

PATRON CONDUCT POLICY

(Approved by the Board of Trustees on August 13, 2018)

The Elyria Public Library System seeks to provide quality library service to all patrons. The following code of conduct has been adopted for the comfort and protection of the rights of all those using and working in the Elyria Public Library. The library staff will enforce this code in a courteous but firm manner. We ask your cooperation in helping us to provide a safe and pleasant environment for all our patrons and staff.

We do not permit conduct that disturbs others or interferes with any person's comfort or safety, such as:

- Disruptive behavior, noise or loud talking
- Disrupting or interfering with normal operation of the Library and its staff
- Sleeping in a disruptive manner
- Blocking access to entrances, exits and/or materials
- Bringing bicycles, shopping carts, skateboards, or similar bulky articles into the Library, with the exception of baby strollers and those articles necessary to assist individuals with disabilities
- Disruptive use of cell phones—loud or long, involved conversations should be taken away from public service areas
- Harassment, verbal abuse, threats, fighting, or repeated unwelcome advances towards other persons
- Selling items or services, and soliciting of any kind on Library premises—solicitation of signatures or contributions for non-commercial or non-profit purposes are permitted outside of the Library only (see Petition Policy)
- Soliciting interaction of any minor by any unrelated adult
- Distributing or posting any printed materials—please see a staff member regarding posting on public bulletin board
- Use of any tobacco products or tobacco simulating products
- Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs, or the appearance of being under the influence
- Fighting and/or using abusive, profane, harassing, or threatening language
- Misuse of Library furniture and property
- Intentionally or recklessly damaging, destroying or stealing Library, patron or employee property
- Removing Library materials from the premises without checking them out
- Send, receive, or display text or graphics that may be reasonably construed as obscene or pornographic—this pertains to Library computers and personal devices being used on Library premises (see Internet Policy)
- Using library computers, software and/or Wi-Fi for illicit behavior or activity
- Acts of child abuse and/or child endangerment as defined by the Ohio Revised Code
- Sexual conduct which is considered a violation of Chapter 2907 of the Ohio Revised Code
- Using public restrooms for bathing and/or laundry or other public areas for personal grooming

- Bringing large bundles into the Library—bundles, packages, briefcases, purses, and other containers may be subject to search upon entering or leaving Library buildings in order to protect and preserve the safety and security of property and people inside the Library
- The use of assistance animals that do not meet the definition provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Carrying or handling weapons of any kind
- Violating Library policies and/or procedures
- Any act which meets the definition of a crime under the codified ordinances of the city of Elyria, the Ohio Revised Code or the laws of the United States of America

The Library must prioritize public health and safety.

The Library reserves the right to ban customers when there is evidence of a public health risk and/or pests. Patrons shall maintain a generally acceptable standard of personal hygiene. Health or hygiene conditions that constitute a nuisance, such as strong or offensive body odor, are considered unacceptable. Patrons must wear a shirt and shoes at all times.

Please recognize that the Library is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

We recommend that patrons do not leave personal belongings unattended.

Library staff cannot act in the place of parents or caregivers

Young children and vulnerable patrons are not to be left unattended in Library facilities, even when caregivers are in other areas of the building. Patrons of all ages are permitted to use Library computers to access the internet, and any restrictions of a child's access to the internet are the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

If a child is left unattended:

- Staff will notify a supervisor or most senior staff member and will stay with the child as they try to locate the responsible person by searching nearby area or paging on Library intercom.
- When such person is located, explain the Library policy in regard to children, give them a handout, etc.
- If the responsible person is not located within half-hour, or if the Library is closing within a half-hour, the police will be notified and asked to pick up the child. Staff will remain with the child in the building until parent or police arrives.

- If a child is reported missing, obtain name, age, and a description of the child. Check all possible areas (restrooms, etc.) within the Library. Page child on intercom. Notify responsible person of your extensive search.
- If child is not found, recommend that the police be notified.

Enjoy snacks responsibly.

Light snacks and covered beverages are permitted in designated areas in all of our branches. Please remember to discard or recycle garbage before you leave and tidy your area for the next patron.

Damages, Suspension, Expulsion

Failure to comply with the behavior guidelines stated above will result in escalating responses ranging from recovery for damages and/or limitations on service, to revocation of Library privilege(s), eviction from the premises, or criminal prosecution depending on the severity and frequency of the violation and if there is local, state or federal law.

Those who intentionally damage or deface Library materials or property may be prosecuted. Parents can be liable for damage done by a child under the age of eighteen.

Enforcement and Appeal

The Library Director and his/her designated staff are authorized to interpret these rules in accordance with applicable law and to ensure appropriate behavior of all persons in the Library facilities.

Any person receiving a warning for a violation of the above rules and regulations will be required to provide some form of identification which may be copied and recorded, along with documentation of the violation, for future use by Library staff or Library Board of Trustees in determining the need for expulsion or exclusion, or any notice of the reasons.

Any person who is asked to leave a Library facility as a result of violating these rules and regulations and refuses to do so shall be considered a trespasser and may be subject to permanent expulsion and/or arrest. Further, the Library Board of Trustees, on recommendation by the Library Director, may deny any patron who violates these rules and regulations future access to Library facilities any patron whose privileges have been denied, or who has been permanently excluded from Library facilities, upon **written** petition within thirty (30) days of the decision to do so, may appeal the decision to the **Board of Directors**.

Patron Code of Conduct-Staff Procedure:

- **Violation of any of the above rules from the Library Patron Code of Conduct will be handled in the following way:**
 - Patron will be asked to stop behavior.
 - Patron will be asked again to stop behavior and warned that they will be asked to leave if warned again.
 - Patron will be asked to leave the library.
 - Notify other departments and/or buildings
 - Write up an incident report
- **Patrons may be asked to leave the library, at the discretion of any staff member, if the situation mandates. If necessary, the police will be contacted.**