

Code of Conduct: Patron Behavior Policy

Updated 7/2022

The North Suburban Public Library District strives to provide a safe, pleasant, and welcoming environment for our residents and guests. Patrons are expected to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of themselves and others. Behavior that violates this policy may result in intervention by staff members. To support this purpose, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following patron behavior code of conduct. Conduct that will not be allowed in the library or on library grounds includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any activity that violates federal, state, or local statutes or ordinances, including any conduct that violates health guidelines required by the Winnebago County Health Department.
2. Interfering with another person's ability to use the facilities or services or with library employees' performance of their duties.
3. Interference includes behavior that is deliberately intrusive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive, or that monopolizes the time of a staff member. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to: following, interrupting, staring at, or spying on any patron or staff member.
4. Behaving in a disorderly, boisterous, or loud manner, including but not limited to: playing audio listening devices at levels audible to others, loud talking, loud laughter, profanity, or excessive displays of public affection.
5. Placing or taking verbal phone calls in unapproved areas of the Library or in such a manner as to disturb others.
6. Loitering, panhandling, soliciting, petitioning, or congregating.
7. Running in the library, skateboarding, roller blading, or using roller shoes.
8. Damaging, defacing, destroying, or theft of library property. Staff may inspect briefcases, bags, purses and so forth at any time if a person is suspected of stealing or mutilating materials. Anyone found stealing or mutilating property will be prosecuted.
9. Verbal or physical harassment, including but not limited to: threatening another person or fighting.
10. Possession of any weapons or using matches, lighters, or other means of ignition.
11. Eating, sleeping, gambling, or use of tobacco products, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Beverages must be in a lidded container.
12. Bringing personal belongings in spaces where they interfere with patrons' and staff members' ability to use library collections, furnishings or equipment, or to move safely and freely throughout the premises. Patrons shall not leave personal belongings unattended.
13. Creating a nuisance to other patrons or staff with offensive bodily hygiene or use of scented products, not wearing shoes and shirts in the library, or using library rest room facilities for inappropriate purposes i.e. loitering, bathing, etc.
14. Bringing animals, except well-behaved service animals that provide assistance to persons with disabilities, inside library facilities or within 10 feet of any door.
15. Violation of the Internet Policy for Public Access:
 - Patrons may not access or attempt to access inappropriate sites that by local community standards would be considered obscene (see Internet Policy for Public Access on NSLD website: www.northsuburbanlibrary.org).
 - Patrons who damage library equipment, including hacking or spreading computer viruses, may lose their library privileges or be prosecuted.
16. Disregarding the reasonable direction of a Library staff member. This includes, but is not limited to, remaining in the library past regular operating hours or when circumstances dictate evacuation, i.e. power failure, fire, threatening weather, or similar situation.
17. Being present in Library offices, lounges, storage areas, or other non-public areas while unaccompanied by a Library staff member or without prior agreement with Library management.
18. Leaving children in need of supervision unattended on the premises. (See Unattended Children and Youth After Hours policy.)
19. Using another patron's library card to check out materials, gain time on library computers, or use other library services. Library cards are not transferable.
20. Any behavior that is contrary to the intended purposes of the library.

Warning Procedure

- Staff will issue a verbal warning to cease the behavior or actions.
- First Warning is issued if behavior continues. Violators will be asked to leave the library for the remainder of the day.
- Second Warning will be issued upon the second violation. The violator will be blocked from the library for 30 days.
- Third Warning is issued upon a third documented offense. Violators may be barred from the library premises for a period of one year.
- In the event a patron barred from the use of the library attempts entry to the library during any such period of exclusion, the police will be summoned and informed of the prior action.
- In instances involving minors, identification may be requested and the incident may be reported in writing, or by phone, to the parent or guardian.

- Patrons engaged in misconduct that is extreme or potentially threatening will be ordered to leave the building immediately, and may be excluded from the library for a length of time determined by the Library Board or Library Director.
- The Library is not required to go through the entire intervention process. Intervention may begin at any step, including immediate involvement of the police, depending upon the severity of the incident or behavior.
- Patrons wishing to appeal such action may do so upon written request to the Board of Library Trustees.

Unattended Children and Youth After Hours

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children while they are in the library. The North Suburban Public Library District staff welcomes children and is committed to help children with activities related to the library. We encourage families to make full and frequent use of the library with the understanding that the library is not designed to provide child care needs. Library staff cannot, nor is it their responsibility to serve as baby-sitters, teachers, or disciplinarians.

- Children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons, and are subject to the same consequences, including being asked to leave the library.
- Whenever advisable, the library will notify the parent of incidents involving an unattended child.
- Children younger than age 12 must be accompanied by a parent or capable caregiver age 14 or older.
- Children younger than age 9 must be in close proximity and within sight of a parent or other capable caregiver age 14 or older.
- Children under the age of 18 who are unable to follow NSLD's Code of Conduct must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- When the safety of an unattended child is in doubt, or the parent or caregiver cannot be located, library staff is authorized to call the police.
- Parents and caregivers are required to be familiar with the library's hours and to make advance arrangements to pick up or otherwise transport their children before the library closes. In the event a young person is still at the library after the library closes to the public, the police will be called to pick up the young person. Attempts will be made to reach parents, but in no instance will staff take young people home. Two staff members will stay with the young person until parent, caregiver, or police arrive.

July 2022: Policy is adopted by the Library's Board of Trustees.

Contact NSLD's Library Director for more information: 815-633-4247x118.