

## **PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY**

### **I. Introduction.**

The Lapeer District Library (the “Library”) is open for specific and designated civic, educational and cultural uses, including reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, and using Library materials. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the Library facilities in an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and excellent service, the Library Board has adopted this Patron Behavior Policy. The purpose of the Patron Behavior Policy is to assist the Library in fulfilling its mission as a community resource enriching life, stimulating intellectual curiosity, fostering literacy, and encouraging an informed citizenry.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all buildings and all branches – interior and exterior – and all grounds controlled and operated by the Library (“Library facilities”) and to all persons entering in or on the premises, unless otherwise specified.

### **II. Rules for a Safe Environment.**

- A. Violations of Law. Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation (including but not limited to assault, larceny, removing library material from the property without authorization through the approved lending procedures or vandalism) is prohibited.
- B. Weapons. Carrying guns, pistols or other weapons, except as specifically permitted and exempt from local regulation by law, is prohibited.
- C. Alcohol; Drugs. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited; provided that alcohol may be permitted at certain Library-sponsored events if specifically approved by the Library.
- D. Under the Influence. Persons noticeably under the influence of any controlled substance or alcoholic or intoxicating liquor are not allowed on Library property.
- E. Recreational Equipment and Personal Transport Devices. Use of skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, or other wheeled form of recreational equipment is not allowed in the Library or on Library property. Library patrons must park bicycles or other recreational vehicles only in authorized areas. Wheelchairs and other personal transport devices are permitted by those individuals with disabilities.
- F. No Blocking of Doors, Aisles or Entrances. All doors, aisles and entrances must remain obstacle-free. This includes a prohibition of running power cords across aisles or other areas that are used for walking.

- G. Animals. Animals are not permitted in the Library other than service animals (as defined by law) for those individuals with disabilities, those used in law enforcement or for Library programming.
- H. Incendiary devices. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches, and lighters, is prohibited inside the Library.
- I. Staff Only Areas. Patrons shall not be permitted in any areas designated as “staff only” unless otherwise permitted by the Library Director.
- J. School Groups. School groups using the Library must have approval of the appropriate department head and must have a teacher and other appropriate staff present to ensure that the students use the Library in conformance with these rules.

### **III. Rules for Personal Behavior.**

- A. Personal Property. Personal property brought into the Library is subject to the following:
  - 1. The Library personnel may limit the number of parcels carried into the Library. The Library may also limit the size of items, for example, the Library prohibits large items such as suitcases, duffle bags or large plastic garbage bags.
  - 2. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.
  - 3. The Library does not guarantee storage for personal property.
  - 4. Personal possessions must not be left unattended or take up seating or space if needed by others.
- B. Food and Beverages. Food is not permitted inside of the Library, except in the meeting rooms. Beverages, if in a lidded container, are permitted.
- C. Unauthorized Use. Patrons must leave the Library promptly at closing time and may not be in the Library when it is not open to the public. Further, any patron whose privileges to use the Library have been denied may not enter the Library. Any patron whose privileges have been limited may not use the Library in any manner that conflicts with those limits placed on the patron by the Library Director, his or her designee, or the Library Board.
- D. Engaging in Proper Library Activities. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building or on Library property. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, or using Library materials shall be required to leave the building and shall not remain on Library property.

E. Considerate Use. The following behavior is prohibited in the Library and in the Library building.

1. Spitting;
2. Running, pushing, shoving or other unsafe physical behavior;
3. Putting feet or legs on or climbing furniture;
4. Using obscene or threatening language or gestures.

F. Panhandling or Soliciting. Panhandling or soliciting Library staff or patrons for money, products, or services inside the Library or on Library property is prohibited. Sales of products or services that are incidental to Library programming may be permitted if approved in advance by the Library Director.

G. Interference with Staff. Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties in the Library or on Library property. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes or forces the attention of staff for an inappropriate period of time, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.

