

Kingston Library

Patron Conduct

Reviewed and Approved by the Kingston Library Board on Sept. 18, 2014

A. Library Behavior

The Kingston Library is committed to providing an atmosphere where people of all ages may come to read, browse, do research or study. This policy does not prohibit quiet conversations between patrons and/or staff members or conversation required to carry on library programs or business. It is designed a safe and reasonably quiet atmosphere where library patrons may use library materials and services without disturbance. In order to maintain such an atmosphere, library users are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

1. Any food or drink that is brought into the library for consumption must be removed or disposed of properly by the person who brought it in. NO food or beverages may be consumed at or near the computers.
2. Use or exchange of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol or illegal substances is prohibited.
3. Pursuant to New York State Public Health Law Section 1399-0, smoking is prohibited in libraries. Further, smoking is prohibited within the fenced area outside the library building where hazardous to health second hand tobacco smoke can effect individuals health and where quality of the environment is decreased by the litter of cigarette butts and packages. Signs shall be displayed in appropriate smoke free areas to identify the smoke-free status of the area.
4. Appropriate dress, including shoes and shirts must be worn in the library.
5. Bicycles are not allowed in the library. Bicycle racks are provided on a first come first served basis. The library assumes no liability for damage or theft.
6. Use of roller blades and skateboards is prohibited on library grounds.
7. Selling, advertising, petitioning or soliciting for contributions or support is prohibited, except as authorized.
8. Patrons are expected to abide by federal, state, and local laws, ordinances and regulations. Anyone found in violation of such will be reported to the proper authorities.
9. Disruptive behavior is prohibited. Disruptive behavior consists of actions which are illegal, or which infringe upon the rights of others using the library and/or disturb the tranquility of the library, or the proper activities of its staff and patrons. Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Lewd behavior or sexual misconduct including exposure, offensive touching or sexual harassment of other patrons or staff.
 - b. Any behavior involving an unwilling person, or inappropriate or indecent behavior with a child.
 - c. Behavior that makes it impossible for another patron to continue using the library.
 - d. Loud or boisterous behavior including loud talking, shouting, running or fighting.
 - e. Misuse of library property.
 - f. Profane, obscene or offense language directed at another person.
 - g. Use of radios, stereos, video games, etc. without earphones.
 - h. Verbal harassment of staff or patrons.
 - i. Interference with library operations or other patron's use of the facilities though extremely poor personal hygiene.

- j. Any action which willfully annoys another person.

Illegal activity will be reported to the proper authorities immediately. A person demonstrating disruptive behavior will be instructed by library staff to discontinue the behavior. If the behavior continues, the person will be instructed to leave the library. If a person so instructed does not leave within a reasonable amount of time, the staff will contact the proper authorities. Any serious incident involving a child will be reported to the child's parent or guardian, who will also be informed of any action taken by the library.

A brief written report of any incident involving vandalism, illegal activity or major disruptive behavior will be filed with the library director. The director, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may suspend the library privileges of any individual who continually violates library regulations. The person whose library privileges are suspended will be advised in writing of the suspension and the reason(s) for such action. The offending person will also be informed that the suspension may be appealed at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the library's Board of Trustees.

B. Unattended Children

1. All children seven (7) years of age or younger must be in the company of a person over fourteen (14) years old, (maximum of 2 children) while in the library. If such children are attending a program, the responsible person is expected to remain with the child for the duration of the program.
2. Library Staff is not responsible for the care of unsupervised children in the library. If it is determined that the child is lost or unattended, a staff member will attempt to identify and locate the parent or other person responsible for the child. If the parent or other responsible person cannot be located, a staff member will contact the appropriate authorities to report and abandoned child.
3. In the event that a child who is to be picked up by a parent is still at the library at closing time, that child will be given the opportunity to call home. If the child has not been pick up within 15 minutes after closing, he or she will be left in the care of the proper authorities. Under no circumstances will staff transport children in a vehicle or accompany them home without explicit written permission from the child's Parent or guardian, to be filed in the library office.

C. Children's Library Use

1. While in the library children are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct expected of adults.
2. Children seven (7) years of age and under must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible person.
3. Activities permitted in the Children's Library include selecting books, reading, working on a computer, doing homework or research, or participating on a library program.
4. The Children's Library is for the use of children, therefore, no young adult or adult should linger there when not assisting a child.
5. Children who are being disruptive will be given one warning by the library staff. If the disruptive behavior continues the child will be instructed to leave the library. If the child cannot safely leave the library on his or her own, the child will be permitted to call a parent. If no parent can be reached, library staff may contact the proper authorities, depending on the severity of the situation. A child who is old enough to come to the library on their own is old enough to leave the library on their own.
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D. Theft of Materials

The library's theft detection system will sound an alarm when patrons attempt to leave with library materials that have not been properly checked out. A person who triggers the alarm when passing through the detection system will be requested to return to the circulation desk. A staff member will examine checked out materials and desensitize them if necessary.

If the patron does not have any checked out materials or if the alarm sounds a second time after checked out materials have been properly desensitized, library staff may detain the individual for questioning pursuant to New York State Education Law 265A, which states that an employee of the library who has "reasonable Grounds" to believe a person is committing or is attempting to commit larceny of library materials may detain such a person for a "reasonable time" for the purpose of investigation or questioning as to the ownership of any materials. Such questioning is to be conducted by a peace officer or by the librarian in charge or his or her authorized employee or agent. "Reasonable grounds" shall include but not be limited to, knowledge that a person has concealed, unauthorized possession of material owned or belonging to the library. "Reasonable time" shall mean the time necessary to permit the statement, and the time necessary to examine employees and records of the library relative to the ownership of the materials.

A person accused of committing theft of library materials shall be subject to the law.

E. Theft of Personal Belongings

The library is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal belongings of staff or patrons.