

# RUTH CULVER COMMUNITY LIBRARY LIBRARY POLICY

## APPROPRIATE LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

### I. Introduction

(A) The Ruth Culver Community Library Board may enact regulations that serve to insure the safety of all Library staff and patrons as well as render the most beneficial use to the greatest number of users. The Ruth Culver Community Library Board may exclude from the use of the public Library all persons who willfully violate such regulations. Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 43.52(2).

(B) The Library Board is committed to providing an atmosphere where people of all sex (including transgender status, change of sex, or gender identity), race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other characteristic protected by Federal or State civil rights laws are comfortable using the Library facility.

(C) Inappropriate behavior includes any activity that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the library or disturbs library patrons or staff, damages the building or its furnishings, involves rudeness, profanity, or any other behavior generally deemed inappropriate or unacceptable.

(D) Library staff is to take appropriate action regarding violations of this policy up to and including contacting law enforcement personnel.

### II. Specific Guidelines

#### (A) Prohibited Behavior

The Library Board and Staff reserve the right to regulate behavior within the facility. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to the following prohibited behaviors:

1. Any behavior that causes a public disturbance.
2. Intimidation, threats and verbal harassment towards staff and patrons, including without limitation, yelling, foul language, sexual advances or sexual harassment, following or stalking in the library building or on library grounds.
3. The use of offensive, threatening, harassing or abusive language or gestures.
4. Damaging, defacing, or misusing Library materials, equipment or facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, monopolizing or obstructing any library space, as well as improperly using library restrooms or facilities for purposes such as bathing and shaving.
5. Smoking, vaping, and the use of e-cigarettes or any tobacco product within the facility.
6. Being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance in a state which causes a public disturbance.
7. Possessing, selling, distributing or using/consuming any controlled substance or any alcoholic beverage, except for purposes pre-approved by the Library Board.
8. Possessing, selling, distributing, displaying or using any dangerous weapon in the library building or on library premises or using or threatening the use of any other object in such a manner that it

may be considered a weapon. The carrying of concealed weapons including firearms is prohibited in the library building as stated in Section 9-2-2 of the Village Ordinance.

9. Soliciting, canvassing or surveying Library patrons and/or staff by groups or individuals not affiliated with the Library or other Library related group. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by filing a written request with the Library Director.
10. Engaging in any sexual contact, activities, or conduct.
11. Animals, except trained services animals used to aid individuals with disabilities, service animal trainees, and animals featured in Library sponsored programs.
12. Entering or remaining in the Library without a shirt or shoes.
13. Sleeping, napping or dozing in or on library premises for an extended period of time (more than 15 minutes).
14. Committing or attempting to commit a crime in violation of federal, state, or local ordinances. This includes theft of library materials.

### **III. General Guidelines for Handling Problem Behaviors**

(A) It is the patron's responsibility to maintain proper behavior (in order to protect his/her rights and the rights of other patrons and staff.)

(B) If a patron creates a public nuisance, Library staff will ask the patron or patrons to stop the offensive behavior. Failure to stop the offensive behavior after being warned will result in the individual(s) being asked to leave. If the patron refuses to leave, or, threatens Library staff, the police department will be called. Staff will contact the police department immediately if a patron is engaging in illegal activity.

(C) A written report of any incident involving theft, vandalism, illegal activity, or major disruptive behavior will be filed by staff with the Director as soon as possible after its occurrence.

(D) The Director, acting on behalf of the Library Board, may suspend the Library privileges of any individual who willfully violates Library regulations when the severity or continued reoccurrence warrants such action. The Director will inform the Library Board of any such action taken.

(E) The person whose Library privileges are suspended shall be advised in writing of the suspension, reason(s) for such action, and the appeal procedure.

### **IV. Responses**

Consequences of infractions and repeat infractions will be as follows:

#### Minor Offenses:

1<sup>st</sup> infraction: Patron will receive a verbal warning. Patron may be asked to leave the library for the rest of the day if the behavior does not cease following the warning.

2<sup>nd</sup> infraction: The patron may be required to leave the library premises for 1 week.

3<sup>rd</sup> infraction: If a 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction occurs within 60 days or continuous repeat infractions occur, the patron may be banned from the premises for not fewer than 1 month.

4<sup>th</sup> infraction: The patron will be banned from the premises for six months.

Additional infractions after receiving a six month ban will result in an additional suspension of privileges of six months or more, pending approval of library board.

Major Offenses:

If a patron is found to be engaging in illegal activity or any behavior which threatens the safety of other library visitors, the police department will be contacted for immediate removal from the building. Any illegal behavior or instance where the police must be called to intervene shall be considered a major offense. The patron may lose his/her library privileges for a period of six months or more, depending on the nature of the offense that required removal, the extent of the damage or disruption caused, any history of previous infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.

Additional infractions after receiving a six month ban will result in an additional suspension of privileges of six months or more, pending approval of library board.

**V. Appeal Procedure**

A. If any individual wishes to appeal his/her loss of privileges, he/she may file a written appeal to the Library Director or their designee within 10 days of the notification of loss of privileges. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Library Director will review and may reconsider the decision and may shorten or terminate the banning if information submitted by the individual warrants such modification. The Director will respond to the appeal with a written determination. If the Library Director denies the appeal, the claimant may make a further appeal by filing a written appeal with the Library Board of Trustees within ten days of the Library Director's determination. The Library Board shall consider the appeal and make a final determination at their next regularly scheduled board meeting. Appeals to the board shall be filed at the Ruth Culver Community Library, 540 Water St., Prairie du Sac, WI 53578. The determination of the Board shall be final. Any suspension of privileges will remain in effect throughout the appeal procedure.

B. Any person who enters or remains on the Library premises after losing his/her library privileges will be reported to the police department for immediate removal.

**VI. Unattended Children**

(A) One of the primary missions of the Ruth Culver Community Library is to provide a variety of services for children of all ages. The Library encourages visits by young children, and it is our desire to make these visits both memorable and enjoyable for the child.

(B) "Unattended" means that the parent or other responsible adult is not in close proximity to the child. Parents or other responsible party are responsible for children's behavior while in the Library.

(C) All children six years of age and under must be in the company of a parent/responsible person while in the Library. Even if the young child is attending a program, it is required that the parent/responsible parties remain in the Library during the program.

(D) If it is determined that a child is lost or left unattended, Library staff will try to identify and locate the parent/responsible party. If that person cannot be found, the police department will be contacted.

Approved by Library Board

Date: 2/18/99

Amended/Modified by Library Board

Date: 10/17/02  
04/21/05  
05/18/07  
10/12/11  
03/12/14  
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Reviewed by the Library Board

09/18/19  
10/19/22  
Date: