

Public Conduct Policy

of the Porter County Public Library System

The library seeks to create a welcoming, safe, comfortable, and inclusive environment that facilitates the use of library resources and services. While using the library or its resources, individuals shall behave respectfully and responsibly, and shall refrain from the following:

- Illegal activity of any kind
- Actual or potential damage, destruction, tampering, vandalism, or theft of property
- Obscene, indecent, sexual, or lewd conduct
- Threatening, harassing, or intimidating language or behavior
- Possession of any weapon, except as permitted by law, which must be secured or holstered, and not brandished or displayed in a threatening or intimidating manner
- Intoxication; consumption or possession of intoxicating (nonmedical) substances
- Use of electronic smoking devices or tobacco products
- Disorderly, disruptive, or boisterous conduct; running, throwing, horseplay, etc.
- Use of wheeled conveyances such as skateboards, bicycles, shopping carts, etc.; does not apply to devices such as wheelchairs, strollers, etc. used for mobility
- Solicitation, petitioning, or canvassing
- Selling of goods or services, except as part of an approved library program
- Loud or avoidable noise in designated quiet areas
- Using auditory devices without headphones; may not apply to assistive devices
- Speaking on a phone or other communication device in unapproved areas
- Creating a custodial burden such as with food or drink, refuse, litter, dirt, etc.
- Not wearing footwear if ambulatory; not wearing clothing that covers the torso
- Sleeping, bathing, washing laundry, camping, or otherwise using the library for living or accommodation purposes
- Blocking aisles or doorways, or interfering with the free movement of individuals
- Unattended personal property
- Animals brought inside, unless a service animal; unleashed animals anywhere on the premises, unless the handler is unable to leash a service animal because of a disability
- Strong odors, unhygienic behavior, or any conduct that may spread bodily substances
- Insect infestation, either on an individual's person or in their living space
- Use of areas and property other than for the intended purpose and by the intended users
- Being in unauthorized areas, or remaining on library premises after closing or evacuation
- Leaving library premises during open hours while a vehicle is parked on library property or overnight parking
- Engaging on-duty staff in personal, social, or other activities not related to services
- Not following a reasonable request made by a library staff member

All children aged 10 or younger, or dependents of any age who are vulnerable or unable to autonomously adhere to this policy, must be accompanied and closely attended by a caregiver at least 14 years old with the maturity and ability to regulate the child's behavior and guard their safety. The library is not responsible for the care, supervision, or control of minors. Unattended children whose caregivers cannot be contacted may be placed in the care of local police.

The library is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. The library reserves the right to inspect all parcels when staff has reason to believe policy may have been violated.

Conduct that does not comply with this policy may result in the loss of library privileges, such as account blocks, temporary or permanent removal from the premises, or no-trespass orders. The library reserves the right to immediately discharge individuals who are dangerous or in any way threatening. Library staff may take any measures reasonably appropriate to enforce this policy including contacting law enforcement. At the director's discretion, exceptions to the conduct guidelines above may be made for specific circumstances or events.

History

Adopted: April 17, 2024

Supersedes: The following sections of PCPLS Policy Manual Section II (2011): "Petitions, Surveys and Solicitations", "Drugs & Alcohol", "Eating and Drinking", "Lost or Stolen Property", "Tobacco-Free Library", "Patron Rights," "Patron Responsibilities," "Problem Patron Procedures", "Illegal Behavior", "Unattended Children", and "The Use of Buildings Located on Library Property".