

LINCOLNWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

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POLICIES GOVERNING BEHAVIOR IN THE LIBRARY AND ON LIBRARY PROPERTY

Illinois law stipulates that public libraries be governed "...subject to reasonable rules and regulations the [library] board adopts to **render the use of the library of the greatest benefit to the greatest number of...residents and taxpayers.**" [75 ILCS 16/1-10] The Lincolnwood Library Board of Trustees ("the Board") has adopted the following policies (i) to provide the greatest possible number of library patrons with a safe and pleasant environment conducive to quiet study as well as other uses deemed to be consistent with the library's goal of serving the educational, cultural, and civic needs of the community of Lincolnwood; (ii) to enable library staff to do their jobs effectively and enjoy a safe and secure workplace; and (iii) to protect library property from damage or theft.

I. Prohibited Behavior: General Definition

Any behavior that, in the opinion of staff, jeopardizes the safety of those using the library and its grounds (including the parking lot), hinders easy access to or departure from the library building or grounds, unreasonably infringes on the quiet use and enjoyment of the library by others, interferes with library operations or the ability of staff to do their work, or endangers library property, is prohibited.

II. Prohibited Behavior: Specific Examples

Behavior prohibited in the library or on library property includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

1. **Engaging in loud, disruptive conversation or conduct**, including loud use of cellular phones and audio-visual, computer, or other equipment; loud or prolonged snoring; and rowdy actions, such as running in the library, and throwing or purposely dropping paper, pencils, or other objects. Patrons using equipment must set the sound volume at levels that do not disturb others in the library.

2. **Eating or openly displaying food, unless at an authorized library function. Beverages, including water, may neither be consumed at nor brought near computer work stations.** In all other areas of the library, drinks must be kept in sipper bottles or other sealed containers that will help avoid spillage. Lids or tops must remain on containers at all times.

3. **Use of rollerblades, skateboards, basketballs, and similar equipment in the library or on library property.** Bicycles may neither be brought into the building nor left outside in areas that obstruct convenient and safe passage by others, nor may they be used unsafely in the library parking lot. Wheelchairs used by disabled persons and strollers for children are permitted. The library requires safe use of such conveyances.

4. **Bringing any animal into the building, except one needed and trained to assist a disabled or visually impaired person** or one that is part of an authorized library program or function.

5. **Failing to wear shoes, or other acceptable footwear, and a shirt, or other clothing that appropriately covers the body.**

6. Exhibiting offensive bodily hygiene which clearly disrupts and hinders the effective use of the library by others. Bathing, shaving, or washing articles of clothing in the library's bathrooms will not be permitted.

7. Relocating library furniture or equipment without permission from library staff.

8. Inappropriate or unsafe use of furniture and floors including sitting on tables and other work surfaces or on the sides of armchairs and couches; use of an item of furniture by more people than it was designed to accommodate; placing feet or legs on tables, chairs, and other furniture; reclining along the length of couches; lying down on the floor; sitting, kneeling, or "spreading out" on the floor for extended periods or so as to hinder convenient and safe access or passage by others; and setting personal belongings or library materials and equipment on the floor so as to hinder such access or passage.

9. Use of library meeting rooms without the prior permission of staff.

10. Smoking or other use of tobacco products in the library or within 25 feet of the library entrance.

11. Possessing or using alcohol or other controlled substances on library property, or being impaired from use of such substances.

12. Loitering or congregating in or around the facility so as to unreasonably disrupt or hinder another's use of, or convenient entry to and exit from, the library.

13. Physical, sexual, or verbal harassment of patrons or staff, including purposeful attempts to intimidate, annoy, or provoke others by following them around, by prolonged staring, or by engaging in behavior that staff feels is clearly meant to mock, taunt, or bait.

14. Damaging, defacing, endangering, or misusing library property, including books and other materials and equipment.

15. Panhandling, or soliciting (including charitable solicitations), selling, or distributing goods or services in the library or on library property is prohibited, with the following exception. The library itself or the Friends of the Library may sell or distribute goods or services, provided any such activity is approved by the Board.

The direct distribution or posting of leaflets, notices, fliers, brochures, and similar materials, except by authorized library personnel, is prohibited. Library bulletin boards and informational display racks and other exhibit spaces are reserved for use by the library itself, other governmental agencies, and local non-for-profit organizations. All items to be posted or exhibited must be approved and posted or placed by authorized library staff.

Petitions may not be distributed in the library. Petitioners may solicit signatures on the library grounds, but must do so politely, safely off the parking lot, and at least 25 feet away from the library's entrance.

Library Meeting Rooms may not be used for paid tutoring sessions. Tutoring will be permitted in open study and reading areas only if such activity does not disturb staff or library users and if those involved otherwise comply with all rules, guidelines and procedures governing behavior as set forth in this document. Tutors may not publish or distribute advertisements or letters indicating the library as their place of doing business or otherwise imply library sponsorship of their activities. The library does not sponsor, recommend, or assume liability or responsibility for the work and/or activities of tutors who use library space.

