

Manchester Community Library

Patron Conduct Policy

The Manchester Community Library (MCL) Patron Conduct Policy has been established to promote a welcoming and safe atmosphere for all. The policy is intended to ensure every individual's ability to make use of the Library and its associated resources to the fullest extent possible and to have reasonable access to Library facilities without interference. The policy cannot anticipate every possible event or situation; however, staff members are empowered to act and make decisions based on the good faith nature of this policy.

The Manchester Community Library supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Friendly, courteous, and respectful service
- Free and equal access to information
- Privacy and confidentiality in their use of Library services and collections (see Patron Privacy Policy)
- A welcoming, clean, and comfortable environment
- Use of the Library undisturbed and without threat of harm, interference, or discrimination by others

The use of Library facilities and resources implies acceptance of our Patron Conduct Policy, which is based on the following principles:

- Respect other patrons and their right to a positive experience at the Library
- Respect for Library staff whose responsibility it is to maintain a safe and comfortable atmosphere for all and to assist patrons in optimizing their Library experience
- Respect for all Library facilities, materials, computers, equipment, and resources, and rules regarding their use

Respect of Other Patrons

To ensure every individual's rights to use the Library free of disruption, Library patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a community library while on Library property (e.g., reading, studying, accessing library materials or services, attending programs or events, etc.) Patrons not engaged in library-related activities may be asked to leave the property.

Out of consideration for other patrons, conversation volume levels should be kept at moderate to low tones. Patrons are expected to note the designated areas within the Library for which brief in-person conversations and mobile phone use are permitted. Disruptive conduct, which includes any behavior that interferes with the normal functioning of the Library or Library programs by behaving in a manner which can be reasonably expected to disturb or be a nuisance to others, is not tolerated. Patrons engaged in disruptive conduct may be asked to leave the property.

Respect of Library Staff

The safety and security of the Library staff is of the utmost importance. The Library staff has the right to a safe and respectful work environment. Accordingly, patrons will use polite language and maintain a respectful tone and volume when engaging with staff. Patrons are expected to comply with requests from Library staff. Conduct that causes or threatens harm to staff, interferes with their performance of duties, or constitutes persistent, unwanted, hostile or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated.

Respect of Facilities, Materials, Technology, Equipment, and Resources

It is expected that all patrons will treat Library materials, furniture, and equipment with care, and use Library facilities, materials, and furnishings as intended. Such practices will help to ensure clean, comfortable, and safe facilities for the use and enjoyment of all.

Enforcement of the Patron Conduct Policy

- For the purposes of identification, Library staff may request that patrons provide proof of identity (e.g., library card, driver's license, school ID, etc.) at any time.
- The Library reserves the right to inspect all bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, etc. for concealed Library materials.
- It is expected that patrons will follow federal, state, and local laws and policies. Library staff are authorized to contact the police for assistance in the case of theft; violent, aggressive, or hostile behavior; illegal activity; or to ensure enforcement of this policy.
- Library staff have the authority to decide what is considered appropriate behavior and to enforce the Patron Conduct Policy. Library staff will inform the patron if they are violating the Patron Conduct Policy and warn them that continued violation will result in loss of privileges. Staff have the right to ask patrons to leave Library property if they are uncooperative, combative, hostile, or argumentative.
- The Library reserves the right at all times to immediately eject a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening to staff or other patrons.
- The Library may pursue remedies under federal, state, or local law where applicable.
- ***The Manchester Community Library assumes no responsibility for unattended minors.*** Parents and/or guardians are responsible for the behavior of their minor children, attended or unattended, while on Library property. Unattended minors who do not abide by Library rules and policies, or who exhibit behavior in violation of this policy, will be asked to leave the property.

Suspension of Library Privileges

- Library staff and law enforcement officers are authorized to enforce the Library's Patron Conduct Policy up to and including long-term suspension of library privileges, permanent banning from the Library, or criminal prosecution.
- Depending on the nature and frequency of the behavior, consequences may include suspension of Library privileges or permanent banning. The Board of Trustees and the Executive Director of the Library have the authority to ban from the Library premises any individual whose behavior is a sufficient threat to the ability of the Library to operate in a safe manner and/or individuals who repeatedly violate the Patron Conduct Policy. Reinstatement of Library privileges is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director of the Library.
- Banning or suspension from Library premises denies the patron access to Library property (e.g., building and grounds), programming, and services. Banned and suspended individuals will receive a written copy of their status, a copy of which will be kept by the Executive Director. Suspended patrons may still access, from an offsite computer, the Library's webpage and any databases available through its site.
- If any individual named in a suspension notice enters the Manchester Community Library before the return date listed on the suspension notice, it will be considered criminal trespass and the individual will be asked to leave. If the individual does not leave when asked, staff will contact local law enforcement.

- Individuals who have had their Library privileges suspended may appeal the suspension. A request must be made in writing and will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees and Executive Director of the Library within 15 business days.
- It is the sole responsibility of the individual banned to apply for reinstatement of Library privileges, which are not automatically granted at the end of the period of exclusion. A written request must be presented to the Board of Trustees and Executive Director to be eligible for reinstatement.

Minor Children

Parents or guardians are responsible for the welfare and behavior of their minor children (under 18) while in the Library or on Library grounds, regardless of whether or not they accompany their minor child. Minors aged 12 to 17 are permitted to use the Library unaccompanied by a parent or guardian; however, *The Manchester Community Library assumes no responsibility for unattended minors.*

Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs

The following policies apply equally to staff, vendors, patrons, and visitors:

- Smoking of any and all kinds, including vaping, is prohibited in the Library building and on the grounds.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited unless approved permits have been acquired in advance.
- A zero tolerance policy applies to illicit drug use.

Dangerous Weapons

Except for law enforcement officers, possessing on Library property any dangerous weapon (e.g., guns, knives) is prohibited.

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