



Allen Parish Libraries

"Bringing the World to You"

BEHAVIOR POLICY

The library staff is responsible for protecting all library patrons' safety and maintaining order in the library. From time to time, the staff may have to deal with patrons who violate the rights of others or who create disorder in the library. The staff should take the following actions when and if such incidents occur.

1. Issue a verbal warning with the statement that the person(s) will be asked to leave if the behavior in question does not cease.
2. Request that the person(s) leave the library.
3. If the person refuses to leave the premises, call the police.

Non-Problem (Non-Disruptive) Behavior

Some library users may act strangely or be a source of concern or irritation to the staff and public, but their behavior does not constitute problem behavior. Examples include sleepers, the person wearing three coats in the summer or mismatched shoes, someone whose body or clothing is so dirty that it is unpleasant to be near, ritual touchers or people who exhibit other compulsive behavior or speech, and the simply lonely watchers and talkers. The library is seen as "safe" and is often sought by people with difficulty in interpersonal or social situations.

Although it may be strange or eccentric, this behavior does not usually disrupt the functioning of the library, and no action is required on the part of the staff.

From time to time, the library may believe that a particular patron needs the help of a mental health or social service agency. Depending on the situation, this procedure can be followed:

- A Patron asks for Help- If, in talking to a staff member, a patron acknowledges a problem and asks for help, the staff member can inform the patron about the service of a local agency and allow the patron to use the library telephone to call the agency.

However, if any of the above situations creates a disruptive or dangerous situation, treat the behavior as defined in the Problem Behavior section.

Problem (Disruptive) Behavior

When a patron willfully and purposefully disrupts other patrons, a staff member or supervisor should approach the patron and ask them to stop the disruptive behavior. If the disruptive behavior continues, a supervisor should, in a reasonable manner, tell the patron to stop the behavior or to leave the library. If the patron continues to act disruptively and refuses to leave the library, the person in charge should be called. This person should politely tell the patron to leave the library, or the police will be contacted. If the person refuses to leave the library, the police should be called. If the patron becomes dangerous during this process, the police should be called immediately, and measures should be taken to protect other patrons and the library staff.

The following behaviors are grounds for immediate ejection from library property and may result in long-term or permanent loss of library access.

1. **Theft**- LA RS 14:67 defines theft as "the misappropriation or taking of anything of value which belongs to another, either without the consent of the other to the misappropriation or taking, or using fraudulent conduct, practices, or representations."
2. **Use of Tobacco Products**- Library policy prohibits using tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping products, etc., within library buildings or 25 feet of any library entrance.
3. **Disturbing the Peace**- LA RS 14:103 defines disturbing the peace as "the doing of any of the following in such manner as would foreseeably disturb or alarm the public:."
 - a. Engaging in a fistic encounter; or
 - b. Addressing any offensive, derisive, or annoying words to any other person who is lawfully in any street or other public place; or call him by any offensive or derisive name, or make any noise or exclamation in his presence and hearing with the intent to deride, offend, or annoy him, or to prevent him from pursuing his lawful business, occupation, or duty; or
 - c. Appearing in an intoxicated condition; or
 - d. Engaging in any act in a violent and tumultuous manner by any three or more persons; or
 - e. Holding of an unlawful assembly; or
 - f. Interruption of any lawful assembly of people."
4. **Obscenity**- LA RS 14:106 fully describes legally obscene acts. While all are grounds for immediate ejection from library property, the following are examples of the most likely actions to occur:

- a. The intentional exposure of genitals, buttocks, or chest for sexual arousal or to deliberately cause offense
 - b. Sexual intercourse or any other activity meant to cause sexual gratification
 - c. Masturbation
 - d. Exhibition, distribution, display, etc., of obscene materials in any medium.
5. **Battery**- LA RS 14:33 defines battery as "the intentional use of force or violence upon the person of another."
 6. **Assault**- LA RS 14:36 defines assault as "an attempt to commit a battery, or the intentional placing of another in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery."
 7. **Criminal Mischief**- LA RS 14:59 defines criminal mischief as "the intentional performance of any of the following acts:
 - a. Tampering with any property of another, without the owner's consent, with the intent to interfere with the free enjoyment of any rights of anyone to it, or with the intent to deprive anyone entitled to it of the full use of the property.
 - b. Throwing any stone or any other missile in any street, avenue, alley, road, highway, open space, public square, or enclosure, or throwing any stone, missile, or other objects from any place into any street, avenue, road, highway, alley, open space, public square, enclosure, or at any train, railway car, or locomotive.
 - c. Taking temporary possession of any part or parts of a place of business or remaining in an area of business after the person in charge of such business or portion of such company has directed such person to leave the premises and to desist from the temporary possession of any part or parts of such business."
 8. **Instructional Vandalism**- LA RS 14:225 defines institutional vandalism as "knowingly vandalizing, defacing, or otherwise damaging the following:

Other behaviors that are prohibited:

1. Excessive noise
2. Horseplay
3. Running
4. Obscene language or gestures
5. Knowingly exposing others to a communicable disease
6. Excessive odor or other hygiene practices which impede the use of the library by others
7. Misuse of furniture or library equipment
8. Sleeping, when habitual or disturbing to others
9. Solicitation

10. Eating anything that is likely to cause damage or stains to library materials or furniture or has an odor likely to disturb or distract other individuals. Food is not permitted in technology areas or near library computers.
11. Drinking from any container with no lid or which can otherwise not be sealed. No beverages are permitted in technology areas or near library computers.

If the library service is withdrawn from a juvenile for over a few days, the Director should Notify the custodial parent.

Allen Parish Libraries reserves the right to pursue criminal charges or civil suits and aid in pursuing criminal charges or civil cases by any victim of the above behaviors.

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