H. Campaigning, Petitioning, Interviewing and Similar Activities. As a limited public forum, the Library reserves the right to regulate the time, place, and manner for campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting on Library grounds as follows:

1. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting are prohibited inside the Library building.
2. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting outside the Library building but on Library property are subject to the following requirements:
  - a. Persons or groups are requested to sign in at the Service Desk in advance.
  - b. Use of the Library property does not indicate the Library's opposition or endorsement of the candidate or issue that is the subject of the petition, interview, campaign or discussion.
  - c. Permitted areas for campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting outside of the Library building shall be limited to the areas 10 feet from all entrances.
  - d. No person shall block ingress or egress from the Library building.

- e. Permitted times will be limited to the operating hours of the Library.
  - f. Campaign material, literature or petitions may not be brought into the Library, posted at the Library or left on Library property.
- I. Sales. Selling merchandise on Library property without prior permission from the Library Director is prohibited.
- J. Distributions; Postings. Distributing or posting printed materials/literature on Library property not in accordance with Library policy is prohibited.
- K. Restrooms. Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, sleeping, shaving, hair cutting or trimming, bathing, and sexual activity is prohibited. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.
- L. Harassment. Staring, photographing, video recording, audio recording, following, stalking, harassing, arguing with, threatening, or behaving in a manner (1) which can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while such staff or patrons are in the Library or on Library property; and (2) that interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job is prohibited.
- M. Loud Noise. Producing or allowing any loud, unreasonable, or disturbing noises that interfere with other patrons' use of the Library or which can be reasonably expected to disturb other persons or have the intent of annoying other persons, including yelling, cheering, talking (with others or in monologues) or noises from electronic, entertainment, and communication devices, such as cell phones, tablets, headphones, and radio, is prohibited.
- Adults may read aloud to children in the Youth Area, provided that they are reading in a voice that would not reasonably disturb others.
- N. Odor. Offensive odor, including but not limited to body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume, or cologne that causes a nuisance is prohibited. (For example, if the patron's odor interferes with staff or other patrons' use of the Library, the patron violates this Policy).
- O. Phones. Phones may be used in the library for essential calls. All other calls should be taken outside. Phones shall be placed on silent or vibrate mode upon entering the Library.
- P. Library Policies. Patrons must adhere to all Library Policies.
- Q. Identification. Patrons must provide identification to Library staff when requested.

- R. Tables or Structures on Library Property. A table, stand, sign or similar structure may be set up on Library property with advance permission of the Library Director. This does not apply to Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events.
- S. Smoking; Tobacco Use. Smoking, using e-cigarettes, vaping, or chewing tobacco is prohibited on Library property.
- T. Shirts and Shoes. Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times inside the Library and on Library property.

#### **IV. Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property.**

- A. Care of Library Property. Patrons must not deface, vandalize, damage or improperly remove Library materials, equipment, furniture, or buildings. Patrons shall be responsible to reimburse the Library for costs incurred by the Library for violating this provision. Patrons shall not cause damage by returning books containing bedbugs or bringing bedbugs into the Library.
- B. Internet Use. Patrons must abide by established time limitations and all other provisions of the Library Internet Use Policy.
- C. Equipment. Library phones and staff computers are for staff use only. In an emergency, phones may be used to call for transportation.
- D. Authorized Lending. Library materials may only be removed from the premises with authorization through established lending procedures.

#### **V. Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Library**

- A. Use by Children. Children are welcome and encouraged to use the Library at all times. The Library desires to make each visit an important one for the child. A “Child” means a minor under the age of 18. A “vulnerable adult” is an individual age 18 or over who, because of age, developmental disability, mental illness, or physical disability requires supervision or personal care or lacks the personal and social skills required to live independently.
- B. Rules and Regulations Regarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
  - 1. All patrons, including children and vulnerable adults, are expected to comply with the Library's policies. Parents, guardians or responsible caregivers shall review and be fully aware of all Library policies governing children and vulnerable adults, particularly the Internet Use Policy.
  - 2. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children or vulnerable adults regardless of age while in the Library or on Library property.
  - 3. Library staff will not be expected to supervise or monitor children's behavior.

