

Code of Patron Conduct

The Board of Trustees of the Patterson Library has established rules of behavior which Library users must adhere to when in the Library or on the Library grounds.

These regulations serve to make the Library a place where:

- 1) All feel welcome and safe
- 2) Patrons have the right to freely access Library materials and services
- 3) Library staff is able to conduct Library business
- 4) Library materials, facilities, and property are preserved and protected

Library users should conduct themselves in ways that respect other Library users and staff.

Prohibited conduct may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Harassing**, willfully annoying or threatening another person
- Behaving in a **disorderly**, loud or boisterous manner
- Peeping, **voyeurism** or exhibitionism
- **Impeding access** to the building or an area of the building, including leaving animals, bicycles or personal items in the Library or on Library property in a way that disrupts normal Library business
- Interfering with other patrons' use of the Library with loud, unreasonable, and/or disturbing **noises** or conversations and/or noises from electronic, entertainment, communication devices, and cell phones. Earphones are strongly recommended and available at the circulation desks.
- Intentionally leaving personal items in the building overnight. The Library assumes no responsibility for any **belongings left unattended**.
- **Smoking**, including e-cigarettes, in the Library or within 100 feet of the Library's entrance per the New York State Clean Indoor Air Act.
- Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of state, federal or local law, ordinance or regulation, including **vandalism, theft or endangering the safety of others**.
- Leaving **unattended youth or vulnerable adults** who need supervision. Refer to the "Unattended Child Policy" for more details.
- **Interfering with staff members' performance of duties on Library property**. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes the attention of a staff member for an inappropriate period of time, making inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, harassment of a physical and/or verbal nature, or refusing to comply with staff requests
- Dressing inappropriately to community standards for public spaces. Opaque **shirt, shoes, and bottoms** are required at all times. Clothing must not display words, pictures or symbols that imply hate or violence to any subset of people. Pornography will not be tolerated.
- Having offensive and/or **pervasive odor** or artificial scent that interferes with other users' ability to enjoy the Library
- Carrying any **weapon**, including firearms (regardless of concealed weapon permits)

Restricted conduct may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Bringing **animals** into the Library, except as required as service or therapy animals or for Library sponsored programming
- Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey taking, pan-handling, **soliciting** or selling, unless authorized by the Director or their designee
- **Using drugs, consuming alcohol** or being intoxicated. Alcoholic beverages may be consumed on the premises only at Library sponsored programs or at other times with the Director's approval.
- Entering **non-public areas**, unless accompanied by a staff member or through prior authorization from a staff member
- **Sleeping**. Staff will awaken any sleeping patrons out of concern for a possible medical problem.
- Consuming of **food or beverage** in any public computer area. In the children's and teen areas beverages with caps are allowed, but all food and other beverages must be consumed in the story time room. In all other areas, food and beverage are permitted under the discretion of the Library staff, with the understanding that the patron is responsible for cleaning any residue or mess.
- Using juvenile areas of the library as an **adult unaccompanied by a child**. While not absolutely precluded from such use, said adults will be asked by Library staff to use other areas of the library for activities such as magazine reading and computer use which are not specifically tied to use of materials in the juvenile area. Such requests are for the protection of adults as well as children.

In the event of health and other types of emergencies, Library users and staff are required to abide by protocols issued by the government or the Library's Board of Trustees.

Violations: Failure to comply with the Library's established rules and policies could result in removal from the premises and/or termination of Library privileges, or, when appropriate, violators will be subject to arrest.

Westfield Police Officers will be asked to intervene, if necessary, to stop prohibited activities and behaviors.

Suspension: Library staff members may ask violators of the Library's Policies to leave the premises for the day. This is termed a **suspension**. These persons may return no earlier than the following day, or longer at the Director's discretion. All suspensions will be documented in Library records.

Banning and Appeal: Library staff members may also **ban** persons for repeated and/or serious offenses. A *banned patron* may not return to the Library without the Library Director's permission. If they return to the Library without permission the police will be contacted to remove them from the building. All bans will be documented in Library records.

When a person is being banned, they will be given contact information for the Library Director, who is responsible for reinstating Library privileges. It is up to the banned person to contact the Director by phone, mail or email to set up a meeting to discuss the situation and the length of the ban, which may be one week or longer, at the discretion of the Director. At the meeting, banned persons under the age of 19 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. After the meeting, the banned person must leave Library premises until the date that the ban is lifted.