

WESTCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

PATRON CONDUCT POLICY

The library is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment conducive to the use and enjoyment of the library by its patrons and in furtherance of library's mission.

Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, attending library programs, or using library materials or library resources and who violate conduct guidelines should be informed of their violation and either asked to correct their behavior or to leave the library depending upon the severity of the situation.

All Library staff members are responsible for enforcing the patron conduct rules of the library and for maintaining a quiet, orderly library environment conducive to reading and study. Library staff members should be alert to problem patron behavior in their assigned departments and should periodically check the areas such as restrooms, hallways, and vacant rooms throughout their working day for problem conduct.

The following rules apply within the library or anywhere on library property:

UNRULY BEHAVIOR

Patrons shall not interfere with the use of the library by other patrons, or interfere with library employees' performance of their duties. Patrons shall respect the rights of other patrons and shall not harass, annoy, or intimidate others through noisy, boisterous, or threatening activities; by unnecessary staring at another person; by following another person about the inside or outside of the building; by playing audio equipment so that others can hear it; by singing or talking loudly to others or in monologues; or by behaving in any other manner which reasonably can be expected to disturb other persons.

Additional unruly behavior includes, but is not limited to, loud talking, laughing, fighting, throwing objects, running, using obscene language, horseplay, and otherwise disrupting the normal functioning of the library.

Unruly behavior is not permitted in the library and should be corrected immediately. Patrons should be warned to correct their behavior and if they don't comply, they should be asked to leave the library. If they don't reply to a request to leave, the police should be notified.

DRESS

Patrons are required to wear shirts and shoes while in the library.

GAMBLING, SOLICITING, OR CAMPAIGNING

Gambling, soliciting or campaigning is prohibited on library property. Please see the Exhibits, Displays, Petitions, Surveys and Solicitations Policy

SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited in the library. Please see the library's full no smoking policy.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink are prohibited in the library except in designated areas.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The use of illegal drugs and other chemical substances is prohibited. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted except at Library Board sponsored functions. Public drunkenness is prohibited.

LITTERING, DAMAGING OR DEFACING OF PROPERTY

Patrons caught littering, damaging, or defacing property in the library will be asked to make appropriate restitution by either cleaning up the litter or paying for the replacement of the damaged public property.

Patrons shall not utilize library property or other property that has been brought into the library by the patron or another individual in a manner that creates a safety hazard for library patrons.

TELEPHONE USE BY PATRONS

Patrons are not permitted to use the library's telephones except for emergencies.

CELLULAR TELEPHONES

Patrons are asked to turn off their cellular telephones while in the library. Cellular telephones may be used to take and make telephone calls only in the library lobby areas.

BICYCLES

Bicycles are to be parked in the bicycle racks and not left outside the library entrances.

SKATES AND SKATEBOARDS

Skates may not be worn in the library and skateboards may not be ridden on library property.

BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS

Backpacks and book bags are subject to search and are not to be taken into the Audio-Visual Department. Backpacks and book bags may be left at the Audio-Visual desk.

RESTROOMS

Patrons are not to loiter in the restrooms. Restrooms may not be used for laundry or bathing. Restrooms subject to vandalism will be locked.

RESTRICTED AREAS

Patrons are not allowed in the library meeting rooms, staff rooms, kitchens, offices or the Adult Learning Center without cause.

CHILDREN

Children of kindergarten age and younger must be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for their care and behavior. Please see the Unattended Children Policy.

VIEWING SEXUALLY EXPLICIT IMAGES ON LIBRARY COMPUTERS

Viewing sexually explicit images on library computers where other patrons and staff members can also see the images is prohibited.

WEAPONS

Except for law enforcement officers, possessing on library property any dangerous weapon, including but not limited to the following items, regardless of any permit for the same: knife, billy club, blackjack, nunchuks, throwing star, martial arts weapon, pellet or BB gun, paint ball gun, dart gun or electrical device designed to disable or incapacitate someone is prohibited. An individual may possess a chemical spray, such as mace, as long as such a device is carried only for personal self-defense and is not

brandished about or displayed in an aggressive or threatening manner. An individual who possesses a valid permit or who otherwise is legally authorized may possess a firearm, provided that said individual complies with the library's firearm policy.

FIREARMS

All individuals possessing firearms on library premises must comply with state and federal law and also **MUST** comply with the following provisions. Failure to comply with these rules will result in removal of said person from library premises and may result in confiscation of the firearm and/or prosecution.

(i) *Handgun Possession – Ind. Code § 35-47-2-1.* No person may possess a handgun on library property or inside any library building (“Library Premises”) unless they also possess a valid permit to carry a handgun in the State of Indiana. Any person carrying a handgun on Library Premises must provide proof of license upon request by library personnel.

(ii) *Criminal Recklessness – Ind. Code § 35-42-2-2.* All firearms carried on Library Premises must be secured in a manner which prevents potential injury or serious bodily harm to any other person or to property.

(iii) *Criminal Recklessness – Ind. Code § 35-42-2-2 and Pointing a Firearm – Ind. Code § 35-47-4-3.* No person may point, brandish or display a firearm in any manner that is intended to threaten or intimidate any library patron or library staff member.

(iv) *Criminal Recklessness – Ind. Code § 35-42-2-2.* Persons may not carry a firearm in any manner which violates Indiana's Criminal Recklessness Statute.

STUDY HOURS

The time period between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm is designated as a Study Time during the school year. During that period, special care will be taken to insure that the study environment is not disturbed.

SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES

Violators will receive a warning and an opportunity to cease a behavior that violates this policy. Continued or repeat violations may result in suspension of library privileges for a period of time commensurate with the severity of the offense, the patron's history of policy violations, and any other relevant factors. Patrons engaged in behaviors that pose a serious imminent risk to health or safety may be immediately expelled from the library without prior warning and with or without the assistance of library security or local law enforcement.

When possible, patrons who have their library privileges suspended will be provided with written notification stating the specific library policy violated and specifying the length of the suspension. A suspension might be indefinite if the offense is severe.

Appeal requests may be made in writing to the library director. Further appeals may be made in writing to the library board. In the case of minors, the parents of the child will be notified of the action.

ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

Patrons who display illegal behavior should be reported immediately to the Director. If the Director cannot be reached, the police should be notified immediately.

Revised September 8, 2011