

# Patron Behavior Policy

Example from Kings County with Notes prepared by Southern Tier Library System

## Rationale

A library is within its rights to limit access, but it must provide a rationale for doing so that is objective, community minded, and enforceable.

To ensure that all people who use and work at the Kings County Library can do so in a comfortable and safe environment, the Kings County Library reserves the right to determine what it considers to be disruptive or inappropriate behavior by the patrons in the Library. In order to ensure that every patron has the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the Library, patrons visiting or using the Library's facilities or services must comply with the Kings County Library Policy, **Behavior in the Library – Patrons** while on the Library's premises.

## Format Matters

Visually prioritize for the reader what matters most in your policy.

### **Dangerous, destructive or illegal conduct, including but not limited to the following, will not be tolerated:**

- Physical abuse or assault, including fighting or challenging others to fight;
- Engaging in intimidating or harassing behaviors, including following or stalking other patrons or Library staff, staring fixedly or leering at others, or attempting to peer under another patron's or staff member's clothing;
- Making violent or threatening statements to others; and
- Damaging, destroying, stealing, or otherwise vandalizing Library property.

Any patron engaging in one or more of the above behaviors will be instructed to leave the Library immediately and may have his or her Library privileges suspended for a period of up to one (1) year depending on the severity of the violation. In addition, law enforcement may be called and appropriate legal action may follow.

## Policy Consistency

Agreement between unattended child, internet use, etc. is key.

### **The following behaviors are also prohibited:**

- Using harassing, obscene, abusive, or insulting language or gestures.
- Leaving children under the age of ten (10) unattended by a parent, guardian, or caregiver.
- Annoying other patrons by talking, gesturing, or otherwise interfering with their ability to read, study, contemplate, or use the Library.
- Interfering with Library staff's performance of their duties.
- Entering the Library with animals other than service animals authorized by law.
- Entering the Library with bicycles, shopping carts, or other bulky items excluding items necessary to assist individuals with disabilities.
- Using roller skates, scooters, skateboards, or other similar devices on Library property.
- Eating or drinking in the Library except for bottled water with a secure top. However, bottled water is prohibited in the computer room.
- Smoking inside the Library or within 20 feet of any Library entrance or window, as prohibited under Government Code sections 7596 and 7597.

- Possessing, consuming, exchanging, selling, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs inside or outside the library building.
- Lying on the floor or sleeping. Sleeping in chairs for more than 15 minutes.
- Using the public restrooms in any manner that is not usual or customary, including laundering or bathing.
- Failing to wear a shirt, top, pants, skirt, or shoes.
- Making loud or unreasonable noise, including but not limited to the use of electronic equipment or mobile telephones at a volume that disturbs others. Ringer volumes should be set to silent or vibrate.

### Policy Consistency

Including agreement with municipal policies, if you are a municipal building.

- Carrying weapons of any type.
- Petitioning, soliciting, or selling merchandise or services including the distribution of handbills or flyers without the written permission of the Library Director.
- Loitering outside the library, as prohibited by the Hanford Police Department under Municipal Code 9.04.20.
- Adults loitering in the children's room/area without a child.
- Refusal to follow reasonable direction from Library staff, including but not limited to leaving the Library during normal closing procedures or following a suspension of Library privileges or refusing to evacuate during an emergency.

### Consequences

Objective, clear, and determined before the action. Extended consequences should be determined by board.

**Engaging in any of the above behaviors may result in one or more of the following consequences, depending on the severity of the violation:**

- Initial warning, given copy of **Behavior in the Library – Patrons**.
- Library privileges suspended for one day.
- Library privileges suspended for seven days.
- Library privileges suspended for up to one year.
- Depending on the severity, time may be determined at the discretion of the Library Director or Library Manager

### Recourse

Any limit to access by judgment of the library must include an appeal process the patron can take.

**Patrons who are suspended from the Library for a period exceeding one day may petition to have their suspension reviewed by the Director.**

**Please inform Library staff if you observe anyone behaving in a suspicious or inappropriate manner. Thank you.**

*Adopted by the Kings County Board of Supervisors on: February 14, 2012.*