

## **Allenstown Public Library Patron Code of Conduct Policy**

The purpose of the Allenstown Public Library, acting per New Hampshire Library Laws, is to provide and promote access to materials, resources, and programs to meet the educational, cultural, and informational needs of all community members regardless of ability, age, sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic origin or creed. To promote this purpose and to make the library an accessible, safe, and comfortable place for all of our patrons, the Trustees require that all persons on library premises observe the Code of Conduct. No list is exhaustive; any conduct that disrupts the library is prohibited.

### **LIBRARY POLICY: CONDUCT IN THE LIBRARY AND ON LIBRARY GROUNDS**

- **Disruptive Behavior.** Library patrons and others on library property may be asked to leave the library and its grounds for exhibiting disruptive behavior. Disruptive behavior may include running, throwing, eating, littering, loud or abusive talking, fighting, moving furniture, inappropriate public displays of affection, vandalism, interfering with the reasonable activities of other patrons, or any other inappropriate behavior.
- **Vandalism.** In accordance with RSA 202-A:24, “Any person who shall willfully (sic) or maliciously deface, damage or destroy any property belonging to or in care of any gallery or museum or any state, public, school, college or any other institutional library, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Any such person shall forfeit to or for the use of such library, gallery, or museum, 3 times the amount of the damage sustained, to be recovered in an action in the superior court.”
- **Loitering.** Persons are prohibited from loitering on the library premises in a manner that interferes with the normal activities of library patrons or staff or which blocks or obstructs doorways, hallways, passages, aisles, sidewalks, driveways, or the parking lot.
- **Children:** Parents and caregivers shall supervise the behavior of those in their charge. The Library assumes no responsibility for the care and supervision of children or individuals needing continuous supervision or assistance.
- **Unattended Children:** please see Child Safety Policy.
- **Public Health:** During an infectious disease outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic, persons must follow health and safety guidelines or requirements as determined by the Board of Trustees based on Local, State, and Federal recommendations.
- **Appropriate Dress:** Individuals shall wear shoes and shirts (or their equivalent) and shall not have offensive body odors.
- The Library reserves the right to photograph the premises.

- Prohibited behavior includes but is not limited to the following:
  1. Individuals shall not engage in any illegal act. This includes, but is not limited to, the destruction of library property, public drunkenness, the sale or the exchange of drugs or alcohol, and viewing or possessing pornographic materials.
  2. Harassment or disturbing of library visitors or staff, including excessive noise, such as playing audio equipment so that others can hear it, swearing or profanity, pervasive odors, or other behaviors that negatively affect the ability of other library visitors to use the library or staff to perform their work.
  3. Inappropriate touching or physical display of affection; Aggressive physical or verbal actions. Intimidation and threats towards staff and patrons, including, without limitation, sexual advances or sexual harassment, following or stalking in the library building or on library grounds
  4. Smoking and vaping are prohibited in the library.
  5. Eating and drinking are only permitted with the permission of library staff.
  6. Public bathrooms are meant for one person at a time unless a parent accompanies their child or a caregiver accompanies a charge.
  7. Patrons should turn off cellular telephone ringers while in the library. Individuals shall not disturb or invade others' personal space. Cell phone conversations should be kept to a low volume so as not to disturb other patrons. For lengthy phone conversations, users are asked to relocate outside the building.
  8. Theft or removal of items without permission.
  9. Running in the building or in and out of the building is prohibited.
  10. Patrons are responsible for their personal property. Book bags, knapsacks, etc., are to be kept with their owner at all times, under tables or chairs. The library is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
  11. Knives and other weapons are strictly prohibited.
  12. New Hampshire law permits concealed carry of firearms. However, other library patrons, especially children, may be disturbed by this practice. The Allenstown Public Library asks firearms owners not to bring firearms to the library.

## **Enforcement**

- Staff will ask patrons abusing the above guidelines to cease using the library, move to another location, or leave. Those refusing to leave or who have been ejected for repeated offenses may be banned from the premises, or library use will be conditional.
- If a person refuses to leave after being asked to do so for violating the code of conduct, they are considered trespassing, and appropriate action will be taken. The library staff reserves the right to contact the Allenstown Police Department for assistance in any situation.
- Persons penalized for violating the Library's rules or Code of Conduct may make a written appeal to the Board of Trustees and Director, who have final jurisdiction over permission for library use. Persons banned from the premises who enter the premises

without express written permission from the Library Director or Trustee may be prosecuted in any appropriate manner permitted by law.