16. Failing to leave the premises promptly at closing time or during an emergency evacuation.

17. **Leaving unattended personal property in or on ~~the~~ library property.** The Library takes no responsibility for unattended items.

18. **Parking or waiting in library parking lot traffic lanes. Any area of the lot that is not a marked parking spot is defined as a traffic lane. (See section VI below.)**

III. Enforcement of Behavior Policies

A. Illinois law authorizes the Board: "To exclude from use of the library any person who willfully violates an ordinance or regulation prescribed by the board." [75 ILCS 16/30-55.55] Any patrons or groups of patrons who continue to exhibit or participate in prohibited behavior or disregard library rules and policies after having been advised of and given reasonable opportunity to correct the problem, will be required to leave the library, including the library grounds, and not return for the remainder of the day. Staff will define "reasonable opportunity" on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the nature and severity of the behavior, the levels of responsiveness and cooperation exhibited by the patron or group when approached by staff, and conditions which prevail in the library at the time. Generally, individuals or groups will receive **no more than three warnings** on any given day before being required to leave.

B. The Library Director is authorized to limit or suspend, for up to thirty (30) days, the library privileges, including access to the library and its grounds, of anyone whose unacceptable behavior is dangerous or severely disruptive, or becomes chronic in nature. With the approval of the Board, a person or group may be denied the privilege of access to the library and its grounds for a period longer than thirty (30) days. A person whose library privileges have been denied or limited may appeal the decision to the Board by requesting a hearing. Any such request must be submitted in writing. A hearing will be scheduled at the discretion of the Board.

C. Staff, including security personnel, are authorized to use necessary and reasonable measures to enforce these policies. In this regard, such personnel have the right to:

1. Confiscate and dispose of any food brought into the facility and any beverage that is deemed to be in an unsafe container or handled in a careless manner.
2. Limit the number of persons who may sit together at a single table or carrel, at a computer station, or in an arrangement of lounge seating.
3. Separate members of a group from one another or relocate individuals from one area of the library to another.
4. Inspect the contents of bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, and other containers for library material and equipment.
5. Impose time limits on the continuous use of library resources, including reference materials, computer equipment, and the public telephone.
6. Require patrons to furnish commonly accepted forms of identification, such as drivers licenses and student ID cards.
7. Seek the help of the Lincolnwood Police Department when staff deems this to be necessary or prudent. **The police will be called if anyone fails to leave the library promptly when asked to do so.**

IV. Quiet Room

The *Quiet Room* is reserved for silent study, reading, and similar activities. It is the one area of the library where talking of any kind, including whispering, is prohibited. Sound producing equipment, including cell phones must be turned off or set to vibrate.

V. Supervision, Safety, and Behavior of Children in the Library

A. The Board is strongly committed to the provision of services for children. The library is a busy public facility, however, and library staff members do not function *in loco parentis* (i.e., in the position or place of a parent) or as substitute caregivers. Staff cannot assume responsibility for the supervision, safety, and entertainment of children who use the library, except within the limited context of defined library programs. This responsibility must be borne by the child's parent, guardian, or designated caregiver and cannot be ceded to--or forced upon--the library staff. The Board believes that the following policies are in the best interests of all concerned: young library users, their parents, guardians, or caregivers, other patrons, the library staff, and Lincolnwood taxpayers.

B. Children under eight (8) years of age may not be left unattended in the library and must be under the direct and constant supervision of a caregiver [an adult or mature adolescent, fourteen years or older] who assumes full responsibility for the children's safety and behavior in the library. While a child in this age group attends a program scheduled and conducted by the library's Youth and Teen Services Department, "direct and constant supervision" does not require the caregiver's attendance at the program, but does require that the caregiver remain in the library and be readily available in case he or she is needed to provide supervision.

C. Caregivers who, in the opinion of staff, do not adequately or effectively supervise the behavior of children in their charge will be made aware of the problem as quickly and discreetly as possible. If a problem persists after the caregiver has been made aware of it and given a reasonable opportunity to correct it, the caregiver and child will be required to leave the library. If the problem is severe enough or becomes chronic in nature, the Library Director may limit or suspend a caregiver's and child's access to the library, as provided for in Section III-B above.

D. Children eight (8) years of age and older are welcome to use the library without direct, on-site supervision by a caregiver. If left alone, they must respect the rights and safety of others in the library by observing all rules of behavior and policies which govern library use.

E. Parents or guardians must pick up their children PRIOR to library closing time. Children under age thirteen (13) not picked up by closing time may, for their protection, be placed in the custody of the police.

VI. Library Parking Lot

The library parking lot is solely for the use of those who are either visiting or working at the library. Use of the lot for any other purpose, without the express permission of the Board, is prohibited. Vehicles found to be in violation of this policy are subject to being towed from the lot at the owner's expense.

To insure the safety of and ease of access for all library users, parking or waiting in parking lot traffic lanes is strictly prohibited. Any area of the lot that is not a marked parking spot is defined as a traffic lane. Library personnel will record and forward to the Lincolnwood Police Department the license plate numbers of vehicles whose drivers refuse to cooperate with this policy.