

STOUGHTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
APPROPRIATE LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

I. Purpose

- A. The Board of Trustees is committed to providing an atmosphere where people of all ages may come to read, browse, do research or study. Under the provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, specifically Section 43.52 (2), the Stoughton Public Library Board of Trustees may enact regulations that serve to insure the safety of all library staff and patrons, protect the collection and maintain order in the library.
- B. This policy does not prohibit quiet conversations between patrons and/or staff members or conversations required to carry on library programs or business. It is designed to preserve a reasonably quiet atmosphere where library patrons may use library services and materials without disturbance.
- C. Questions regarding the interpretation of these guidelines will be referred to the Library Director and/or the Library Board.

II. Definitions

- A. “Inappropriate” is defined as that which disturbs others, interferes with library operations or damages the building or its contents. Any behavior that exhibits rudeness, profanity or is generally considered unacceptable in a public place is inappropriate.
- B. “Illegal” is defined as that which violates federal regulations, state statutes, municipal ordinances or library policy.
- C. “Emergency” is defined as any situation in which an individual’s actions present an imminent danger to the life and safety of themselves or others.
- D. “Unattended children” refers to children age 8 or younger who are unaccompanied by or not in immediate proximity to a caregiver over the age of 14.

III. Inappropriate Behavior

- A. The rights of individuals to use the library should not be denied without due cause. To guarantee these rights for all patrons, no library patron shall engage in the following behaviors:

1. Eating, except as provided in the library's meeting room policy or as part of library sponsored activities. Note: Beverages outside of library-sponsored events must be in covered containers.
 2. Smoking. The library is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited throughout the facility.
 3. Willfully annoying another person.
 4. Blocking entry, aisles or traffic areas.
 5. Damaging or defacing public property within or outside the building.
 6. Engaging in loud or boisterous behavior.
 7. Using profane, obscene, or offensive language.
 8. Causing a public disturbance.
 9. Entering or remaining in the library without a shirt, shoes or other appropriate attire.
 10. Loitering on the premises under circumstances that cause concern for the safety or health of any person or property in the vicinity of the library.
 11. Remaining in the building after its regular closing hours.
 12. Interfering with other library patrons' use of the facility through extremely poor personal hygiene.
 13. Sleeping in the library for an extended period of time (more than 15 minutes).
 14. Soliciting, surveying and canvassing, except in conjunction with Library Board approved projects. Vendors may meet with authorized library personnel only.
 15. Bringing pets or other animals into the library unless they are guide dogs or part of a library program.
 16. Violating the library's Materials Use Policy or Internet Use Policy.
- B. Personal electronic equipment may be used in the library in designated areas as long as it does not disturb or offend others. (This includes but is not limited to laptops, MP3 players and cell phones.) Users of audio equipment will be asked to use headphones.
- C. Guidelines for Handling Inappropriate Behavior
1. If a patron creates a public disturbance, that patron may be restricted from the use of the library facilities. Those who are unwilling to leave or do not leave within a reasonable amount of time, after being instructed to do so by staff, will be subject to the law.
 2. A brief written report of any incident involving theft, vandalism, illegal activity, or major disruptive behavior will be filed with the Director as soon as possible after its occurrence.
 3. The Library Director, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may suspend the library privileges of any individual who willfully violates library regulations when the severity or continued reoccurrence warrants such action. (Wisconsin State Statutes 43.52 (2)). The Director will inform the Board of any such action taken.

4. The person whose library privileges are suspended shall be advised in writing of the suspension and the reason(s) for such action. The offender shall also be informed that the suspension may be appealed at the next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting. Suspensions will be for a minimum of one month and start immediately upon issuance of the written notice.

IV. Illegal Activity/Emergency Situation

- A. Any individual observed engaged in the following activities will be subject to police intervention/arrest.
 - 1. Assault or threat of assault.
 - 2. Possession of a weapon.
 - 3. Possessing controlled substances.
 - 4. Committing any crime, misdemeanor or violation of a municipal ordinance on the premises of library facilities.
 - 5. Knowingly entering non-public areas of library facilities.
 - 6. Using the Internet for other than legal purposes.
 - 7. Entering or remaining on library premises after having been notified by authorized individual not to do so.

- B. When illegal/emergency activities are committed by an individual, the police will be called.

V. Unattended Children

- A. Library staff will not assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library. A parent or designated caregiver is responsible for the child's behavior while in the library.

- B. If it is determined that a child is lost or left unattended, a staff member shall bring the child to the Children's Librarian or other staff member in charge. The staff will then attempt to identify and locate the parent or designated caregiver. If a parent or designated caregiver cannot be found, then the child will be remanded to the care of the Stoughton Police Department.

VI. Theft of Library Materials

- A. According to Section 943.61 (3) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, the concealment of library material beyond the last station for borrowing this material is evidence of intent to deprive the library of possession of the material. The discovery of library material which has not been checked out in accordance with library procedures and which is concealed by a person upon the person or belongings of another is evidence of theft.

- B. According to Section 943.61 (4) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, an adult employee of the library who has probable cause for believing that a person has committed a theft in her/his presence may detain the person for a reasonable length of time in order to turn the person over to the police. The detained person shall be promptly informed of the purpose for the detention, but shall not be interrogated or searched against his/her will before the arrival of the police who may conduct a lawful interrogation of the accused person.

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