

Code of Conduct Policy

Adopted: 1/17

Revised: 5/25

Approved by: Library Board of Trustees

Policy Statement

The Fenton Free Library Board of Trustees ("Board") is committed to providing an atmosphere conducive to the enjoyment of Library facilities, where people of all ages may read, study, use library equipment, and partake of Library activities and programs.

The Board and Library Staff invite all patrons to enjoy the Library and its collections, services and programs. Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status; because of mental, emotional, or physical condition; or because of age or sexual orientation.

The Board is authorized to establish rules and regulations for the protection of Library resources, visitors, staff and the physical building. The Library Director is authorized and directed by the Board to interpret and enforce these rules and regulations. The rules and regulations that follow are referred to as the Library's Code of Conduct.

Anyone whose behavior is not in compliance with the Library's Code of Conduct will be asked to leave the building and is subject to loss of library privileges (New York State Education Law, Section 262). Library visitors must cooperate with Library personnel in enforcing the Code of Conduct. If a person defies an order personally communicated by an authorized Library employee not to enter the library or not to remain in the Library for failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, said person is subject to arrest for trespass (New York State Penal Law, Section 140.05). Abusive language and behavior toward Library staff will not be tolerated.

Rules and Regulations

In general, behavior that violates the law, behavior that interferes with the use and enjoyment of the Library by others, and behavior that interferes with Library employees in the performance of their duties is prohibited. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the Library or upon Library grounds.

Entering the building and/or grounds of the Library signifies agreement with this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct is not a complete list of violations or prohibited behavior and is intended for guidance only. The Library staff is authorized to take appropriate action in response to any other behavior, which can reasonably be deemed to be unsafe, offensive or disturbing to Library patrons or staff members.

Behavior and Conduct

No person, either singly or in concert with others, shall:

- a. Disregard the reasonable lawful request(s) of Library staff or impede the orderly or efficient operation of the Library.
- b. Refuse to produce proper identification or Library card if requested by Library staff.
- c. Use abusive, foul, threatening or obscene language or gesture, or become involved in an act of violence or breach of the peace on Library property.

- d. Patrons shall not conduct any business or trade for profit.
- e. Patrons shall not carry weapons of any type.
- f. Patrons shall not sleep, stare, stalk, loiter, or litter.
 - Patrons who are sleeping, or who appear to be asleep, may be awakened by Library staff.
 - Loitering is defined as: remaining or wandering in a public place without any discernible legitimate reason. A patron who remains on library property without being engaged in library-related activities such as reading, studying, using library computers, using meeting rooms, checking out books or attending library programs may be considered to be loitering.
 - This includes sleeping or camping on library grounds, including the parking lot.
- g. Patrons shall not enter staff work areas without express invitation and permission from an authorized member of the Library staff.
- h. Harassment, in any form, directed at library customers or personnel will not be tolerated. Harassment shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. following such person in or about a public place or places or by engaging in a course of conduct or by repeatedly committing acts which places such person in reasonable fear of physical injury (NY Penal Law 240.25);
 - ii. striking, shoving, kicking or otherwise subjecting such other person to physical contact, or attempts or threats to do the same;
 - iii. engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly commits acts which alarm or seriously annoy such other person and which serve no legitimate purpose. (NY Penal Law 240.26).
- i. Disrupt, interfere with, or attempt to prevent the orderly conduct of staff or others using the Library or attending lectures, meetings, and other public events authorized by the Library or engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with normal operation of the Library.
- j. Make excessive noise. Noise will be maintained at levels that ensure a quiet environment for reading and study. Normal conversational noise levels are permitted within reason as long use of the Library by other patrons or Library staff is not disrupted.
- k. Run, fight, or roughhouse.
- l. Roller skate, skateboard or play ball in the Library, on the grounds or in the parking lot, unless it is part of a special event or program sponsored by the Library.
- m. Willfully misuse, mar, deface, damage or destroy library property, equipment, or displays. Library furniture, fixtures, and property are arranged for effective Library operation and may not be moved or rearranged without permission from Library staff.
- n. Make visual recordings or take photographs of library users, staff, or the interior or exterior of the Library or Library grounds without the prior approval of the Library Director.

- o. Distribute unauthorized materials in the Library. Materials must be submitted for review and approval for posting and/or distribution.
- p. Sell, panhandle or solicit in the Library building, on the grounds or in the parking lot.
- q. Leave a child or children of any age at the Library for childcare or baby-sitting purposes. Children under the age of 11 must be supervised during Library visits and must not be left unattended.
- r. Having offensive body odor (including excessive perfume or cologne) or personal hygiene.
- s. Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.

