

PONTIAC PUBLIC LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

Mission Statement

Pontiac Public Library is here to serve as a community information center and provide materials to enrich life, stimulate intellectual curiosity, foster literacy and encourage an informed citizenry for a diverse community.

I. Introduction

The Pontiac Public Library is open for specific and designated uses, including reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, and using Library materials. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the Pontiac Public Library facility in an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and excellent service, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted this Patron Behavior Policy. The purpose of the Library Patron Behavior Policy is to assist the Pontiac Public Library in fulfilling its mission as a community resource enriching life, stimulating intellectual curiosity, fostering literacy, and encouraging an informed citizenry.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all buildings (interior and exterior) and all grounds controlled and operated by the Pontiac Public Library and to all persons entering in or on the premises.

II. Rules for a Safe Environment

- A. **Violation of Law**. Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation is prohibited.
- B. **Weapons**. Carrying weapons, except bona fide officers of government jurisdictions or individuals with a lawful permit, is prohibited.
- C. **Alcohol & Drugs**. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic beverage, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.

D. Under the Influence. Persons noticeably under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicating liquor are not allowed on Library property.

E. Use of Library Buildings and Grounds.

1. Use of skateboards, roller-blades, roller-skates, or scooters is not allowed in the Library or on Library premises.
2. Library patrons must park bicycles or other vehicles only in authorized areas.
3. All doors and entrances must remain obstacle-free.
4. Animals or personal transport vehicles are not permitted in the Library other than those required by persons with disabilities or those used in law enforcement or for Library programming.
5. Smoking inside the Library facilities is prohibited and smoking is prohibited within 25 feet of any entrance. Smokers must use exterior ashtrays and refrain from littering with cigarette butts.
6. Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times inside the Library.
7. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches and lighters, is prohibited inside the Library.

III. Rules for Personal Behavior

A. Personal Property. Personal property brought into the Library is subject to the following:

1. Library personnel may limit the number of parcels carried into the Library.
2. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.

3. The Library does not guarantee storage for personal belongings left unattended.
4. Personal possessions must not take up seating or space if needed by others.

B. Food and Beverages. Food and drink must be consumed in designated areas.

C. Closing Time. Patrons must leave the Library promptly at closing time.

D. Engaging in Proper Library Activities. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying or using Library materials or facilities shall be required to leave the building.

E. Considerate Use. The following behavior is prohibited in the Library building.

1. Spitting
2. Running
3. Putting feet or legs on furniture
4. Using obscene or threatening languages or gestures

F. Solicitation Policy. No solicitations of funds for individuals, groups or organizations, or sale of candies, cookies, or items for any causes, or panhandling, is permitted in the Library or on Library property. The only exception being those activities that are authorized by and on behalf of the Library, or on behalf of its affiliate Friends of the Library organization.

1. Panhandling library staff or patrons for money, products, or services inside the Library or on Library property is prohibited.

- G. **Interference with Staff**. Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties in the Library or on Library property. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes or forces the attention of staff for any inappropriate period of time, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.

- H. **Campaigning and Similar Activities**. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing are prohibited on Library property.

- I. **Sales**. Selling merchandise on Library property without prior permission from the Director is prohibited.

- J. **Distribution; Postings**. Distributing or posting printed materials/literature on Library property not in accordance with Library Policy is prohibited.

- K. **Restrooms**. Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, shaving, hair cutting or trimming, bathing and sexual activity is prohibited.

- L. **Harassment**. Staring, photographing, following, stalking, harassing, or threatening Library users or staff while in the Library or on Library property so that it interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his job is prohibited.

- M. **Loud Noise**. Producing or allowing any loud, unreasonable, or disturbing noises that interferes with other patron use of the Library which can be reasonably expected to disturb other persons, including those from electronic, entertainment, and communication devices, such as cell phones, headphones, and radio is prohibited. Cell phones are not allowed to be used in the Library.

- N. **Body Odor**. Offensive body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume, or cologne that causes a nuisance is prohibited.

- O. Insects.** In order to ensure a clean environment free from infestation the Pontiac Public Library reserves the right to ask any individual with visible insects on their person to leave the building. Having insects, inclusive of but not limited to bedbugs, on your person and bringing them into the library poses a serious threat to the potential spread of the infestation.

If a patron is seen with insects on them the library may request that the person leave the building and become banned for at least 30 days to treat their infestation. After that time the patron may return after an interview with library administration.

The library routinely inspects the facility and after each occurrence where a person has been in the building with an infestation, the Library facility receives a germicidal treatment to kill any insects that may have come into the building on the host patron.

IV. Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property

- A. Care of the Library Property.** Patrons must not deface, vandalize, or improperly remove library materials equipment, furniture or buildings.
- B. Internet Use.** Patrons must abide by established time limitations and all other provisions of the Pontiac Public Library Internet Use Policy.
- C. Equipment.** Library phones and staff computers are for staff use only.
- D. Authorized Lending.** Library materials may only be removed from premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
- E. Restrooms.** Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.

V. Child Safety Policy

The Pontiac Public Library strives to provide a positive and safe environment for all its patrons, especially families and children. It is recognized that unattended or disruptive children at the library can represent a serious concern. Responsibility for behavior and well-being of children using the library rests with the parent/guardian/caregiver, not with library staff. The library is a public building and it is not safe for young children to be left alone.

Children 12 years and younger must be attended by a responsible caregiver of at least 13 years of age. If children younger than 12 years of age are found without a responsible caregiver, staff will attempt to locate the parent/guardian/caregiver and reunite them with the children. If those persons cannot be located either within the library building or at home within one hour, or if the building is closing, staff will contact the local police department to pick up the children. Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on November 2008

The Library is not a playground. Patrons must maintain appropriate behavior at all times. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may serve as grounds for removal of the child from the building.

- A. **Supervision of Children.** Parents or caregivers must be present and responsible for the supervision of children 12 years and under pursuant of the Library's Child Safety Policy.
- B. **Restrictions of Youth Areas.** Staff may restrict adult use of youth areas, including youth restrooms.

VI. Disciplinary Process for Library Facilities

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to

Library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

A. Incident Reports. Library staff shall record in writing on the incident report any violation of this policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an incident report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.

B. Violation of the Policy & Suspension Privileges. Unless otherwise provided in this Policy, (see section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:

1. Initial Violation: Library patrons observed violating this Policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If they refuse, police may be called.
2. Subsequent Violations: The Director or the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations shall of the rule result in additional suspensions of increasing length.

C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security. Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug use, intoxication, theft, or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:

1. Initial Violation: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal

prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of library privileges. The incident report shall specify the nature of the violation.

2. Subsequent Violations: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director or the Director's authorized designee, may further limit or revoke the patron's library privileges in escalating response, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions, of increasing length.

D. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Director or the Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated.

VII. Rights of Appeal

Patrons may appeal a decision in writing to the Library Director within 10 working days of the date of the letter stating why Library privileges should be restored.

The Library Director or a designee will respond to the appeal in writing within 10 working days of the date the appeal was received.

Any person may appeal the Library Director's decision by sending an appeal in writing to the President of the Library Board within 10 business days.

The decision of the Library Board is final.