

# Brodhead Memorial Public Library

## Code of Conduct Policy

**Approved by the Library Board 11-8-2010**

**Last updated by the Library Board on 8-17-2015**

Wisconsin Statutes, Section 43.52(2), "Every public library shall be free for the use of the inhabitants of the municipality by which it is established and maintained, subject to such reasonable regulations as the library board prescribes in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number." The library board may exclude from the use of the public library all persons who willfully violate such regulations.

### **Introduction**

The Library Board and library staff are committed to providing a safe, peaceful atmosphere where people of all ages may visit. This policy is designed to preserve a reasonably quiet and welcoming atmosphere where library visitors may use the library services and materials without disturbance.

Inappropriate behavior includes any activity that disturbs others, interferes with library operations, damages the building or its fixtures or furnishings, as well as rudeness, profanity, or any other behavior generally considered unacceptable in a public place.

This policy has been established for library visitors. If a visitor is not responsive to the needs of other library users, or disregards the policies protecting visitors, staff, and library property, the person will be asked to leave the library if he/she does not comply.

### **Library Staff Responsibilities**

- Ensure a welcoming environment for people to visit.
- Assist people in using library resources or locating information. This may be limited if there is a shortage of staff available, the circulation desk cannot be left unattended.
- Help people to use the library catalog or other on-line databases as staffing permits.
- Assist people in retrieving items that they cannot find or are unable to reach. Staff may offer the use of carts for heavy loads or materials or offer assistance if they are physically able to do so.
- Provide basic help in using library equipment such as the copier, microfilm reader, etc.
- Treat customers with courtesy.
- Protect the privacy of visitors.
- Ensure that the rights of individuals who use the library are upheld.
- Enforce the Code of Conduct Policy so that the facility can be used to the fullest.

Questions regarding the interpretation of the Code of Conduct Policy will be referred to the Library Director or other staff member in charge.

### **Code of Conduct Guidelines**

The rights of all visitors to use the library should not be infringed upon. To guarantee these rights, people using the library will be expected to follow the guidelines for appropriate behavior as listed:

- Be considerate of other library visitors and library staff.
- Keep noise to a minimum.

- Avoid rude behavior. Uttering profane, obscene, or offensive language is ground for removal from the library.
- Threatening, harassing or intimidating language or behavior will result in immediate expulsion from the library and possible legal action. This includes stalking, prolonged staring at or following another with the intent to annoy, or intentionally behaving in a manner that could reasonably be expected to annoy or disturb other customers or staff.
- Staff work area is off limits to visitors unless authorized and supervised by the library staff.
- Cell phones should be in silent mode or switched off when entering the library. Phones may be used in the lobby.
- Personal stereos should be set so that they cannot be heard by others.
- Laptop computers may be used as long as the keyboarding does not disturb others.
- Petitioning, solicitation, canvassing, surveying or distribution of literature by members of the public is not allowed within the library.
- It is illegal to smoke in the library; use of tobacco and other electronic cigarette or “vaping” devices is also prohibited in the library building.
- Beverages that are securely covered may be brought into the library, but may not be taken into the computer lab.
- For health and safety reasons, shoes and shirt are required to be worn.
- All pets are prohibited from the library unless they are part of a library program. Service animals trained to assist patrons are welcome.
- Respect library materials and library property so that everyone may enjoy them.
- Skateboards and rollerblades are allowed in the library only if they are carried and not used.
- Bikes should not be parked in front of the library’s doors. The entrance must remain clear for handicap access and for emergency exit.
- The library is not responsible for lost/stolen item during your visit.
- Sleeping in the library is not encouraged. (Babies or children in strollers are exempt)
- Children 7 and under should be supervised and accompanied by a responsible care giver.

### **Youth in the Library**

- Librarians cannot be responsible for the safety and welfare of unattended child(ren).
- Children seven years or younger must not be left alone in the library. A parent or caregiver must remain in the library even when the child is attending a library program.
- Children who are continually disruptive will be dealt with firmly. The child will be given a warning that he/she must settle down or will be asked to leave the library. If bad behavior is not corrected, the child may be asked to leave the library. If the child needs to contact someone to come and get them, he/she may do so and then wait in the lobby until that person arrives.
- Disruptive behavior includes such acts as throwing library materials, running and/or chasing other children, fighting, excessive noise, or any behavior that interferes with other people’s use of the library, or that may damage library property.

### **Specific Guidelines for Handling Unattended Children**

“Unattended” means that the parent or caregiving is not in close proximity to the child.

1. Staff will seek out adult in charge of the unattended child and will express their concern for the child’s safety and explain the library’s policy regarding unattended children.
2. If an adult cannot be located or do not arrive within 30 minutes, the staff may call the Brodhead Police Department at 897-2112 for assistance.
3. At closing, library staff will wait up to 30 minutes with an unattended child, age twelve or younger, until the parent or caregiving arrives. The staff members must be present with the child. (This is compensated staff time.) If the

parents or caregiving do not arrive within the stated time, the child will be given into the care of the Brodhead Police Department.

4. Unattended children, age thirteen and above, remaining in the library at closing will be ushered into the library's foyer to wait for his/her ride. Staff will identify the child that is being left in the foyer and lock all doors to secure the library. Staff should show child how to exit using the panic bar of the main door. Police will be alerted to the situation and staff will wait for the police to arrive to access the situation

### **General Guidelines for Handling Disruptive Customers**

It is the visitor's responsibility to display proper behavior standards in order to protect his/her rights to use the library.

1. A person who violates the rights of others or who creates a disturbance in the library will be dealt with by a staff member. They will be asked to use appropriate behavior in the library and relevant policy explanation will be given.
2. Continued or severe prohibited/inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and the person will be asked to leave. Those who are unwilling to leave or refuse to leave within a reasonable time will be subject to the law. Staff should call the non-emergency police number: 897-2112 and ask for police assistance.
3. A brief written report of any incident involving theft, vandalism, illegal activity, or major disruptive behavior will be filed with the Director as soon as possible.

### **Repercussions for Disruptive Customers**

Behavior which violates library policy, interferes with the use of the library by others or interferes with staff in the conduct of their duties is not permitted. Visitors engaging in such behavior may be asked to stop the behavior and/or they may be asked to leave the building. The police may be called and/or the customer's library privileges may be revoked. Unlawful activities will promptly be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Staff is authorized to require a person to leave the library if – in the judgment of the staff member – the visitor's behavior is disorderly or disruptive.

Customers shall cooperate with library staff who must interpret and apply rules and policies. Upon request, customers shall be required to provide their correct name or show their library card or other identification to library staff and leave the premises when so directed.

Specific repercussions include:

- Warnings with an explanation of the Code of Conduct or other policies.
- Suspension of some aspect of library service for any length of time. Longer suspension for repeated offenses, such as accessing inappropriate internet sites.
- Removal from the library's property.
- Parents or caregivers of children under the age of 18 will receive a letter notifying them of the conduct violation and the length of suspension of library service if it exceeds more than a day.
- Report to the Director, Library Board and/or Police Department.
- Payment for damages to library materials and/or property, including cost to fix or replace.
- Banning from the library property for a period of up to a year or longer as per the discretion of the Library Director and the Library Board.