Patrons are encouraged to report disruptive individuals to the staff.

Proper Dress, Smoking, Food, Beverages and Animals

- a. Public health codes must be observed. Library users must be fully clothed and wear shoes; bare feet are not permitted.
 - A patron may be asked to leave if their personal hygiene interferes with the ability of others to use and enjoy the facility.
- b. Sinks in Library bathrooms are for hand washing only.
- c. In accordance with New York State and local law, the Library, including its property and parking lot is a smoke-free establishment.
- d. The consumption of food is prohibited, except during special events and/or programs sponsored by the library. Groups using the Library may only serve food and beverages with permission of the Library Director.
- e. Non-alcoholic beverages in lidded (covered) containers may be consumed in the library. Lidded containers include covered coffee, water, soda, and juice cups, glass and plastic beverage bottles, and beverage cans. The use of "sippy cups" and/or baby bottles is also permitted.

Personal Property

- a. The Library is not responsible for users' personal property. If a personal loss occurs, a staff member will assist the person in notifying the police of the loss.
- b. The Library reserves the right to inspect the contents of any bag, knapsack, or briefcase that a patron wishes to bring into the library building or onto library grounds, including the parking lot and no person shall refuse to permit such inspection if requested by Library staff.

- c. Personal belongings may not obstruct aisles, walkways or seating for other patrons and may not be left unattended at any time. Monopolization or blocking of library spaces, aisles, ingress, egress, resources, equipment, or furniture is prohibited. Examples include lying on floor or other surfaces.
- d. Unattended personal property which is found in the Library will be kept in lost and found for up to thirty (30) days and then will be considered abandoned property and shall be disposed of by the Library.
- e. Bicycles shall be parked in the bicycle rack are not allowed in the Library or the entrance way to the Library.
- f. Parking vehicles on Library premises for purposes other than official library use. Vehicles parked in violation of this rule may be towed at the owner's expense.
- g. Only library-oriented materials may be brought into the library. Items such as writing materials, book bags, briefcases, etc are acceptable; sleeping bags, hiking equipment, sports items and other personal items are not. Library staff may ask patrons to leave personal items outside the library. The library is not responsible for unattended personal items, whether inside or outside the library.

Use of electronic devices

- a. Mobile telephones and personal communication devices: Mobile telephones conversations may not be carried on in the Library and electronic devices should be set to "vibrate" or set so as to be inaudible to other patrons and the Library staff.
- b. Personal audio players (e.g. MP3 players, CD players, tape players, or any other type of audiovisual player) may be used only with headphones, and the volume must be inaudible to other patrons and to Library staff.
- c. Personal computers: Patrons using their own computers must comply with the Library's separate policy on use of computer and access to the Internet as well as with the Library Code of Conduct.

Children's & Chapter Book Rooms

These rooms are intended primarily as a space for children, teens and caregivers to feel welcome and safe. Adults are welcome to browse for items, but adults who hang out in the space or use the tables without children present will be asked to move to a different part of the library.

Library Staff Procedure for Handling Code of Conduct Violations

- a. Anyone in violation of the Library Code of Conduct policy will be so informed by Library staff and asked to stop the conduct and/or leave.
- b. If further action is needed, the Library Director or designee will speak directly with the patron. If necessary, Library Director/designee will call 911 for emergency assistance.
- c. An Incident Report Form will be completed by Library staff for the Library Director.
- d. Members of the public who violate these rules and regulations may be expelled by staff members from the Library premises and/or have Library privileges withdrawn or suspended by the Library Director or designee for a specific or indefinite period of time.
- e. Notice of suspension will be either hand delivered or mailed, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the patron or, in the case of a minor child, his or her parent or guardian.
- f. A patron whose privileges have been denied may have the decision reviewed first as follows. In the event of a staff determination, the initial review shall be made by the Library Director. In the event of a Library Director determination, then appeal shall be by the Board of Trustees. The patron shall request a review by the Library Board of Trustees. An appeal may be made, in writing, to the attention of the President, Fenton Free Library Board of Trustees, 1062 Chenango Street, Binghamton, New York 13901, within ten (10) days of receipt of notice of suspension or within ten (10) days of denial of privileges. The patron, or in the case of a minor child, the parent or guardian, will be notified by mail of the date and time of the hearing on the notice of appeal.