

Sewickley Public Library

Patron Behavior Policy

Sewickley Public Library

Policy No.: 301

Title: Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy

Section: 300 Patron Policies

Date Adopted: May 13, 2013

Date Revised: February 13, 2017

Purpose: To protect the rights of individuals including patrons, staff, volunteers, etc., who are in the library to work or use materials or services and to assist staff members in conducting library business efficiently, and to preserve library materials and facilities.

Statement of Policy:

Library patrons are expected to use the library, including its facilities, grounds, resources and materials, in a responsible, appropriate, and courteous manner. Illegal acts or conduct in violation of Federal, State, or local laws, ordinances or regulations, and library policies are prohibited. Behavior that disturbs or infringes on the rights of other library patrons and staff and which damages library materials and property is not permitted. This policy applies to patrons of all ages.

1. Rules and Regulations:

Actions prohibited include, but are not limited to:

- 1.1 Engaging in disorderly conduct, drunken, dangerous or threatening behavior, fighting or challenging to fight, running or using offensive words which disturb or tend to disturb the peace or good order of the library, and any other behavior that is disruptive to library use.
- 1.2 Blocking entryways, vestibules, book returns, restrooms, staircases, elevator or other common areas.
- 1.3 Refusing to comply with the requests of any member of the library staff to comply with library policies.
- 1.4 Using offensive or abusive language or acting or behaving disrespectfully toward a library employee, volunteer or patron.

- 1.5 Any forms of harassment – physical, sexual, verbal, online – of library patrons, staff, or others. Harassment may include initiating unwanted conversations, impeding access to the building, stalking, cyberbullying, hacking, and the like.
- 1.6 Displaying obscene or sexually explicit materials or Internet sites in violation of 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec 5903.
- 1.7 Excessive noise and other disturbances, such as loud conversation, laughter, use of audible electronic devices, or music which is disturbing to others, separate from an authorized library program.
- 1.8 Selling and/or soliciting for services, money, items, or signatures, except for library or library-related activities.
- 1.9 Distributing or posting printed materials, literature, or other items that have not been approved by the Library for use inside the library building.
- 1.10 Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 1.11 Smoking or other uses of tobacco, e-cigarettes, tobacco vaporizers, or similar products.
- 1.12 Food and beverages are not permitted in the Children’s Department, the History Room or at any public computer. Beverages are permitted elsewhere on the first floor. Light snacks are permitted in the Colbert Reading Room and patio. SPL does permit beverages in designated areas and food on special occasions such as fund raising events or for programming purposes. Librarians may make judgment decisions regarding food and beverages based on special circumstances.
- 1.13 Not wearing shoes or shirts.
- 1.14 Bringing animals or pets into the library except for assistance animals or for specific library programs.
- 1.15 Intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing any property belonging to the library, a patron, employee, or volunteer.
- 1.16 Removing library materials from the premise without authorization through established lending procedures.
- 1.17 The use of cell phones by patrons for conversational purposes is restricted to the entry vestibules of the library building, the hallway outside the Children’s Department, or outdoors. Electronic devices must be turned off or set to vibrate at all times within the library if such device makes an audible sound.
- 1.18 Moving tables, chairs or other furniture beyond ordinary use without permission of library staff.
- 1.19 Leaving a child under 8 years of age unattended by a responsible person.
- 1.20 Misuse of restrooms. Restrooms are for the use of library patrons and staff only. Smoking, changing of clothes, bathing, and hair washing are not allowed.

- 1.21 Possessing weapons of any type including knives and cutlery, unless permitted by the library staff.
- 1.22 Indecent exposure.
- 1.23 Gambling.
- 1.24 Entering "Staff Only" areas without permission of library staff.
- 1.25 Use of staff computers, phones, or any equipment designated for staff use only.
- 1.26 Abuse of borrowing privileges.

2. The library reserves the right to:

- 2.1 Inspect all backpacks, book bags, satchels, and briefcases.
- 2.2 Confiscate and dispose of any food, beverage or containers thereof brought into the library.
- 2.3 Limit the number of persons who may sit together on a single chair, at a table, carrel or computer station, in an arrangement of casual seating, or in a study room.
- 2.4 Separate members of a group from one another or relocate individuals from one area of the library to another.
- 2.5 Impose time limits on the continuous use of library resources, including reference and circulating materials, computer equipment, staff telephones and equipment, and the study, conference, history, community and Colbert Room.
- 2.6 Require patrons to furnish commonly accepted forms of identification, such as a driver's licenses and student ID cards.

3. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit a person's freedom of expression of his first amendment rights as guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

4. The library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended. Personal items left by patrons are subject to disposal

5. Noncompliance:

- 5.1 Failure to comply with this policy and/or the library's established rules, regulations, and procedures will result in a warning and may also result in exclusion from the library for the day or specified period of time or permanently, and/or arrest.
- 5.2 Theft or damage of library materials is a serious offense and will result in permanent exclusion from the library and/or arrest.
- 5.3 Communication of threats, physical violence or sexual offenses will result in permanent exclusion and/or arrest.
- 5.4 Trespassers will be arrested and prosecuted.

- 5.5 Any person who is asked to leave the library as a result of the violation of these guidelines and refuses to do so shall be considered trespassing. The library staff will contact the Sewickley Borough Police Department in all such cases.
- 5.6 The library staff will call the Sewickley Borough Police Department at times when staff deems this to be necessary.
- 5.7 Any patron whose privileges have been denied by library staff may appeal that decision by making a written request to the Library Director within 10 days of the denial.
- 5.8 Within 10 days of receipt of this request, the Director shall mail a written statement approving or reversing the denial and explaining the reasons.
- 5.9 Within 10 days of the receipt of this statement, the patron may by written request appeal the Director's decision to the Sewickley Public Library Board of Directors. The Board shall approve or reverse the decision at its next regularly scheduled meeting.