

Highland City Library: Patron Behavior Policy

All people are welcome to use the Highland City Library and have access to information and library resources. In order to protect Library users' right of access, ensure the safety of users and staff, and protect Library resources and facilities, the Library prohibits activities that are illegal, interfere with the use or enjoyment of the Library by others, present health or security risks, damage Library resources, or disrupt the normal flow of library operations.

Examples of Behaviors that are Prohibited in the Library

- A. Destruction or abuse of property (that of other patrons, staff, or the Library).
- B. Physical confrontation (such as an altercation between two patrons or physically abusive behavior directed at a staff member).
- C. Threatening or harassing others verbally or nonverbally
- D. Exhibitionism, sexual acts or abuse, excessive public display of affection (making out) and lewdness.
- E. Theft.
- F. Exhibiting or watching pornography on Library computers or on personal computers or devices in the Library.
- G. Consuming liquor, smoking, vaping, or using illegal drugs.
- H. Intoxication.
- I. Soliciting of any kind without permission.
- J. Entering the Library with excessively wet or dirty clothing, or with extreme offensive body odor.
- K. Eating or drinking anything except water in public areas.
- L. Sleeping.
- M. Excessive noise or loud talking.
- N. Unsafe running or horseplay.
- O. Leering or staring at other patrons or staff.
- P. Bringing animals in the Library, with the exception of service animals or those authorized in Library programs.
- Q. Bringing dangerous weapons onto the Library grounds unless authorized by law.
- R. Using wheeled devices in the Library for recreational purposes (e.g., bikes, hover boards, skateboards, scooters, roller skates, rollerblades, etc.

Staff Responses to Inappropriate Behavior

If a patron violates any of the behavior guidelines a Library staff member may follow these steps depending on the nature of the offense. An incident report will be filed with the Director when any of these steps are taken.

- A. First infraction: Inform the patron that the behavior is inappropriate and if it is not stopped, they will be asked to leave.

- B. Second infraction: Ask the patron to leave.
- C. Third infraction, deny access to Library services for one month.
- D. Fourth infraction: deny access to Library services for three months.
- E. Fifth infraction: deny access to Library services for one year.
- F. Notify the police if the patron refuses to leave or becomes threatening in any way.

Children in the Library

The Highland City Library encourages children to use its facilities and services. However, children in the Library are the responsibility of their parents. The library has neither the staff nor the legal authority to supervise children in the Library.

Children under 9 years of age must be accompanied by a responsible adult or caregiver. Caregivers must be at least 12 years old, stay in the same room as the child, and supervise the child under age 9 at all times.

If a child under age 9 is found to be unattended in the Library, a library staff may take action necessary to resolve the situation. If necessary, the Library staff may ask the police or child protective services to take the child into custody for the child's protection.

A. Dealing with Disruptive Children

If a young child is being disruptive (prolonged noise making; running up and down aisles; damaging library property; or bothering other library patrons), Library staff may do the following:

1. Remind the child that they should be quiet (should not run around, etc.) in a library.
2. If the behavior continues, Library staff will attempt to locate the child's parent or caregiver. When the parent/caregiver is located in the Library, staff will explain that the child's behavior is disturbing other library patrons, and will ask the parent/caregiver to deal with the problem.
3. If the parent/caregiver refuses or is unable to control the child, they may be asked to remove the child from the Library until the problem is resolved.

If an older child (above 9 years old) is disruptive, Library staff will inform them that they are behaving inappropriately and ask them to behave in a more appropriate manner. If the disruptive behavior continues, Library staff may:

1. Attempt to locate a parent/caregiver to deal with the problem.

2. Ask the child to leave the Library. Library staff members are to use their discretion in such situations. (Is the child old enough to leave on his/her own; does he/she live within walking distance; is it light or dark out; etc.)
3. If a parent/caregiver cannot be located within the Library, the disruption is sufficiently severe, and the staff feels it would be unsafe to require the child to leave the Library, the police or child protective services may be called to deal with the situation.

B. Unattended Children at Closing

Library staff will not remain after hours with an unattended child and are not permitted, under any circumstances, to give them a ride home. If a child's transportation is not available within 15 minutes after closing, and the staff feels it would be unsafe to leave the child alone, the police may be called to escort the child home or keep the child until parents can be reached.

The Library is not responsible for children outside the Library who await transportation or who are socializing.

Remember that parents and caregivers, not Library staff, are responsible for the safety and behavior of children within the Library.

Approved by Library Board January 28, 2009, Revised by Library Board March 28, 2012, March 28, 2019, May 23, 2019, June 27, 2019, February 23, 2023.