

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Adopted: August 23, 2005

Last Revised: February 24, 2025

Visitors to the Library are expected at all times to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner that does not interfere with others and does not interfere with library programs and services.

In order to provide a safe environment, it is necessary for the following basic rules of courtesy and responsibility to be followed by Library users of all ages.

On the premises of the Branch District Library, the violation of any federal or state law or local ordinance will also be regarded as a violation of the Code of Conduct.

1. Library Use

- A. Loitering, lying down, sleeping, and blocking aisles, exits or entrances is prohibited. Loitering is defined as remaining or wandering in a public place without any observable legitimate reason. All visitors shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a Library.
- B. Visitors may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties. This includes engaging in conversation, behavior, or service requests that monopolize or force the attention of staff for an inappropriate period, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.
- C. For the safety of our visitors, no recreational equipment, such as bikes, skateboards, rollerblades, etc., are allowed inside the library. Bikes must be secured in designated areas outside of the building.
- D. The defacement of, improper use of, or damage to library materials or property is prohibited.



- E. Entering staff-only areas is not allowed.
- F. Remaining in the building after closing hours is prohibited.
- G. Solicitation of library patrons is not permitted on library premises. This includes fundraising, surveys, petition drives, or similar efforts.
- H. Library users shall not violate the provisions of the Library's "Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy", including exceeding computer access time limitations or disregarding requests by library staff to terminate computer use.

2. Personal Property

- A. The Library staff may limit the number of and size of parcels carried into the Library.
- B. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended and Library staff is not permitted to guard or watch personal belongings.
- C. Personal possessions must not be left unattended or take up seating or space if needed by others.

3. Hygiene and Dress Code

- A. Appropriate attire is required for entry and service.
- B. Offensive odor that interferes with staff or use of the library by other guests, including but not limited to: body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume or cologne, or odors from items brought into the Library, is prohibited.
- C. Attending to one's personal hygiene in the common areas of the library is not permitted.

4. Noise

- A. No profanity, loud conversations, or sounds which disrupt library users are permitted.
- B. Courteous use of cell phones is allowed in designated areas.
- C. Headphones must be used when viewing or listening to media. Headphones are available for a small fee at the service desk, if needed.

5. Food and Beverage

- A. Eating is allowed only in designated areas.

- B. No food is allowed by any library-owned computers.
- C. Covered drinks are allowed.

6. Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking, Vaping

- A. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcohol, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.
- B. Persons who are noticeably intoxicated or noticeably under the influence of a controlled substance are not allowed in the library.
- C. The library is smoke-free. Use of tobacco products inside our facilities is not allowed, neither is smoking or vaping of any kind. Smoking is permitted outside only in designated areas away from entrances and air intakes.

7. Restrooms

- A. Misusing the restrooms, including, but not limited to laundering, shaving, haircutting, bathing, sexual activity, or other inappropriate behavior is prohibited.
- B. Unless a parent or guardian is assisting a child, or a patron is assisting a person with a disability, there shall only be one person to a stall and only one person at a time in individual-use restrooms.
- C. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.

8. Animals

- A. No animals are allowed in the library, except for service animals as defined by law, or animals that are part of library programs.
- B. Emotional support animals do not qualify under law as service animals.

9. Minors in the Library

- A. The BDL Board and staff are concerned for the safety of juveniles. However, they cannot keep watch over juveniles. Juveniles, either accompanied by an adult or left unattended, are the responsibility of their parents or legal guardians who are liable for their juvenile's behavior in the library, for damage to materials, equipment, and furnishings, and for injury to themselves and others.
- B. Juveniles should be at the library only with the knowledge of a parent or legal guardian.

- C. Parents or guardians must pick up their juveniles promptly so that they are not forced to wait for lengthy periods in the Library. Members of the staff are instructed to contact the police before leaving when unattended juveniles are left at the Library at closing time. Staff will wait until police arrive.
- D. Library staff will contact parents if a juvenile's behavior presents problems or if the Code of Conduct Policy is not followed.

10. Procedure for Violations of the Code of Conduct Policy

Library users who violate this Code of Conduct Policy may, at the discretion of staff, be penalized by any one or more of the following actions:

- A. Violators will be asked to cease their violating behavior with a verbal request. If the violator does not comply, they will be asked to leave for the day. If they refuse, police may be called.
- B. Violators may be asked to leave the library for 1 day for a first offense. A second offense may result in being barred from the Library for 1 week. A third offense may result in being barred for 90 days. A fourth offense may result in being barred for 1 year.
- C. Violators (and, if the violator is a minor, the parents or guardians of the violator) will be sent a certified letter informing of the revocation of library privileges when the violator is barred for a week or more.
- D. Whenever a violator is asked to leave the Library, an Incident Report must be completed and turned into the Director by the end of the next business day. A copy of any revocation-of-privileges letter should be included as well.
- E. For violations that affect the safety and security of Library visitors, staff, or facilities, including but not limited to verbal abuse, violence, threatening behavior, obscenity, harassment, sexual misconduct, etc., the police will be called immediately. Arrest or criminal prosecution may occur. The violator will be barred for a minimum of 90 days [??] to give the Library sufficient time to investigate the incident. The Director, or designee, may add additional time to the initial suspension period. Subsequent violations will result in suspensions of increasing length.

11. Right to Appeal

Library users who have been denied privileges due to violating this Code of Conduct Policy may appeal that decision in writing to the BDL Board of Trustees. The decision of the Library Board is final.