

# **Sunderland Public Library — Sunderland, MA**

## **Appropriate Patron Behavior Policy**

To ensure that the Sunderland Public Library provides a healthy and safe environment for all library users and staff, and to protect library materials, equipment and facilities, the following guidelines for acceptable behavior when on library property must be observed. These guidelines are established in the interest of promoting equal access to, and enjoyment of, library services.

The Library staff reserves the right to ask any person to leave the Library when, in the staff's judgment, that person is exhibiting unlawful, abusive, harassing, threatening or inappropriate behavior or creating a disturbance which interferes with other patrons. The Library Staff have sole discretion to determine which behaviors constitute a danger or disturbance. Library users who violate this Policy may also be subject to the suspension or revocation of their library privileges, exclusion from the Library and/or legal action. For the comfort and safety of patrons, volunteers, and staff, and the protection of library property, disruptive behavior will not be allowed. We ask that the following rules be followed:

- Patrons must be fully clothed.
- To avoid disturbing other library patrons, cell phone conversations should take place in the library's back entry hall or outside the building. Cell phone conversations that must take place in the library (ex: at a library computer) must be conducted as briefly and quietly as possible.
- Food and drink are restricted to the café area.
- Bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, scooters or similar types of equipment, with the exception of equipment used by persons with disabilities, are not allowed in the building.
- Library patrons will utilize personal electronic equipment (laptops, personal music players, etc.) in a way that does not interfere with other patrons' use of the library. The Library requires the use of earphones at a reasonable sound level. However, the library staff will make an exception to this rule if a piece of personal electronic equipment is required for communication.
- Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other persons shall be required to leave the building.

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- To maintain a sanitary environment, caregivers should change diapers on the changing stations in the public restrooms. We request that used diapers be disposed of in the waste basket outside of the library entrance.
- Using restroom facilities in any way that prohibits others from accessing them is not allowed.
- No commercial solicitation of any kind is permitted at the Library without the written permission of the Library Director (see *Bulletin Board Policy* and *Fundraisers Policy*).
- Possessing or consuming alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs (see MGL Chapter 270) is not allowed.
- Smoking, vaping, chewing, or other use of tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana within the Library or on Library grounds (see MGL Chapter 270) is not allowed.
- The Children's Room is reserved for use by children, their parents or caregivers, and adults interested in children's literature (also see *Child Safety Policy*).
- In recognition of the special developmental needs and interests of young adults, the Young Adult Room is reserved for patrons ages 12 - 18 and adults who wish to browse the materials in that room. This will be strictly enforced weekdays from 2:30 until closing, all school holidays, all day Saturday, and during summer vacation, generally judged to be from June 21 through Labor Day.
- Neglecting to provide proper supervision of minors is prohibited. Parents or guardians are to supervise their minors and to curtail excess noise, running and other behavior that disturbs other patrons or puts those minors at risk. The Library is not childproof and supervision of minors is necessary to insure the prevention of accidents.
- Sleeping is not permitted in the library.
- **Only** service animals and animals associated with library programs are allowed in the building.
- Damaging or altering library property is not allowed (also see *Replacement Fee Schedule*). All materials must be checked out before leaving the building. The library staff reserves the right to inspect the bags of any patron. Removing material from the Library collection without authorization through established lending procedure is prohibited. Theft of library materials is a serious offense and will result in permanent exclusion from the Library and/or arrest.
- Weapons shall not be permitted except as otherwise might be required by law. Any patron in possession of a weapon shall comply with all local, state, and federal legal requirements applicable to the possession, transportation, and use of firearms and other weapons. The term "firearm" includes any weapon from which a shot, projectile

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or other object may be discharged by force of combustion, explosive, gas and/or mechanical means, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded, and any weapon or destructive device as defined by law. Patrons may not display or brandish any weapons or threaten other persons in the Library or on Library property with a weapon.

- Engaging in any activity in violation of federal, state, or local law is prohibited.
- Fighting, running, pushing, shoving and throwing things are not allowed. Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, volunteers or staff, including stalking, staring and lurking are behaviors that are not allowed. Shouting, profane, threatening or obscene language and other loud or disruptive behaviors are prohibited and will result in exclusion from the Library and/or legal action.
- Patrons must leave the library by closing time. To facilitate closing procedures, the Young Adult room will be closed five minutes before closing. Public computers are turned off 10 minutes before closing.

Please cooperate with the library staff who must interpret and apply these rules and regulations. Your cooperation will help promote excellence in library service for everyone.

Any patron violating any of the above rules may be denied access to the Library by the Library Director or Director's designee. Patrons whose privileges have been revoked may apply in writing to have the decision reviewed by the Library Director or the Board of Library Trustees.

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