

PROBLEM PATRON POLICY

- **The safety of employees and patrons is the most important point to remember in handling the situations outlined in this policy.**

A. DISRUPTIVE PATRONS

Disruptive patrons are those individuals who are engaged in activities that do not fit the acceptable behavior of patrons. These activities include talking loudly, arguing, fighting, cursing, verbal abuse, and other inappropriate behavior.

Employees should attempt to deal with disruptive patrons, whether an adult or child. Employees are not to talk with patrons if this would make the situation worse (e.g., it would lead to violence). Employees are to act in a responsible and prudent manner regarding problem patrons. Employees should ask patrons to stop their behavior. If they do not stop their behavior, the employee will ask the patron to leave the building; if the patron refuses to leave, the employee must call the police or notify the police by using the panic button located at the main circulation desk or at the children's circulation desk.

Children who are being disruptive may call their parent or guardian to tell them they have been told to leave the building and cannot return that day or longer, depending on the situation.

If the Director is in the building, he should be notified immediately there is a problem with a patron. If the Director is not in the building, he should be informed of the situation as soon as possible and the measures that were taken to correct it.

A Patron Incident Form must be filled out by the employee.

B. THREATENING PATRONS

If a patron threatens an employee or another patron, the police are to be called.

A Patron Incident Form must be filled out by the employee.

C. PATRONS INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

The police are to be called if a patron is involved in an illegal activity, or if the patron appears to be involved in an illegal activity.

A Patron Incident Form must be filled out by the employee.

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D. CHILDREN AT CLOSING (NOT EARLY CLOSING)

The employee will allow any child, under the age of 18, to call their parent or guardian if they need a ride home or need to be picked up. If the library has closed, these children must wait outside the library.

For children under the approximate age of 10 (the employee will use his discretion in determining the appropriate age), the employee will make sure the child has a ride home or is being picked up. If the situation warrants, the employee will wait ten minutes to see if the child is picked up. All employees who are in the building at closing must wait until the situation is resolved.

If the child isn't picked up, the police must be called and advised of the situation. If the police will come to pick up the child, all employees will wait until the police arrive. If the police will not come to pick up the child, the employees are free to go home.

A Patron Incident Form must be filled out by the employee.

E. CHILDREN AT AN EARLY CLOSING

If the library is closing early for an emergency (e.g., weather), employees will allow 30 minutes for patrons to leave. The employee will allow any child, under the age of 18, to call their parent or guardian if they need a ride home or need to be picked up.

For children under the approximate age of 10 (the employee will use his discretion in determining the appropriate age), the employee will make sure the child has a ride home or is being picked up. If the situation warrants, the employee will wait for ten minutes to see if the child is picked up.

If the child isn't picked up, the police must be called and advised of the situation. If the police are going to come to pick up the child, all employees will wait until the police arrive. If the police will not come to pick up the child, the employees are free to go home.

A Patron Incident Form must be filled out by the employee.

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F. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- Eating and drinking
- Smoking
- Cell phone or pager usage
- Portable stereo usage without headphones
- Animals in building, except those aiding people with disabilities, or those that are part of a library-related program**
- Misuse of bathrooms
- No shoes or shirts
- Scooters or rollerblades
- Sleeping *
- Bathing, washing of clothes, shaving, brushing of teeth, or other acts of personal hygiene, other than hand washing.**

G. UNATTENDED CHILDREN

Children who are seven years old and younger cannot be in the library without the supervision of an adult.

H. PATRONS WHO HAVE BEEN ASKED TO LEAVE THE BUILDING

The Director, at her or his discretion, will determine the length of time before a patron who has been told to leave the building is allowed to return. For most situations, the patron will be allowed back in the library the next day.

Approved by Board of Trustees
April 11, 20001

*Changed Spring 2002

**Added Feb. 2003