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Public Library of Northfield



In order to provide all Library users with equal access to the Library's collections and services, and to achieve the optimum and safest use of the Library facilities, the Board of Trustees has adopted these rules governing the use of the Library.

Library users shall engage in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building. The Library is intended to be used for reading, studying, securing information, conducting research, computer access, borrowing Library materials, or attending Library-authorized programs, meetings and activities.

Persons visiting the Library are responsible for following these and all posted rules and policies. Copies of the Library Policies are posted on the Library's website (www.nflibrary.org) and in the Library and a paper version may be requested from the Circulation Desk.

Any person violating the Library's rules, or local ordinances, State or Federal statutes or regulations will be required to leave the premises. Police assistance may be utilized. Persistent or extreme violations of these rules may result in the suspension of Library privileges, including the right to use the facilities and/or borrow materials.

Illegal Behavior

Activities in the Library are governed by local ordinance, state and federal regulations and statutes regulating conduct in public places. These laws **prohibit**:

- Intoxication and illegal drug use: Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, or being under the influence of the same
- Smoking or other use of tobacco
- Harassment, assault, and disorderly conduct, including:
 - Threatening, harassing, staring at or physically harming Library users or staff members within or outside of the Library premises.
 - Using obscene or offensive language, including but not limited to racial comments or language deemed inappropriate for public buildings.
- Public indecency, including but not limited to any form of sexual misconduct (i.e. exposure, offensive touching, sexual harassment of patrons or staff, or viewing or distributing pornography within the Library.)
- Stealing Library material or property or stealing the property of another person or staff member.
- Criminal mischief, including damaging library property or the property of another person or staff member.
- Gambling, selling and/or soliciting for money or items or services.
- Trespassing: entering the Library building when it is closed to the public; entering non-public areas in the Library without proper authorization, such as staff work rooms, offices, equipment rooms, and storage areas.
- Loitering: remaining or wandering around in the Library without any apparent legitimate reason, i.e. sleeping, sitting without using Library resources. Patrons also may not stand around a staff desk when they are not engaged in discussion with the employee, nor may they stand around another patron's desk area or computer station.
- Carrying a weapon, unless authorized by law.

Library Policy also governs behavior in the Library. The following activities are also **prohibited** on Library premises:

Disruptive Behavior

- Interfering with another person's use of the Library or with Library personnel's performance of their duties.
- Disturbing other people or employees of the Library by disrupting their use of the Library or their work, i.e. inappropriate use of personal equipment, including but not limited to cellular phones, computers of any kind, PDAs,

radios, music players, portable televisions or video display devices; conversation with others; extended use of equipment such as public computers, photocopiers, and pay telephones.

- Speaking loudly or having conversations in designated Silent Study or Quiet Study areas.
 - Blocking aisles, pathways, doorways or emergency exits.
 - Sitting or lounging in areas that are not designated sitting areas.
 - Distributing or posting printed materials/literature that has not been approved the Library Director.
 - Photographing or videotaping without prior permission of the Library administration and the permission of all Library users being photographed or recorded.
 - Sleeping.
 - Eating in the Library. (Covered beverages and small snacks are permitted only in non-computer areas.)
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- Bringing animals into the Library, except when needed to assist a person with a disability.
 - Having offensive bodily hygiene that constitutes a nuisance to other Library patrons or staff, and interferes with the rights of others to use the Library.^[1]
 - Not wearing shoes or a shirt.
 - Misusing library materials or property.
 - Putting feet or legs on the furniture or misusing furniture. Adults may only sit in chairs designed for adults.
 - Misusing restrooms, including changing or washing of clothes or bathing.
 - Taking Library materials into the restrooms, unless the materials have been checked out by the patron.
 - Bicycles, bedrolls and blankets are not allowed in the Library at any time. Duffle bags, suitcases, carts or large plastic bags are not allowed in the Library, unless the person is passing through (i.e. returning an item or picking up an item on hold at the Circulation Desk). A person may not sit at a table or desk with these large items.
 - Bringing more than two bags per person with the purpose of remaining in the Library for an extended period of time. Each bag should not exceed 21x11x15 inches.
 - Leaving personal property unattended in the Library or on its premises. The Library is not responsible for any property left unattended or for any property discarded.

Misusing Library Computers

- Using the Library computers more than is permitted on any given day.
- Reprogramming or altering Library computer software or data or tampering with computer software or hardware.
- The Library is not responsible for the malfunction of personal property used in the Library, for example, for electric surges causing damage to personal devices or computer viruses.
- Violating the Library Internet Safety Policy. This states in part, that computer and internet use that jeopardizes another person's safety, security, confidentiality, or which damages another person or entity's property (real or virtual), or which violates the law or encourages others to violate the law, is prohibited.

Violating the Library's Policy on Safety in the Youth Services Area

- Adults loitering in the Youth Services Area. Adults (19 years of age and older) who are not accompanied by children (18 years of age and younger) may use the Youth Services Area only for the purpose of retrieving materials for check out or to make arrangements to pull materials for research on the first floor of the Library.
- Leaving a child under the age of nine (9) unattended by a responsible caregiver who stays with the child at all times in the Library. (A responsible caregiver must be at least 14 years of age and assumes full responsibility for the child's safety and behavior in the Library.)
- Violating other rules of conduct or behavior established for persons using the Youth Services area.

Enforcement of the Policy Governing the Use of the Library

- A. Security personnel and staff are authorized to use necessary and reasonable measures to enforce these policies. In this regard, Library personnel have the right to:
1. Confiscate and dispose of any food, beverage, or containers thereof brought into the facility.

2. Inspect the contents of bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, and other containers for Library material and equipment.
3. Limit the number of persons who may sit together at a single table or carrel, in an arrangement of lounge seating, on in a study room.
4. Separate members of a group from one another or relocate individuals from one area of the Library to another.
5. Impose time limits on the continuous use of Library resources, including reference materials, computer equipment, microfilm and copier machines, public telephones, and study rooms.
6. Designate specific areas of the building for limited and/or special purpose use.
7. Require library users to furnish commonly-accepted forms of identification, such as drivers' licenses, student ID cards, and library cards.
8. Seek the help of the Northfield Police Department to enforce these policies.
9. Take other actions as deemed appropriate to enforce these policies.

Library users are urged to report disruptive or dangerous behavior to staff immediately so that appropriate steps can be taken to resolve the problem.

- B. The Employee in Charge is authorized to limit or suspend, for up to (30) days, the Library privileges of anyone whose unacceptable behavior is dangerous or severely disruptive, or becomes chronic in nature, and may seek the approval of the Library Director to suspend library privileges for a longer period.
- C. The Library Director and Assistant Director are authorized to limit or suspend, for up to two (2) years, the Library privileges of anyone whose unacceptable behavior is dangerous or severely disruptive or becomes chronic in nature. With the approval of the Board of Trustees, a person or group may be denied the privilege of access to the Library permanently. A written notification from the Library containing the right to appeal the suspension will be provided at the time of the suspension.
- D. Any person whose privileges have been suspended, or who has been permanently excluded from Library facilities, may appeal the decision in writing to the Library Director within fourteen (14) days of the denial of library privileges. The written request must include the name, current mailing address, time and date of the denial of privileges and the basis for the appeal including any written documentation to be included in the appeals process.

The Library Director will review the appeal and provide a decision in writing. The person may file a request for a Library Board review of the Library Director's decision within fourteen (14) days after receiving the decision. The Board of Trustees shall review the appeal at the next regularly scheduled board meeting, considering the written record, and will issue a final decision.

During the appeal process, the person whose privileges have been withdrawn or who has been excluded from Library facilities may not enter the Library building at any time and must communicate in writing directly with the Library Director.

[1] See appellate court ruling in *Kreimer v. Bureau of Police*, 958 F.2d 1242 (3d Cir. N.J. 1992).

*Policy Approved by the Library Board of Trustees on December 14, 2017.