Caldwell County
NORTH CAROLINA
Public Library

Patron Code of Conduct

Purpose

To guarantee the rights of patrons to a proper atmosphere in their use of the library by establishing basic conduct rules.

Policy

The Caldwell County Library supports the right of all individuals to free and equal access to information and to library use without discrimination, intimidation, threats, or invasion of privacy. The Library is dedicated to providing friendly, courteous, and respectful service, as well as an enjoyable, clean, and comfortable environment for all users. To ensure a welcoming and safe space for reading, studying, or working, the library has established the following rules:

Respect for the rights and needs of all library users shall be maintained at all times.

All members of the public will conduct themselves so that they will not interfere, by their actions or speech, with the legitimate rights of other library users.

Conduct considered improper in the library includes, but is not limited to:

- Public disturbances
- Physical abuse or assault
- Offensive or abusive language, talking in loud tones, or making other loud noises
- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or other impairing substances
- Abusive use of library facilities or equipment (including all outside areas)
- Tobacco use and smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping) on any library premises
- Offensive personal hygiene
- Staring at, following, or photographing staff or patrons
- Harassment of others
- Panhandling or soliciting
- Indecent exposure, sexual acts, and excessive displays of affection
- Sleeping in the library
- Engaging in extended conversation or behavior that occupies the staff for an inappropriate period of time, including making inappropriate personal comments, making sexual advances, or engaging in physical and/or verbal harassment.

Patrons using the library are required to wear shoes and shirts at all times.

Covered beverages are allowed in the library. Eating is not allowed in the library, except in designated and identified spaces.

Only service animals qualifying under the Americans with Disabilities Act are permitted inside the library; all other animals are prohibited.

In order to maintain a safe and pleasant environment for children and parents in the children's area, adult customers who are not engaged in library activity which requires materials from the children's area will be asked to relocate to other areas of the library.

In order to maintain a safe environment for teens in the young adult area, adult customers who are not engaged in library activity which requires materials from the young adult area will be asked to relocate to other areas of the library.

Library furnishings and materials are not to be rearranged or disarranged by patrons without permission of library staff.

Packages, briefcases, and any other container may be examined at any time. All library materials shall be properly checked out before they may be borrowed. It is strongly suggested that customers not leave bags and other personal items unattended. Unattended items are subject to confiscation. The library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen or damaged in or on the grounds of the library. The library has a policy on the size and number of bags which may be brought into the library. The maximum combined size of items may not exceed 16"x 18"x 24" per patron.

Blocking aisles, entrances, or exits or in any manner impeding access to public areas is forbidden.

Unreasonable use of the restrooms, including laundering, shaving, hair cutting or trimming, and bathing is prohibited.

All patrons shall obey all reasonable requests of the library staff.

Responses to Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior on library property may result in exclusion from the library and/or being subject to arrest.

General Procedures

1. The first response to disruptive behavior will be a verbal warning. An incident report will be filed with the Library Director.

2. The next instance of disruptive behavior by the same patron will result in a written warning.

3. The third instance of disruptive behavior by the same patron will result in written

notification that they are banned from the library for a period of time to be determined by the Library Director.

Immediate Banning

The following violations of the Patron Code of Conduct will result in the immediate banning of the individual from the library grounds, with police enforcement as necessary. Banning will remain in effect for a time period to be determined by the Library Director. Criminal charges may also be filed.

- Assaulting staff or other library patrons
- Threatening staff or other library patrons
- Carrying an unauthorized weapon on library property
- Destruction or theft of library property
- Using abusive language toward staff or library patrons (including but not limited to profanity)
- Fighting (all parties involved)
- Dispensing chemicals or noxious substances including but not limited to pepper spray, stink bombs, and tear gas
- When it has been determined by the Library Director that a user is a chronic behavioral problem

Individuals failing to follow this policy will be asked to leave until the problem is corrected. Failure to comply with these policies could result in a suspension of library privileges and/or exclusion from all library premises for the period of time as deemed appropriate by library and county administration. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be called if necessary.

Adopted by the Caldwell County Public Library Board of Trustees September 18, 1996.
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