

Leicester Public Library

Use of Library/Patron Behavior Policy

Every library patron must respect the rights of others. Library users have the right to assume that visits to the library will be free from unreasonable harassment, physical discomfort, danger and psychological or emotional stress. This policy is designed to promote appropriate use of the library, and to allow the Library to carry out its mission to provide services, programs and materials that enrich people's lives, foster a love of reading and provide access to information in a safe, welcoming environment.

For the library to be enjoyed by all patrons, the following rules must be observed.

1. No smoking, vaping, or use of tobacco products of any kind is permitted in the library. [MGL, Ch. 270, Sec. 21-22] and Town of Leicester Bylaws
2. Being under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs and selling, using, or possessing alcohol/illegal drugs is not allowed.
3. Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, or engaging in other disruptive behavior is not allowed. [GL, Ch. 272, Sec. 41]
4. Patrons are welcome to bring drinks in spill-proof bottles. Food or snacks that do not mark, damage, or leave crumbs are welcome.
5. Shirts and shoes must be worn in the library at all times. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to unreasonably interfere with another person's use of the library shall be directed to leave the building and to remedy the situation before future visits.
6. Damaging library property is forbidden. All materials must be checked out before leaving the building. Theft of library materials, use of false identification to obtain a library card, or use of another person's library card without permission is against the law. Bags may be inspected at the doors. [MGL, Ch. 266, Sec. 99 – 100]
7. Verbally or physically harassing any patron or staff member is forbidden. If a patron has a concern about a policy or procedure, or about another person's behavior, the patron must speak with a staff member rather than interacting directly with the other person.
8. Parents are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children. Young children who are not mature enough to adhere to library policies should not be left unattended in any part of the building or property.
9. Patrons are responsible for their personal property and the library shall have no liability if such property is damaged or lost. For that reason and for the safety and security of all, no one is to leave an item unattended.
10. Recreational use of bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, wheeled shoes, scooters, or similar equipment may not be used either in the building or on library grounds. Bicycles used as transportation to the library should be left outside the building.
11. Patrons must follow the posted policy for the use of the library's computers and printers.

12. The Children's room is reserved for use by children, their parents or guardians, and adults interested in children's literature. The Young Adult's area is reserved for young adults, ages 12-19, and those who accompany them.

Library staff has the authority to interpret and apply these rules for the benefit of the public. Any patron violating the above rules will be given a verbal warning by the Library Director or the Director's designee. After a verbal warning, subsequent violations shall be cause for suspension of library privileges. Suspensions will be for a definite time period, not to exceed twelve months, and the Director or designee will notify the person whose privileges have been suspended in writing of the suspension.

Before any suspension is imposed the Director or Director's designee will: (a) inform the person of the observations of staff or the allegations by a third person or persons upon which the Director, or in the Director's absence the Director's designee, is considering a possible suspension, in sufficient detail to allow the person to respond; and (b) afford the person an opportunity to respond. When circumstances reasonably permit, the notice will be in writing. Except as provided below, no decision will be made before the foregoing has been done.

In case of an alleged offense: (1) which the staff reasonably views as posing a threat to the health or safety of any person or to library property and where there is no reasonable opportunity to provide advance notice and an opportunity to be heard as provided above; or (2) where the accused refuses to listen to or read the grounds for possible suspension, the Director, or in the absence of the Director the Director's designee, may impose an immediate suspension for such period as is reasonably necessary to provide such notice and opportunity, or, in the case of a refusal of the accused to listen to or read the grounds, until such time as the person has done so and been given a chance to respond and the Director or Director's designee has made a decision.

Any suspension of library privileges longer than one day may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees. Notice of an appeal should be made in writing to the Library Director as soon as practicable, and no later than two weeks after receipt of notice of suspension. The Library Director will forward the notice to the Board chair without any avoidable delay and, once known, will inform the appellant of the date of the meeting at which the appeal will be heard. Please note that short term suspensions may end before an appeal can be heard due to the legal requirements of posting Board meetings.

This policy is not intended to waive any other rights or remedies which the town or the library or Trustees may have, and is instead intended to be, and shall be, in addition to any and all other such rights and remedies. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, by way of example only, the town, Trustees and Director reserve the right to have served and enforced a no trespass order pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 266, Sec. 120 in the event that a person whose privileges have been suspended were to enter the library.

Duly voted by the Leicester Public Library Board of Trustees on April 19, 2016