

2.3.1. Patron Code of Conduct

Policy Effective Date: 6/14/2024

Pickaway County Library encourages the use of its facilities for learning, enrichment, and use of the library's resources and services. To preserve that opportunity, we ask patrons to be respectful of each other and staff, and to behave in a manner that does not disrupt other patrons or staff. The rules of public behavior are posted in the library. All library staff are authorized to bring to an individual's attention any act or omission that violates these rules.

The intent of this policy is to make the Pickaway County Library a pleasant and enriching place for all library patrons and staff. **Behaviors that interfere with the right of other patrons to enjoy the library include but are not limited to:**

- I. Eating or drinking inside the library except in designated areas and at library-sponsored events. Spills must be immediately reported to staff.
 - a. Main Library – All food and drinks are allowed in the Gallery. Covered drinks are allowed in all areas except for the genealogy room and where otherwise posted.
 - b. Younkin branch – No food is allowed. Covered drinks are allowed in all areas.
- II. Violating the library's smoke free property policy.
- III. Using, selling, or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol, on library property.
- IV. Leaving children who are under 10 years of age, or those who need supervision, unattended. Responsibility for all children using the library rests with the parent/guardian or assigned chaperone, not with the library personnel.
- V. Sleeping and/or lying on the floor.
- VI. Engaging in behavior that could disturb other patrons or staff including, but not limited to:
 - a. loud talking, singing, and/or boisterous activity.
 - b. running, shoving, and/or throwing objects.
 - c. loud and/or prolonged periods of crying.
- VII. Harassing others, either verbally or through actions.
 - a. Harassment may include but is not limited to initiating unwanted conversations or other actions another individual reasonably perceives to be hostile, threatening, or offensive.
- VIII. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language; racial and ethnic epithets; fighting, or the threat thereof.
- IX. Taking photographs and/or recording videos of Library staff or patrons without their permission.
- X. Impeding access to the building, monopolizing/obstructing space, seating, tables, or equipment to the exclusion of others.
- XI. Leaving items unattended on library property, including in library buildings.
- XII. Improper dress including bare feet and/or no shirt.
- XIII. Using the restrooms as bathing or laundry facilities or as gathering places.
- XIV. Using rollerblades, spiked shoes, skateboards, other sports equipment, or other self-propelled or motorized recreational transportation devices, in the building or on library property.
- XV. Bringing a bicycle or other self-propelled or motorized recreational transportation device into the building, unless authorized.

- XVI. Bringing animals other than service animals into the library unless authorized by library staff.
- XVII. Selling, advertising, or soliciting for contributions or support, except as authorized. Petitioning, such as for voting or ballot issues, is permitted outside of the building on library property but petitioners cannot block the building's entrances and exits.
- XVIII. Entering non-public areas such as workrooms, offices, and storage areas without permission.
- XIX. Abuse or improper use of furniture, equipment, or materials.
- XX. Damaging, destroying, vandalizing, or stealing property belonging to the library, other patrons, or staff.
- XXI. Weapons of any kind or other items deemed dangerous by library staff, either concealed or in plain view, are not permitted in the library building, unless the owner of the weapon is a law enforcement officer.
- XXII. Engaging in any act of sexual misconduct, including exposure, offensive touching, or sexual harassment of other patrons or staff.
- XXIII. Trespassing, violating an eviction, or entering library property when banned.
- XXIV. Violating the library's Internet Access policy.
- XXV. Any illegal act or conduct in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation, including those performed on a computer.

Failure to follow these rules will result in patrons being asked to leave library property (Please see Policy 2.4.1. *Suspension of Library Privileges and Eviction*).

2.4.1. Suspension of Library Privileges and Eviction

Policy Effective Date: 5/1/2018

A patron who has violated the library's code of conduct (See policy 2.3.1 *Patron Code of Conduct*) may be evicted from the library and refused further admission to the library for a set time. The following are intended as a guide for staff enforcement of the patron code of conduct. Serious infractions (including but not limited to willful maliciousness towards patrons or staff, or when posing an immediate threat to patrons, staff, or property) may result in immediate eviction.

I. Violation of the patron code of conduct

- a. Library staff will notify the patron of unacceptable behavior.
- b. If the behavior continues, staff will notify the patron that if further unacceptable behavior continues they will be asked to leave.
- c. Upon a third violation, the patron is asked to leave for the day. An incident report should be completed and given to library administration.
 - i. The library director or their designee may determine, based upon repeated violation of the patron code of conduct or the severity of the violation, that an extended eviction period should be enforced.

II. Eviction

- a. The director or their designee shall evict patrons for violations of the patron code of conduct.
 - i. When possible, the patron will be supplied with a written notice of eviction including the reason and period of eviction.
 1. Notices regarding the barring of a minor patron from the library will be sent to the minor patron's parent or legal guardian.

III. Appeal of Eviction

- a. The library recognizes the patron's right to contest the eviction. The patron may provide a written request to appeal their eviction to the director within 48 hours of the eviction being issued.
- b. The director may consider any of several factors when deciding to reinstate library privileges including:
 - i. the details of the incident that led to the suspension
 - ii. the length of time since the initial eviction and suspension
 - iii. the patron's completion of any requirements imposed by the court as a result of the incident
 - iv. any other information provided by the patron that suggests that he or she is unlikely to engage in the conduct that led to the suspensions of privileges
- c. Decisions of the director may be appealed to the Board via written notice.
 - i. Decisions of the Board will be considered final.

2.5.1. Unattended Minors

Policy Effective Date: 5/1/2018

Library staff cannot act in loco parentis, nor act as caregiver or babysitter. The library and library staff are not responsible for problems resulting from children being left unattended. To provide for the general safety of children:

- I. All children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult or responsible caregiver who is at least 12 years of age.
- II. When a child under 10 years of age appears to be lost or unattended, library staff will immediately try to locate a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver in the library and/or by phone. Staff will stay with the child while the search is in progress. If a parent, legal guardian, or responsible caregiver cannot be located, staff will contact the police department for assistance.
- III. Children aged 10 and older may use the library unattended, subject to the rules and regulations of the library. If an unattended minor is asked to leave library property due to behavior and is lacking transportation or a safe place to go, staff will attempt to contact the parents, legal guardians, or a responsible caregiver to have the child picked up. If unable to pick up the child or if staff is unable to reach someone, the police department will be contacted for assistance.
- IV. Parents and legal guardians should realize that, even in their absence, they are legally responsible for the behavior of their children.
- V. Minors who are unattended and lacking transportation at closing time will be asked for telephone numbers of people who can pick them up at the library. If unsuccessful, the police department will be contacted for assistance. Under no circumstances shall staff take a child out of the building.