other patrons, the activities of other patrons, or otherwise interfering with the privacy of other patrons except as specifically permitted by law.
- Photographing, videotaping, or recording any nonpublic areas of the library, such as restrooms and employee-only areas.
- Smoking or using tobacco products (pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3794; Ohio Revised Code §3791.031; and Mentor City Ordinance §521.10); using any chewing tobacco or snuff tobacco on the premises or any similar substance which involves expectoration; or smoking using an electronic or any other substitute for tobacco.
- Violating the Library's rules for acceptable use of the internet and Library public computers. A user accepts these rules before accessing the Internet through a Library computer. Copies of these rules will be made available by staff upon request.
- While on Library premises no person shall possess, have under the person's control, convey, or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance or other dangerous instrumentality, onto the Library premises, which, in the opinion of the Library management, constitutes a potential threat to the health, safety and welfare of anyone, unless permitted to do so pursuant to federal or state law. Pursuant to R.C. 2923.1210, a business owner, property owner, or public or private employer may not establish, maintain, or enforce a policy or rule that prohibits or has the effect of prohibiting a person who has been issued a valid concealed handgun license from transporting or storing a firearm or ammunition when both of the following conditions are met: 1) each firearm and all of the ammunition is locked within the trunk, glove box, or other enclosed compartment or container within or on the person's privately owned motor vehicle; and 2) the vehicle is in a location where it is otherwise permitted to be.
- Engaging in any other conduct that is inconsistent with those activities normally associated with the use of a public library facility (reading, studying, and using library materials).

Violation of Policy

Patrons who are behaving in violation of this policy will be warned that the behavior must stop. If the behavior is not corrected, the person will be told to leave the premises. Anyone who does not leave after being told to do so will be considered a trespasser and will be treated accordingly.

Mentor Public Library reserves the right to suspend or ban patrons that do not follow the Library's Behavior and Conduct Policy. Patrons engaged in conduct that poses an immediate risk to health or safety may be expelled from Library premises without prior warning and with or without the assistance of local law enforcement. Patrons will be given the opportunity to present a statement prior to the determination of any suspension of library privileges.

Restriction on Library use will be enacted for a period of time based on the severity of the offense, the customer's history or policy violations, and any other relevant factors. Once the period of suspension is complete, and before they can regain Library access, patrons must meet with Library Administration to discuss continued use of Mentor Public Library. Minors will be expected to bring a parent or guardian to meet with Library Administration before reinstatement of Library privileges.

Appeals may be made to the Library Director

Thank you for your cooperation.

Revised and approved March 15, 2023

Resolution # 23-035

Revised and approved August 21, 2019

Resolution # 19-076

Revised and approved December 16, 2015

Resolution # 15-110