



# DOVER FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

## **Patron Conduct Policy**

The Dover Free Public Library aims to be a positive, welcoming space for the entire community. To better serve all the library patrons, the Library Board of Trustees has established certain standards of acceptable behavior to maintain an atmosphere which promotes the use and enjoyment of the resources and services of the library and which protects the safety of the general public, the library staff and the equipment and materials of the library.

Any activity that interferes with the rights of other patrons, which could result in physical, emotional, or mental injury to oneself or others, or could result in damage to facilities, equipment, material or library property and grounds is considered disruptive and unacceptable.

Conduct not acceptable in the library or on library grounds includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local or other applicable law.
- Behavior disruptive to the legitimate use of the library. This includes disorderly conduct, noise or activity, whether intentionally or inadvertently, that interferes with the rights of others, physical abuse, abusive or threatening language and misuse of library equipment or furnishings.
- Any behavior that harasses or distracts others, such as staring at another person with the intent to annoy that person, singing or talking to others or in monologues, or behaving in a manner which reasonably can be expected to disturb others.
- Using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others. Using cell phones and other communication devices in a manner that disturbs others. Cell phones ringers must be set to silent or vibrate mode if turned on in the library.
- No person may carry any item which could reasonably and commonly be classified as a weapon or a dangerous instrument or could be reasonably used

as a means of aggression or defense against another, into the Library or onto Library grounds, unless authorized by law to do so.

- Solicitation, gambling or panhandling, including distributing printed materials, signing petitions or conducting surveys not authorized by the library.
- Sleeping, except for young children under the supervision of the parent or caregiver.
- Neglecting to provide proper supervision of children. Parents and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and safety of their children. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.
- Bringing animals into the Library, except for certified service animals and programs sponsored by the Library.
- Use of the restroom facilities for bathing and/or laundering clothes.

Patrons are expected to adhere to the following rules:

- Shoes and shirts must be worn.
- Patrons must stay within the areas designated for library users.
- Children (aged 17 and under) are to use the computers in the teen or children's room, not the computers in the adult room. Parents may use a children's room computer only if they are supervising a child.
- Patrons who want to use the computers need to come with a basic knowledge of computer usage or bring someone who can help them. Library staff are not available to provide individual computer instruction. Periodically, the library offers free computer skills classes to the community. Patrons will be encouraged to read the instructions on using the printers/copiers.
- Adults are allowed in the children's room only if they are supervising a child or accessing the children's/teen collections. Adults who access the collections need to take the materials to the adult area upstairs to use them.
- Patrons should not leave personal items/packages on the floor or unattended. Unattended items will be put into lost and found for three days. The Library is not responsible for personal items left unattended. Police will be called if a suspicious package is found in the building or on the property.

The Dover Free Public Library reserves the right to put in place additional conditions beyond this policy when health and safety concerns arise. Such additional conditions would be publicized including but not limited to the posting on the library website.

### **Patron Policy - Infraction Discipline Schedule**

**Minor Inappropriate Behavior** - Examples: Disturbing other patrons, loud talking, running, rough-housing, cursing, misuse of facility, running of a business.

1st Offense - Request to stop by staff member

2nd Offense - Verbal warning

3rd Offense - Asked to leave the building. A patron infraction report will be filed on a staff Google Document. The Library Director has the discretion to move immediately to the 3rd offense level if in the Director's judgment, the infraction warrants such a response.

**Egregious Inappropriate Behavior** - Examples: Refusal to comply with staff instructions, disrespect of staff, habitual or repeated offense, use of alcohol or drugs?. A patron infraction report will be filed on staff Google Document.

1st Offense - Asked to leave the building.

2nd Offense - Suspended from the building for 14 days.

3rd Offense - Suspended from the building for 30 days.

The Library Director has the discretion to move immediately to the 3rd offense level if in the Director's judgment, the infraction warrants such a response.

**Infraction of Computer/Internet Policy** - Example: any activity that could cause damage to or interruption of Library computer system. Pornography? Repeat offenders will be subject to the Egregious Inappropriate Behavior Discipline Policy.

1st Offense - Warning

2nd Offense - Removal of computer privileges for 7 days

3rd Offense - Removal of computer privileges for 14 days

The Library Director has the discretion to move immediately to the 3rd offense level if in the Director's judgment, the infraction warrants such a response.

### **Violent or Threatening Behavior Towards Staff or Patrons**

1st Offense - Removal by Dover Police and filing of a police report and suspension for 30 days. Second offenses or first time egregious offenses must result in a permanent ban from the library upon recommendation to the Board of Trustees by the Library Director.

Criminal activity will be immediately reported to the Dover Police Department. Examples include use of controlled dangerous substances, child pornography, gang activity, vandalism, stealing, gambling, unconsciousness that is drug or alcohol related. Staff will call the Dover Police Department and notify the Director (or supervisor on duty) when these behaviors are observed, but will not intervene directly.

Patrons who are suspended or banned from access to the Library or its services will be notified in writing at the time of their suspension. If the Library is unable to give the notification to the patron, a letter will be retained on file to be provided to the patron the next time they are observed in the library.

If a patron violates a suspension or ban from the library, the library will contact the Dover Police Department and will press charges for trespassing. Procedures governing the suspension of privileges will be available at the Circulation Desk.

Patrons may appeal a disciplinary action through a written request to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will provide a hearing at its next scheduled meeting. During the interim period before the hearing, the disciplinary action remains in effect.