

Elmwood Park Public Library Behavior and Code of Conduct Policy

The Library Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the rules of behavior in the facility and surrounding grounds, including meeting and study rooms, as well as staff areas. The library's Computer Use Policy regulates activities on the computer, but are not excluded from this policy. The intention of this policy is to:

- Protect the rights of individuals to use library materials and services without being disturbed or impeded by others
- Allow staff to conduct business without interference
- Ensure that library patrons and employees have a safe, secure, and comfortable environment
- Preserve library materials, property, and facilities; and to prevent damage or theft

The rules of behavior will be posted at each level of the building. Staff are empowered to take action to enforce these rules and any actions, which in their judgment, infringe on the productive use and enjoyment of the library by others. Also, Illinois Library Law (75 ILCS 5/4-7) gives the Board the right "to exclude from the use of the library any person who willfully violates the rules prescribed by the board."

Behavior prohibited in the Library includes, but is not limited to:

1. Conduct that disturbs or harasses library users or staff or that hinders others from using the library or materials, including disruptive conversation or conduct; intimidation; physical, sexual or verbal abuse.
2. Theft of, damage to, defacement of, or misuse of library materials, equipment, furniture, or facilities (including meeting rooms and restrooms) or another's property. The theft, vandalism or mutilation of library property or the property of others is a violation of law and may have legal consequences.
3. Smoking (including e-cigarettes) or using tobacco products inside or within 15 feet of the library entrance. Lighting matches, lighters or use of other flammables.
4. Possession, consumption, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances.
5. Possession or use of a weapon. The only exception is for sworn law enforcement officers.
6. Consuming or openly displaying food, unless at an authorized library event. Covered beverages are allowed.
7. Animals are not allowed except as otherwise provided by law, such as service animals, or for approved library functions. Animals left outside the library may not block access to the building.
8. Soliciting, selling, campaigning, petitioning or distributing materials or goods in the library, entryways, or grounds unless approved by the Library Director or with a valid permit issued by the Village.
9. Using bikes, rollerblades, skateboards, scooters or similar equipment in the library or immediately outside the library entrance. Wheelchairs, strollers and other similar equipment are permitted. All personal property must be attended and may not obstruct aisles, exits, or entrances.
10. Running or using sports equipment, unless at an authorized library event.
11. Personal hygiene that disrupts others from using the library, as well as shaving, bathing, or laundering clothes.
12. Loitering, panhandling, or gambling.
13. Not wearing shoes or shirt, or wearing inappropriate or indecent attire.
14. Sleeping in a manner that disturbs others, or interferes with the use of the library.
15. Failing to leave the premises promptly at closing, during an emergency or as directed by staff.
16. Being present in non-public areas of the Library unless accompanied by staff.
17. Sounding the fire alarm without cause.
18. Engaging in any illegal act or conduct in violation of Federal, State, or local law, ordinance or regulation.
19. Children under 7 years of age, unless accompanied by and under the direct supervision of a caregiver (parent, other adult, or mature adolescent 12 years or older).

Supervision, Safety and Behavior of Children in the Library

The Board is committed to providing programs and services for children. However, the library is a busy public facility, and staff members do not and cannot assume the responsibility for the supervision, safety, and entertainment of children and teens, except within the context of defined library programs and activities. This responsibility must be borne by the child's parent, guardian, or designated caregiver and cannot be expected of or forced upon library staff. Rule #19 above stipulates an age when a child must be accompanied. While a child in this age group may attend a library program alone, the caregiver should remain in the building and be readily available should care or supervision be required.

Enforcement of Behavior Policy

- Staff is authorized to use all necessary and reasonable measures to enforce these policies.
- Staff will make every effort to contact caregivers of unaccompanied children, but if we cannot within a reasonable amount of time, the authorities may need to be contacted.
- Any patron or group of patrons who exhibit or participate in prohibited behavior or disregard library rules or policies after having been warned by staff may be asked to leave for the day, or up to 3 days.
- The Library Director is authorized to limit or suspend for 90 days (all or in part as determined by the Director), library privileges of anyone whose unacceptable behavior is chronic, severely disruptive, or dangerous. Parents of minor children will be notified of this action.
- With approval of the Board, a person or group may be denied access to the library for longer than 90 days, including permanently.
- Any patron or group of patrons who do not leave the library as directed by staff or returning during a banned period will be considered trespassers.
- Police may be called at any time to remove trespassers or provide assistance to staff in dealing with persons who violate library policies.
- A person or group whose privileges are denied or limited may appeal the decision to the Board by requesting a hearing. Any such request must be submitted in writing, and a hearing will be held at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board will be final.

Documentation

- Incident reports will be completed by staff after such situations, disseminated to managers, and saved on the library's network to serve as documentation. Footage from the library's security cameras may also be used as documentation.

Policy Review and Revision

Elmwood Park Public Library Board of Trustees will review this document at least biennially.

Approved and Adopted by Library Board, August 21, 2014.