4. Children under the age of 10 must be attended by a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver. The parent, guardian or responsible caregiver (who must be at least 16 years old) shall remain in the Library at all times. If a child under the age of 10 is attending a Library-sponsored program on the premises, the parent, a guardian, or responsible caregiver is to remain on the premises for the duration of the program.
  5. People of any age who, because of developmental disability, mental illness, or physical disability, require supervision or personal care shall be attended by a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver at all times.
  6. Children ages 3 and under must be within the visual contact of a parent, guardian or responsible caregiver at all times, including during programs and visits to the restroom. Children ages 3 and under may not be left in the Youth Services Department alone.
  7. Staff will not be responsible if unattended children of any age or vulnerable adults leave the Library premises alone or with other persons. Further, staff will not be responsible for children 10 years or older who may be asked to leave the Library if the child is in violation of Library policy.
  8. We request that all unattended children and vulnerable adults be picked up at least ten minutes before closing time. Parents, guardians and responsible caregivers need to be aware of when the Library closes.
  9. Children 10 years or older and vulnerable adults must know their telephone number and other contact information if they are unattended at the Library. It is a violation of Library policy not to come immediately and pick up your unattended child or vulnerable adult if the Library calls.
  10. Children have priority for use of all PCs located in the children's room at all times.
- C. Contact of Parent or Guardian. Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, legal guardian, custodian or caregiver when:
1. The health or safety of an unattended child or vulnerable adult is in doubt.
  2. A child or vulnerable adult is frightened while alone at the Library.
  3. The behavior of an unattended child or vulnerable adult violates Library policy.
  4. The unattended child or vulnerable adult has not been met by a parent, legal guardian, custodian or responsible caregiver at closing time. A child or vulnerable adult is considered unattended at closing time if the child is under the age of 10 or the child or vulnerable adult needs assistance procuring transportation.
- D. Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults at Closing. If a parent, legal guardian, custodian or caregiver cannot be reached by closing time or fails to arrive by closing time, the Library staff will attempt to call the legal guardian, custodian or responsible caregiver. At least two Library staff members shall stay with the unattended child or

vulnerable adult until he or she is picked up or police become involved. If the parent, legal guardian or caregiver is not available by phone and there is no assurance that the child or vulnerable adult will be picked up within a reasonable time, police may be called after 30 minutes, Library staff will contact law enforcement officials to take charge of the situation involving the unattended child or vulnerable adult. Library staff members are not permitted to transport an unattended child or vulnerable adult under any circumstances.

If the parent, legal guardian, custodian or caregiver can be reached by closing time, the staff member shall explain the Library's policy and provide a copy of this policy. If the police are contacted and the child or vulnerable adult is transported by the police to another location, the Library staff shall leave a note on the door (without information identifying the patron) to notify the parent, legal guardian or caregiver regarding the location of the child or vulnerable adult.

## **VI. Disciplinary Process for Library Facilities.**

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to Library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. Incident Reports. Library staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges. Unless otherwise provided in this policy, (see Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
  1. *Initial Violation*: Library patrons observed violating this policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If he or she refuses, the police may be called.
  2. *Subsequent Violations*: The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security. Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug

sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:

1. *Initial Violation:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges in order to give the Library sufficient time to investigate the incident. After the investigation is completed, the Library Director or his/her designee may add additional time to the initial limitation or suspension period.
2. *Subsequent Violations:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Library Director or the Library Director's authorized designee, may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.

D. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or suspended shall attend a meeting with the Library Director or the Library Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated. The Library Director may impose conditions for the reinstatement.

## **VII. Right of Appeal.**

Patrons may appeal (1) a decision to limit or suspend privileges or (2) the conditions placed on reinstatement by sending a written appeal to the Library Board within 10 business days of the date of the decision. The appeal should be sent to the President of the Library Board. The decision of the Library Board is final.

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Most recent revision adoption: April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
Board motion: 18R.04.14