



Edgerton Public Library

101 Albion Street | 608-884-4511 | www.als.lib.wi.us/epl

Code of Conduct Policy

General rules of behavior are designed to protect the rights of library patrons, to outline for staff members acceptable and appropriate behavior on the part of patrons, and to preserve library materials and facilities. Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 43.52 (2) states: “Every public library shall be for the use of the inhabitants of the municipality by which it is established and maintained, subject to such reasonable regulations as the library board prescribes in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number. The library board may exclude from use of the public library all persons who willfully violate such regulations.”

It is the policy of the Edgerton Public Library that community people have the right to use library materials and services without being unduly disturbed or impeded by other library users, and that patrons and staff have the right to a safe and welcoming environment.

General Rule

Any behavior that disrupts or hinders public use of the library is prohibited on library property. This includes, but is not limited to, loud or boisterous behavior, verbal or physical harassment, impairment due to substance use, running and fighting, and engaging in excessive displays of public affection. Behavior that is annoying, harassing, or threatening to another person either through language or gestures will not be allowed.

Guidelines

1. The violation of federal or state laws or local ordinances will not be permitted on library property. Theft, vandalism, and mutilation of library property are criminal offenses and may be prosecuted. The library reserves the right to inspect all bags, briefcases, backpacks, and other such items when the staff has reason to believe this rule has been violated.
2. The library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.
3. Use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products including electronic delivery devices (vaping), or illegal drugs is not permitted on library property.
4. All entries, exits, and walkways both inside and outside of the library must be kept free from strollers, bicycles, scooters, and other equipment. Benches should be utilized for seating outside the library and bicycles should be parked in the bike rack.
5. Selling products or services, and soliciting donations, are not permitted in the library except when pre-approved as part of a library sponsored program.

6. Taking surveys, circulating petitions, distributing leaflets and other similar activities are permitted in the library only when authorized by the library administration.
7. Animals, except those used to aid persons with disabilities, are not permitted in the library, except as part of a library sponsored program. Animals must be leashed and under control at all times. The library is not responsible for animals left unattended on library property.
8. Food is permitted in the library only in so far as it does not create a mess in the library and does not annoy other patrons. Food should be consumed while seated in a single area and not carried around the library. Library staff has the right to ask patrons with messy, loud, or odorous food to leave the library.
9. Beverages must be in closed containers and kept away from computer work stations.
10. All persons must respect the privacy and space of persons using the computer workstations. A maximum of two persons may use any one of the library's computer workstations simultaneously.
11. Headphones should be utilized when using devices that produce sound. Cell phone conversations should be conducted away from computer stations.
12. Seating at library tables, carrels and chairs is limited to the number of persons for whom the furniture was designed.
13. Parents or other legal guardians are responsible for the behavior of their minor children in the library. Children under the age of eleven years of age are expected to be attended and adequately supervised by a parent, guardian or caregiver who is a responsible person of at least twelve years of age. Older children may use the library unattended provided they are able to maintain proper library behavior in accordance with this policy. The library is not responsible for unattended children after the library closes for the day.
14. Library staff will always respond to children with care and concern, but they cannot assume responsibility for children when they are unattended. Staff may contact authorities such as the police either to assist with the enforcement of discipline in the library or to ensure the safety of an unattended child.
15. All persons are required to wear shoes in the library, except babies who are too young to walk.
16. No wet swimwear is allowed in the library.

Staff responsibilities

Library Staff play an important role in ensuring that the Edgerton Public Library is a welcoming library environment for all.

Staff are expected to:

- Weigh the degree of disruptive conduct with the onsite conditions at the time
- Exercise their best judgment in determining conduct that is in violation of the Library Code of Conduct and in determining the correct course of action
- Explain the Library Code of Conduct to patrons
- Request that patrons conduct themselves in a way that is necessary to maintain a welcoming public library environment
- Seek assistance from other staff to resolve ongoing or escalating patron conduct issues

Consequences

Failure to follow the Library Code of Conduct may result in eviction from the library and may include a ban from future library use and services. Staff may request police assistance if patron in question refuses to leave the library, regardless of age. **All incidents cannot be planned for, and as such the Library Director and/or the Library Staff has full discretion on how and when to apply the aforementioned restrictions.**

Questions and appeals regarding compliance with this policy are to be addressed to the Library Director, and after that to the library board if the result of the appeal is believed to be unsatisfactory to the appellant.

Warning and Banning Process

1. A patron will be asked to cease any inappropriate behavior that violates the Code of Conduct policy and will be warned that if the behavior continues, the patron will be asked to leave the library premises.
2. A violator who refuses to correct the inappropriate behavior or who becomes belligerent will be asked to leave for the day. If the patron's inappropriate behavior continues on a later date, the patron will be banned from library premises for one month. The patron must talk to the Library Director prior to returning to the library.
3. If the patron's inappropriate behavior continues after the one-month ban, the patron will be banned from the library for 3 months. The patron must talk to the Library Director before returning to the library.
4. If inappropriate behavior still continues after the one-month ban, the Library Director determines subsequent actions.

All incidents will be documented. In the event that a patron's behavior constitutes an imminent serious threat to library property, other library patrons, or staff, library staff may call the police for assistance.

If an individual who has been banned attempts to return to the library premises, such an act will be considered trespassing and the police will be called to remove the person from library premises.

Approved by the Edgerton Public Library Board

April 11, 2001; revised October 11, 2010; revised September 10, 2019; revised September 13, 2022; revised May 9, 2023