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Patron Behavior Policy

The DeWitt District Library is open for specific and designated uses, including reading, studying, writing, and participating in scheduled library programs, and using library materials. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the DeWitt District Library facilities in an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and excellent service, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted this Patron Behavior Policy. The purpose of the Library Patron behavior Policy is to assist the DeWitt District Library in fulfilling its mission as a community resourced enriching life, stimulating intellectual curiosity, fostering literacy, and encouraging an informed citizenry.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all building – interior and exterior – and all grounds controlled and operated by the DeWitt District Library and to all person entering in or on the premises.

A. Rules for a Safe Environment

1. Violations of the Law. Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation is prohibited.
2. Weapons. Carrying weapons, except bona fide officers of government jurisdictions or individual with a lawful permit, is prohibited.
3. Alcohol: Drugs. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic beverage, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited with the following exception. Alcohol may be served for special programs I approved by the Library Board with insurance coverage to be provided by the entity serving the alcohol.
4. Under the Influence. Persons noticeably under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicating liquor are not allowed on library property.
5. Use of Library Buildings and Grounds
 - a. Use of skateboard, rollerblades, roller-skates, or scooters is not allowed in the library
 - b. Library patrons must park bicycles or other vehicles only in authorized areas
 - c. All doors and entrances must remain obstacle free
 - d. Annuals or personal transport vehicles are not permitted in the library other than those required by persons with disabilities or those used in law enforcement or for library programming.

- e. Smoking inside library facilities is prohibited and smoking is prohibited within 25 feet of any entrance. Smokers must use exterior ashtrays and refrain from littering with cigarette butts.
- f. Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times inside the library.
- g. The use of incendiary devices such as candles, matches and lighters is prohibited inside the library unless used in connection with a library program.

B. Rules for Personal Behavior

1. Personal Property. Personal property brought into the library is subject to the following:
 - a. The Library personnel may limit the number of parcels carried into the library
 - b. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended
 - c. The Library does not guarantee storage for personal property
 - d. Personal property must not take up seating or space if needed by others
2. Food and Beverages. Food and drink must be consumed in designated areas.
3. Closing Time. Patrons must leave the library promptly at closing time.
4. Engaging in Proper Library Activities. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the Use of the Library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, or using library materials or facilities shall be required to leave the building.
5. Considerate Use. The following behavior is prohibited in the Library Building:
 - a. Spitting
 - b. Running
 - c. Putting feet or legs on furniture
 - d. Using obscene or threatening language or gestures
6. Panhandling or Soliciting. Panhandling or soliciting library staff or patrons for money, products, or services, inside the library or on library property is prohibited.
7. Interference with Staff. Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties in the Library on Library property. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes or forces the attention of staff for an inappropriate period of time, inappropriate comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.
8. Campaigning and Similar Activities. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing are prohibited in the Library Building.
9. Sales. Selling merchandise on Library property without prior permission from the Director is prohibited
10. Distributions. Postings. Distributing or posting printed materials/literature on Library property without prior permission from the Director is prohibited.
11. Restrooms. Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, shaving, hair cutting or trimming, bathing and sexual activity is prohibited.
12. Harassment. Staring, photographing, following, stalking, harassing, or threatening library users or staff while in the Library or on Library property

so that it interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job is prohibited.

13. Loud Noise. Producing or allowing any loud, unreasonable, or disturbing noises that interfere with other patrons use of the Library or which can be reasonably be expected to disturb other person, including those from electronic entertainment and communication devices such as cell phones, headphones, and radio is prohibited. Cell phones and pages should be answered promptly. Patrons should speak in low tones and keep conversations brief. If phone calls cannot be completed quickly, patrons should move away from reading, research and study areas.
14. Body Odor. Offensive body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume, or cologne that causes a nuisance is prohibited.

C. Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property

1. Care of the Library Property. Patrons must not deface, vandalize, or improperly remove library materials, equipment, furniture, or building.
2. Internet Use. Patrons must abide by established time limitations and all other provisions of the DeWitt District Library Computer Use and Internet use policies.
3. Equipment. Library phones and staff computers are for staff use only.
4. Authorized Lending. Library materials may only be removed from the premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
5. Restrooms. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.

D. Rules for the Safety of Youth

1. Supervision of Children. Parents or caregivers must be present and responsible for the supervision of children age 10 and under
2. Restriction of Youth Areas. Staff may restrict Adult use of Youth areas, including Youth restrooms.

E. Disciplinary Process for Library Facilities

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patrons' access to library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this policy. If necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

1. Incident Reports. Library Staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of library privileges, by the end of the day on which the incident occurred, and Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension privileges letter should be attached if possible.
2. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges: Unless otherwise provided in the Policy (See Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:

- a. Initial violation: Library patrons observed violating this policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If this patron does not comply with the request he or she may be asked to leave the building for the day. If they refuse, police may be called.
 - b. Subsequent violations: The Director of the Director's authorized designee may further limit or revoke the patron's library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations shall of the same rule may result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
3. Violations that Affect Safety and Security/ Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
 - a. Initial violation: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate two week suspension of Library privileges. The Incident Report shall specify the nature of the violation.
 - b. Subsequent violations. The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Director of the Director's authorized designee =, may further limit or revoke the patron's library privileges in escalating response, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
4. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked shall attend a meeting with the Director or the Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated.
5. Right of Appeal.
 - a. Patrons may appeal a decision in writing to the Library Director within 10 working days of the date of the letter stating why library privileges should be restored.
 - b. The Library Director or designees will respond to the appeal in writing within 10 working days of the date the appeal was received.
 - c. Any person may appeal the Library Director's decision by sending an appeal in writing to the President of the Library Board within 10 business days.
 - d. The decision of the Library Board is final.

