

# Patron Behavior Policy

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The Wareham Free Library aims to provide excellent public library services such as the free access to library materials, the Internet, and quiet space. To deliver these services, the Library promotes a safe, welcoming, and hospitable environment for all of its patrons, irrespective of ethnicity, age, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, educational background, religious affiliations, physical limitations, and any other criteria which may motivate discrimination.

To promote this welcoming environment, library patrons shall respect the rights of other patrons and library staff to the Library's services and premises and behave accordingly. The Library forbids any unacceptable or disruptive behavior on library premises, or any such behavior hailing from any other geographic location, which prevents, hinders, or disrupts any other person's ability to use the Library's services and premises so long as said unacceptable or disruptive behavior can be reasonably expected to prevent, hinder, or disrupt someone's ability to use the Library's services and premises. Specific instances of disruptive or unacceptable behavior are:

- Smoking
- Using or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs.
- Following another person or staring at another person with the intent to annoy, harass, or threaten,
- Engaging in generally disruptive behavior, such as profanity, loud talking, shouting, running, fighting, and playing audio equipment at such a volume that others in the library may hear; that is, behavior which can reasonably be expected to disrupt another person's ability to use the Library's services and premises and/or to disrupt the library staff's ability to manage library operations.
- Mutilating, destroying, or vandalizing the library's property and/or its materials.
- Loitering.
- Soliciting, distributing, or posting of materials without permission from the Library Director.
- Violating the library's computer use and abuse policy.
- Disseminating or retrieving any child pornography and/or information harmful to minors.
- Not wearing a shirt, or any other covering of the upper bodies, and shoes, or other footwear.
- Possessing offensive bodily hygiene so as to constitute a nuisance to other persons.
- Entering restricted staff areas without previous authorization from a library staff member.
- Bringing animals into the library building unless they are service animals.
- Consuming food and beverages in prohibited areas without previous authorization from a library staff member.
- Engaging in behavior that qualifies as public indecency or open and gross lewdness.

Patrons found in violation of this conduct policy will be subject to progressive disciplinary actions:

- Patrons found in violation of any of the above policies will be informed by on-floor library staff that their behavior violates the Library's Conduct Policy and will be asked to cease engaging in said behavior.
- Patrons who persist in violating any of the above policies, after having been requested to cease, shall be asked to leave the library premises for the remainder of the workday. In the case of electronic or telephonic communication, patrons will be asked to cease contacting library staff for the remainder of the workday.
- For patrons that have been asked to leave the building more than once in a thirty-day period, the Director may ban that patron from use of the library premises for a period of thirty days starting from the date of the alleged offense. Patrons will be notified in writing of this action. For patrons who are minors, parents and/or guardians will be notified in writing after the minor's first ejection from the premises and they will be advised of the consequences of further recorded incidents.
- Patrons who have been banned from the library's premises for a period of thirty-days, and who, upon return to the library premises, are asked to leave the premises again for violation of the conduct policy, even if said violation differs from that which merited the patron's initial removal, may be banned from the library premises for a period of at least six months. The Library Director, in consultation with library staff, will determine the length of the ban. Patrons who violate the library's conduct policy, after having been banned for at least six months at least once before, may be banned from the library premises for at least one year.

The Wareham Police will be summoned whenever staff members or members of the public feel threatened by a patron, or whenever a patron refuses to leave the premises once asked to do so by a library staff member. Police will also be summoned if library staff members have reason to believe that a patron has violated federal or state laws and/or local ordinances.

**Appeal:** Patrons (or the parent and/or guardian of a minor) who have been asked to leave and/or have been banned from the library premises for any period of time have the right to submit a written appeals request to the Library's Board of Trustees. The appeals request should explain why the patron feels he/she should not have been removed from the library premises and thus why the ban should be lifted. The appeals request may also acknowledge alleged wrongdoing and instead request leniency. All appeals requests must include language that is clear, specific, and actionable (e.g. "I request that the Library Board of Trustees remove the three-month ban placed upon me"). The Library Board of Trustees, at the next available meeting at a time of convenience, will review submitted appeals requests. Note that appeals requests will be discussed in confidence to protect patron privacy. A majority vote is required to grant the patron's clear, specific, and actionable request. Submitted appeals requests without a clear, specific, and actionable request will not be discussed or voted on and will be returned to the patron.