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Patron Code of Conduct Policy

The Hampstead Public Library wishes to foster a climate of respect, comfort and welcome within library facilities for all library patrons and staff. Public libraries are dedicated to facilitating learning, cultural enrichment, and the acquisition of knowledge through reading, writing and quiet contemplation.

To ensure a positive and respectful atmosphere, we have established the following Code of Conduct. All library users are expected to comply with these guidelines to maintain a space that is conducive to learning, reading, and community engagement, and to preserve and protect our library materials, facilities, equipment, and grounds.

The following list of actions are examples of behaviors not allowed in the library. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

- Abusing, threatening or harassing staff, volunteers, or patrons, either verbally or physically (for example, swearing, stalking, prolonged staring, lurking, offensive touching, or performing lewd acts).
- Carrying firearms or other weapons.
- Stealing, damaging, altering, or inappropriate use of Library property.
- Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local or other applicable law, or Library Policy.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes and vaping.
- Being under the influence of alcohol/ illegal drugs or selling, using, or possessing alcohol/ illegal drugs.
- Horseplay, running, fighting or challenging to fight, pushing, shoving, or throwing things.
- Creating disruptive noises such as loud talking, yelling, screaming, banging on computer keyboards, or using audible devices with or without headphones at a volume that disturbs others.
- Using skateboards, scooters, roller skates, or other similar equipment on library property.
- Photographing, filming, or recording other staff, volunteers or patrons without their consent.
- Shirts and shoes must be worn in the library.
- Parents are responsible for the supervision and behavior of their children. Children under the age of 9 years must be accompanied. Although children 9 and older may be left unattended for a reasonable length of time, children should know how to reach a parent or guardian. Should children be left unattended in the library at closing, staff will call the Hampstead Police Department for assistance after attempting to contact a parent.

- Loitering on the library premises in a manner which interferes with the normal activities of library patrons or staff, or which blocks or obstructs doorways, hallways, passages, aisles, sidewalks, driveways or the parking lot.
- Soliciting, petitioning, canvassing, conducting surveys, or distributing written materials without express permission of the Library.
- The Library will follow CDC recommendations as well as state and local guidelines, during health pandemics. If required by those guidelines during a health emergency, patrons must wear face coverings while in the building. Masks may be provided for patrons who do not arrive with a face covering. As circumstances demand, patrons will be required to adhere to social distancing guidelines.

All staff members are authorized to enforce this policy and other Library rules and procedures in a fair and reasonable manner. This includes providing verbal and written warnings, explanations, and physical copies of Library rules and policies.

Depending upon the seriousness of the violation, staff members may call the Police for assistance and/or ask an individual to leave the premises immediately, either with or without a prior warning. A brief report of any incident involving a violation of this policy will be written and placed on file with the Director as soon as possible after its occurrence.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees 5/21/02

Amended 9/5/12

Amended 2/19/14

Revised September 18, 2018

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Added face covering statement July 21, 2020

Revised September 16, 2025