

La Porte County Public Library Code of Conduct

Purpose

The library serves all customers/users in an equal manner and is open to everyone. The Library's goal is to allow all customers to enjoy the Library facilities, materials and services in a secure, relaxing, and pleasing environment that supports education, reading, research, and learning.

For the Library to fulfill this mandate regulations must be set to govern conduct. These regulations also cover penalties for infractions and, when appropriate, removal from and denial of access to the Library.

Statement of Policy

No one may engage in conduct that interferes with anyone else's ability or right to use and benefit from the Library facilities.

Customers/users who engage in such conduct will receive a warning from the Library staff and/or an opportunity to cease the violation or leave the Library.

Illegal activity, willful or repeated violations of conduct or other posted Library regulations (e.g. computer use rules), may result in removal from the facility and/or suspension of Library privileges. Enforcement will be by Library staff and if necessary, local police departments as appropriate. Where authorized by Federal, State or local law, conduct violations may also result in arrest.

Requirements & Guidelines

The La Porte County Public Library strives to provide an environment for customers that:

- Is free of disruptive activity
- Has confidential access to library materials
- Has library materials that are complete and not defaced
- Has surroundings free from any kind of smoke and carelessly discarded waste materials
- Has quiet areas for individuals to study and to engage in research
- Has spaces that encourage learning on an individual and collaborative basis

Customer conduct is unacceptable if it:

- Impedes other persons from a timely use of facilities or materials
- Excludes others from using the library for its intended purpose
- Results in injury to oneself or others
- Results or may result in damage to library materials, building, or equipment

Enforcement

In order to preserve the peace and provide public access to library facilities, the library may suspend access to the library for persons who fail to follow the Library's established behavior guidelines. The Library reserves the right at all times to immediately discharge a customer who is dangerous or in any way threatening library staff or other customers.

Examples of unacceptable conduct include may be found at laportelibrary.org on the Library Info tab under Policies, Fines and Fees link or at any customer service desk.

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Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

Behaviors that disturb the normal functioning of the Library:

- Engaging in illegal activities.
- Being in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while in the library.
- Smoking, including the use of electronic or vapor cigarettes, inside library facilities or within 8 feet of the library entrance.
- Consuming food or uncovered drinks during computer use or in non-designated food or drink areas. No customer is permitted to leave food and drink residue or otherwise create a custodial workload on library property.
- Creating loud noises that are disruptive to other customers is not allowed.
- Causing strong pervasive odors that constitute a nuisance to others is not permitted.
- Interfering with or disrupting service of computer networks, library services, or equipment.
- Failing to wear shoes or clothing that covers the upper and lower body.

Creating a disruptive or unsafe environment:

- Illegal behaviors such as acting in a lewd or lascivious manner; voyeurism; peeping.
- Harassing, threatening, assaulting, fighting, challenging to fight or intimidating staff or other customers, including physical, sexual, racial, or verbal abuse
- Bringing illegal weapons into the library
- Vandalizing library facilities, equipment, or materials
- Soliciting, petitioning, panhandling, or gambling
- Removing library materials without checkout

Behaviors prohibited by other library policies:

- Inappropriate use of facilities or equipment
- Using restrooms inappropriately, such as for shaving, bathing, laundering, or loitering
- Blocking aisles or any other passages in such a way as to prohibit free flow of pedestrians, strollers, or wheelchairs
- Using furniture or building facilities in ways which may cause damage or excessive or unreasonable wear, e.g. lying down, putting feet on the chairs/walls, using more than one seat per person, etc.
- Using library furniture or collections in a manner other than its intended purpose
- Using electronic devices or any other noisemakers that interfere with other library users, except when authorized by library staff
- Leaving young children unattended anywhere in the library, including the children's areas. A parent, guardian, or other responsible adult must accompany any children who do not know their first and last names, their phone number, and the first and last name of the person who brought them to the library

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- Bringing any animals except service animals, or animals authorized by library staff, onto library property
- Running, riding skateboards, scooters, roller shoes, roller skates, roller blades, or similar devices inside library facilities or on library premises. Such items are permitted inside library facilities provided that they are carried, not ridden, and are stowed away from the public right of way.
- Bringing bicycles, unicycles, tricycles or other similar conveyances into library facilities, or leaving such conveyances at the entry or exit areas in a manner that blocks ingress or egress. This regulation does not apply to wheelchairs, other medical devices, strollers, or other similar devices, provided they are utilized and stored in a manner that does not restrict public access.
- Camping in library facilities or on library grounds. "Camping" refers to the use of library property for lying down, sleeping in a reclined position, living or accommodation purposes
- Customers may bring in up to two (2) bags that do not exceed the following dimensions: 26" x 14" x 4". More than two (2) bags, or bags that exceed 26" x 14" x 4", are prohibited.
- Customers shall not block aisles with personal items.
- Customers shall not leave personal items unattended on library premises at any time. If any item is left unattended for 30 minutes or more, or in the event an item appears to have been abandoned, then the Library reserves the unilateral right to remove and dispose of the items from Library premises.
- Misusing library spaces designated for particular customers. Such spaces vary by branch, and include, but are not limited to:
 - Children's Rooms Teen Rooms, Study Rooms, Makerspaces and Meeting Rooms
 - Certain computers and study rooms are designated for customers working individually and quietly, and other uses of these spaces are not permitted.
- Using the Internet in ways that interfere with a safe, welcoming and comfortable environment for the public and staff.

Approved by the La Porte County Public Library Board of Trustees on 10/27/2016, revised 11/21/2024