

PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY

Watauga Public Library has established this Behavior Policy to ensure that Library facilities are safe, welcoming, and provide equitable access to materials and services for all Library users.

Any activity that interferes with the rights of other patrons to use the Library, disrupts the normal functioning of the Library, could result in physical, emotional, or mental injury to oneself or others, or could result in damage to the facilities, equipment, or materials is considered disruptive and unacceptable behavior.

The Library reserves the right to require anyone who engages in disruptive behavior to leave the premises, the right to restrict privileges for a specified period of time, and the right to ban the individual from the Library for a specified period of time or permanently. Library staff may ask a patron to leave the premises with or without prior warning, depending upon the seriousness of the violation of these guidelines for behavior. In most cases, a staff member will notify the individual that he or she is in violation of the standards of conduct and will provide one verbal warning. Unlawful activities will be reported immediately to the police.

Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to the following:

- **Abuse of Library Equipment, Furniture, and Materials.** Includes but is not limited to placing feet on tables and chairs, standing on furniture, mutilating or defacing books, or periodicals, and mistreating equipment or computers. *Texas Penal Code 28.04*
- **Abusive or Obscene Language or Gestures.** Includes language or gestures that convey a sexually explicit message or are conveyed in a coarse or crude manner and any language that verbally abuses another individual, including staff and public, will not be tolerated.
- **Animals.** Only service animals or animals that are part of a Library-sponsored program are permitted in the library. Animals may not be left unattended outside the premises.
- **Bedrolls, camping gear, storage bags, and shopping carts.** These items will not be permitted in the library. The library reserves the right to search any container, which might contain Library materials.
- **Bikes, Rollerblades, Skateboards, Skateshoes and Scooters.** Must not be ridden anywhere in the Library. Scooters does not refer to electric scooters used by the disabled. Bringing bicycles into the Library or parking bicycles in a manner that interferes with the free passage of others is prohibited.
- **Boisterous Behavior.** Running, shouting, loud talking, and pushing will not be allowed.
- **Cell or Portable Phones.** Cell phone use can be disruptive. Phones should be placed on vibrate and calls taken/made in the foyer.
- **Children left at the Library past closing.** Children left past closing will be escorted to the Police station for their safety.
- **Eating and Drinking.** Eating and drinking are not permitted in the Library unless at authorized Library events. No intoxicating beverages are permitted in public libraries. Individuals who are believed to be under the influence of narcotics or alcohol or who display disorderly conduct shall be requested to leave library premises. *Texas Penal Code 49.02*
- **Entering Unauthorized (Staff) Areas.** The public is not allowed access to non-public areas of the Library without specific permission.
- **Excessive Displays of Affection.** Includes any sexual conduct or physical contact deemed inappropriate for a public place.
- **Fighting.** Includes any type of fighting, whether real or pretend. *Texas Penal Code 42.01*
- **Harassing behavior.** Harassing behavior to staff or public will not be tolerated.

- **Hygiene.** Exhibiting extremely poor personal hygiene, obnoxious body odor, or overpowering perfume or cologne that is disturbing to others.
- **Illegal Behavior.** Acts which are subject to prosecution under criminal or civil codes of law are prohibited.
- **Improper attire.** Wear appropriate attire, including shirts, and shoes. No wet clothes or bathing suits are allowed.
- **Internet.** Internet users are expected to use the public computers responsibly, especially in avoiding images or text, which may be offensive to others nearby or harmful to minors. See the Internet Acceptable Use Policy posted at all stations.
- **Loitering.** Defined as a person who wanders around the Library without apparent legitimate reason and disturbs other patrons.
- **Loud crying children.** Loud and prolonged crying or tantrums are disruptive. Please bring the child back when he is calm.
- **Sleeping.** Pertains to habitual sleeping or those who are sprawled on furniture, or generally disturbing other patrons.
- **Smoking.** The library is a non-smoking facility. Use of other tobacco products is also prohibited. *Texas Penal Code 28.04*
- **Solicitation.** Includes selling anything for personal gain or a charitable cause, begging, panhandling, or circulating petitions among other patrons and staff members.
- **Theft.** Wrongfully takes, obtains, or withholds Library property. *Texas Penal Code 31.03*
- **Threats of Violence.** All threats of violence (whether an imminent threat or a threat of future violence) and/or endangering behavior to Library staff, patrons, or others are prohibited. Any threats, behavior or acts, which may appear to be a danger to life or safety to one or others, are also prohibited. All threats, behavior, or acts described will be reported to the police.
- **Unattended Children.** Abandoning and leaving unsupervised children. Children ages seven and under shall not be left unattended in the Library. *Texas Penal Code 22.041(c)*
- **Voyeurism and Peeping.** Lewd behavior such as indecent exposure, voyeurism, sexual advances, etc. will be reported to the police. *Texas Penal Code 42.01*
- **Weapons.** Carrying weapons of any type on Library or City property is not permissible except by law enforcement officers.

Anyone violating any of the above rules may be removed from the library as a matter of policy. Anyone failing to leave the premises when requested to do so by Library staff, or a law enforcement officer may be charged with criminal trespass under Texas Penal Code 30.05.

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