

Code of Conduct

Allegheny County libraries are a place for reading, studying, and writing; participating in programs, activities and meetings; and, for using or borrowing Library materials. We ask for your cooperation in maintaining an environment in which all Library customers can use and enjoy the Library's resources, services, and facilities. These rules are posted for the comfort and protection of all who use and work at the Library. These rules will be firmly enforced by Library staff and security. All Library users must comply with the Code of Conduct listed below:

The Allegheny County Library Board of Trustees establishes the Code of Conduct to:

- Protect the rights of individuals to enjoy the benefits of library facilities, materials and services
- Protect the rights of library staff members and volunteers to conduct library business without interference
- Preserve library materials and facilities from harm
- Ensure the safety of library patrons, employees and volunteers

The Patron Code of Conduct is posted in each library building. Library staff members are authorized to bring to an individual's attention any act which is prohibited in the library. The individual will be asked to change the problem behavior. If such change is not evident or forthcoming, that individual will be asked to leave library property for a period of time that is determined by the library's Guidelines. Failure to leave if asked may result in the police being called and a possible charge of trespass.

Each Children's or Teen area may have a separate Patron Code of Conduct posted for using that space. Children of all ages are welcome, but children under age 8 must be with a parent, guardian or baby sitter at least 13 years of age. Patrons of any age with mental, physical, or emotional disabilities who are being served by an attendant or caregiver must be accompanied by that attendant or caregiver at all times.

The Allegany County Library System reserves the right to modify this policy during times of local, state, or Federal states of emergency.

Mutual respect makes it possible for every library user to fully utilize library materials and services. All library users can help by being respectful of each other and by behaving in a manner that does not disrupt other patrons or staff members.

Prohibited Behaviors or Activities:

Behaviors that disturb the normal functioning of the library and/or create a disruptive and unsafe environment include but are not limited to:

- Failure to follow staff instructions
- Noise disturbing to others, including loud talking, yelling, inappropriate/loud use of cell phone and audio equipment, including during computer use
- Abusive or threatening language, profanity
- Deliberate behavior that is intimidating, threatening, hostile or offensive, or adversely impacts customers and/or staff work performance
- Fighting, physical abuse or assault

- Theft of or damage to library, patron or staff property; altering or attempts to alter library materials
 - Violating the Internet Use Policy, including the display of obscene or pornographic materials
 - Bare feet or chest
 - Consuming, possessing or selling alcohol or illegal drugs
 - No food or beverages may be consumed at library computers
 - Excessive displays of public affection or engaging in or soliciting sexual acts
 - Exhibitionism, voyeurism or lewd behavior
 - Gambling
 - Leaving children under 8 unattended (see Unattended Child Policy)
 - Offensive bodily odor
 - Panhandling, petitioning, soliciting or selling merchandise
 - Rollerblading or skateboarding on library property
 - Sexual harassment
 - Smoking, chewing tobacco or using other tobacco products
 - Spitting
 - Staring at others
 - Trespassing- entering library property when barred
 - Weapon possession
 - Fire, open flames, and candles
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Inappropriate Use of Facilities or Equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- Activities intended to interfere with or disrupt computer networks or equipment
- Animals, except service dogs or animals which are part of a library sponsored program
- Improper use of library furniture that may result in damage or unreasonable wear, such as feet on furniture or walls, lying down, moving furniture
- Obstructing passageways or blocking access to the library or any part of the library
- Use of public restrooms for bathing or laundry; other inappropriate use of restrooms; use of other public areas for personal grooming
- Vandalizing library facilities and equipment

**Approved by the
Board of Library Trustees
Allegany County Library System
February 20, 2023**