

Madison Public Library
PATRON CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Mission Statement

The Madison Public Library is the community's center for ideas, information, learning, and connections. The Madison Public Library seeks to provide enjoyment, education, information and guidance through materials suited for the Borough of Madison.

Purpose

This policy is intended to provide guidance for acceptable and unacceptable behavior in the Library. This will allow all patrons of the Madison Public Library to use its facilities to the fullest extent during regularly scheduled hours.

Responsibility

The responsibility for these guidelines ultimately rests with the Library Board of Trustees. The authority and responsibility for setting these guidelines rests with the Library Director, who delegates this task to qualified professional staff.

Patrons Shall:

- Comply with this and all other Library policies.
- Engage in activities associated with the use of a public Library.
 - Patrons not reading, studying or using Library materials and/or services may be required to leave the building. Sleeping, except for young children under the supervision of the parent or caregiver, is not allowed.
- Respect the rights of other patrons.
 - Patrons shall report concerns about the activities or behavior of other patrons to a member of the Library staff, but shall not approach other patrons directly, to criticize or complain about their activities or behavior.
 - Patrons shall not harass or annoy others through noisy or boisterous activities, or
 - by staring at another person with the intent to annoy that person,
 - by following another person about the building,
 - by using cell phones or playing audio entertainment equipment so that others can hear it except in designated areas as directed,
 - by singing or talking loudly to others or in monologues,

- by behaving in a manner which can be reasonably expected to disturb others.
- Comply with special posted rules that are specific to areas of the Library regarding computer use, tutoring, quiet spaces, etc.

Appropriate noise levels and behavior standards are determined by the Library staff.

Patrons Shall Not:

- Consume food or beverages in any areas of the Library where it is specifically prohibited.
- Smoke, use tobacco or tobacco products, use non-tobacco products, vape or use e-cigarettes or other similar products in the building.
- Be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or engage in any manner of substance abuse.
- Engage in any sexual activity on Library premises.
- Engage in any activity or conduct that is in violation of federal, state, or local laws or ordinances. Illegal activity is strictly prohibited on Library premises.
- Engage in any behavior that presents an imminent danger to the life or safety of others:
 - including intentional non-emergency activation of alarmed exits or fire alarms,
 - bringing any object, including but not limited to weapons, into the Library that is unsafe, harmful, dangerous, or poses an immediate threat to the safety and well-being of others.
- Leave a child under the age of seven unattended in the Children's wing of the building, or under the age of eleven unattended in the Library without the supervision of an adult.
- Interfere with the use of the Library by other patrons, or interfere with Library employees' performance of their duties.
- Violate the privacy of others in the Library, including capturing the images of others by photograph or video without their consent, or the consent of the Library Director.
- Use another patron's Library card and/or account number for any fraudulent purpose.
- Use obscene or threatening language, or words or actions likely to provoke an immediate reaction which may lead to confrontation or violence.

- Create obstructions to the free flow of pedestrian traffic with their personal items or by moving Library furniture or materials in any aisle, walkway, Library entrance or exit or sidewalk.
- Steal, deface, mar, destroy or make inoperable Library property*
 - *Library property includes books, magazines, newspapers, recordings or other items in the Library collection; Library furnishings and decor; windows or other Library architecture; restroom or kitchenette fixtures; audio/visual and office equipment; or other items in the Library.
- Manipulate or interfere with Library computers, software, Library data, networks, audio/visual equipment settings, office machines and/or print management systems.
- Enter or occupy staff-designated areas without permission and/or a staff escort.
- Enter or remain inside Library facilities before or after posted hours of operation without permission of the Library Director and/or the Board of Trustees.
- Engage in selling, panhandling or soliciting, including distributing printed materials, signing petitions or conducting surveys, except by permission of the Library Director and/or the Board of Trustees.
- Enter the building without a shirt or shoes.
 - Patrons over the age of 3 must wear a covering of their upper bodies and shoes or other footwear. Those wearing wet bathing suits, cleats or other wearable items that may cause damage may not enter the building. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other patrons may be required to leave the building.
- Use the Library restrooms for anything other than their ordinarily intended purpose, it being understood that such purposes do not include bathing, shaving, or washing hair or clothing.
- Use skateboards, bicycles, rollerblades, roller-skates, non-medical scooters or hoverboards, etc. on the Library property.
- Bring animals inside the Library with the exception of trained service animals as per the ADA and New Jersey Law Against Discrimination. No other animals are allowed unless as part of a pre-approved Library program.
- Service and approved guest animals are subject to these condition
 - Animals must be kept in custody and under control at all times.
 - Patrons may be required to pay for any damage caused by their animal.

Staff Enforcement Procedure

A staff member observing a violation of the Library's rules shall:

- approach the patron observed violating the policy courteously
- tell the patron that the behavior is unacceptable, and ask the patron to refrain from the behavior.
 - If the Library staff cannot identify an individual in a group, the group may be addressed as a whole.

If the behavior continues:

- the staff member may approach the patron a second time, reiterate the relevant policy, and warn that he/she may be asked to leave the Library.
- If the behavior is so disruptive, or if the staff member believes a second warning is inappropriate under the circumstances, the staff person need not approach the patron a second time.

In the event the behavior does not cease:

- the staff member is to direct the patron to leave the Library immediately.
- If the patron refuses to leave, the staff member may warn the patron that he/she has no choice but to call the police, or may call the police without warning if deemed appropriate.
- The staff member shall meet the police officer at the door (or a second staff member shall be alerted to meet the police) to instruct the officer that an individual has been asked to leave the Library and has refused to do so.

Any Librarian or Library assistant is empowered to enforce this behavior policy. Anyone ejected under enforcement of this policy may not re-enter the Library that day and up to an additional two (2) days. A suspension of longer than three days is covered under the Suspension Policy and Procedure.

Suspension Policy and Procedure

Any patron ejected through the procedure explained in the Staff Enforcement Procedure section may be subject to a longer suspension for habitual improper behavior.

Suspension from the Library means:

- the patron may not enter the Library.
- If the suspended patron enters the Library the police will be called to remove the patron and the patron may be subject to criminal charges.

The Library Director may recommend the suspension of a violator's Library privileges, including the right to enter the Library, for a period of time greater than three days for repeat offenders, egregious behavior or incidents within the Library that result in a police report by notifying the Board Officers.

Written notices will be sent to the patron or, in the case of a minor, to the patron's parents, with a date upon which the suspension will go into effect and a date upon which the suspension will end. In the event of a suspension, the patron may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Trustees.

The patron may appear at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The term "Library" when used herein encompasses the Library Building, the Chase Room, and the Library grounds except where the context indicates otherwise.

First adopted and approved, January 2010.

Amended and approved by the Board of Trustees of the Madison Public Library at an open public meeting, following normal public notice, on 07/11/2019.

Amended and approved by the Board of Trustees of the Madison Public Library at an open public meeting, following normal public notice, on 02/09/2023.