

SIX MILE REGIONAL LIBRARY DISTRICT

LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

Publicly supported libraries are recognized as designated public forums established to provide all members of the communities they serve with access to information. Therefore, there is a significant public interest in maintaining a library environment conducive to all library users' exercise of their constitutional right to receive information. The Board of Library Trustees of the Six Miler Regional Library District seeks to provide and ensure a welcoming environment, including quiet areas for study and work, which is conducive to the appropriate use of the facilities and services.

The Illinois Public Library District Act of 1991 (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 75, 16/1-10) states: "That library shall be forever for the use of the residents and taxpayers of the district in which it is located, subject to reasonable rules and regulations the board adopts to render the use of the library of the greatest benefit to the greatest number of those residents and taxpayers."

The Public Library District Act describes the powers of the Board of Trustees, including those dealing with exclusions of certain persons from the library and with fines and penalties:

- "The board may exclude from the use of the library any person who willfully violates an ordinance or regulation prescribed by the board." (Ch. 75, 16/30-55.55)
- "The board may provide, by ordinance, fines and penalties (i) for injury to any book or other library material or to any real or personal property belonging to or in the custody of the library and (ii) for failure to return any book or other material or personal property belonging to or in the custody of the library." (Ch. 75, 16/30-55.70)

The resources of the Six Mile Regional Library District are provided for the use and enjoyment of the entire community served by the library. All individuals, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, are welcome to make use of the facilities, collections, and services of any agency of the Six Mile Regional Library District.

The Library District desires to have as few limitations as possible. Customers are expected to treat all people and property with respect. To be respectful, customers are expected to engage in conversations and behaviors in a manner that does not disturb, offend, or harass others; threaten the safety of others; damage property or threaten to damage the property of others. It is important to use library items, furnishings, equipment, and facilities only for their intended use in a manner that does not interfere with others' use and does not damage or threaten to damage library property.

In order to protect the rights of all users to access library resources, to insure the safety and security of library users and library staff, and to protect and preserve the facilities, collections, and services of the library, the Board of Trustees of the Six Mile Regional Library District has adopted the following guidelines for conduct of persons using the library and its resources:

1. COURTESY IS EXPECTED IN DEALINGS WITH OTHER LIBRARY USERS AND LIBRARY STAFF.

When many people are seeking assistance from the staff at the same time, we ask for your patience. Please wait your turn. A staff member will assist you as soon as possible.

2. CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE SHOWN FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHER LIBRARY USERS AND LIBRARY STAFF.

Keep aisles and walkways clear of your belongings. Allow others to pass freely through the study, lounge, and bookshelves areas. When you have finished using library materials, please leave all items stacked neatly on a table or on the end of a shelf. At busy times the library staff may ask you to limit your personal space to one seat at a study table or in the lounge area, so that we may accommodate the maximum number of users.

3. A SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THE LIBRARY.

Deposit all trash in appropriate receptacles. Recreational equipment such as bicycles, skateboards, and skates are to be kept outside of buildings. For reasons of public health and hygiene, we ask all library users to abide by the following directives:

Wear shoes and appropriate clothing in the library. Appropriate clothing is clothing that covers the upper and lower torso of the body. Children old enough to walk must wear shoes, be carried, or kept in a stroller.

The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited in all public areas of the library, including the public restrooms; this included smoking, chewing and spitting, and vaping. "Smoking in public places, places of employment, and governmental vehicles [is] prohibited. No person shall smoke in a public place or in any place of employment or within 15 feet of any entrance to a public place or place of employment." (Smoke Free Illinois Act) Smoking marijuana is prohibited on library property, including the use of medical marijuana.

Because many people are sensitive to strong odors, particularly when such odors occur in enclosed spaces, we ask library users to avoid strong odors on their persons or their belongings when they are using the library. If you or your belongings exude an odor strong enough to constitute a nuisance to other people, the library staff may ask you to leave the library until the odor has been eliminated. This rule applies to all strong odors regardless of cause.

Customers who are ill should not visit the library in order to minimize the spread of infectious disease. Antibacterial sanitizers are provided at various locations in the library; please use these to cleanse your hands from time to time.

4. WE DO NOT ASK FOR OR EXPECT ABSOLUTE SILENCE IN THE LIBRARY. WE DO TRY TO MAINTAIN A QUIET ENVIRONMENT, CONDUCIVE TO READING AND STUDYING, IN THE BOOKSHELVES AND IN STUDY AREAS.

Please speak in a quiet, conversational tone. If you wish to listen to audio equipment in the library, you must use earphones. If the volume is so loud that a person sitting or standing next to you can still hear the sound despite the earphones, the library staff may ask you to lower the volume to a level that is inaudible to other people. Cell phones must be silenced or put on vibrate when you enter the library. Verbal cell phone conversations are to be taken outside the library.

5. WE DO NOT EXPECT SMALL CHILDREN TO MAINTAIN QUIET IN THE YOUTH ROOM. WE DO EXPECT PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS TO SUPERVISE THEIR CHILDREN'S USE OF THE LIBRARY. PARENTS OR

CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 8 MUST REMAIN IN VISUAL CONTACT WITH THEIR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES.

The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent or caregiver and not with library personnel. Children up to age 8 must have a parent or caregiver in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. The assigned caregiver must be a responsible person. An exception would be children attending a library program without a parent or caregiver in the room. However, the parent or caregiver is expected to remain in the library building and immediately join the child at the end of the program.

If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver in the library and inform him or her of the rules. If the parent or caregiver cannot be found, or if the child is found unattended again, the police will be called for assistance.

If a child in this age group violates the Library Behavior Policy, the child and the parent or caregiver will be informed of the rules. If inappropriate behavior continues, the parent or caregiver and the child may be asked to leave the library.

6. PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CHILDREN LEFT UNATTENDED AT THE LIBRARY, AND THEY MUST RETURN TO COLLECT THEM BEFORE THE LIBRARY'S REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLOSING TIME.

Children aged 8 and older may use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions and the well-being of their children. Children behaving inappropriately may be asked to leave the library. All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.

Teenagers are treated as adult users. However, they are still legally the responsibility of their parents and should have an emergency contact available.

Children who do not have transportation home at closing time will be asked for telephone numbers of people who can pick them up at the library. If transportation is not available at closing, the police will be called for the child's safety.

7. THE WILLFUL DESTRUCTION, MUTILATION, OR THEFT OF LIBRARY RESOURCES WILL BE PROSECUTED UNDER THE LAW.

Library facilities, collections, and services are public resources. Library furniture, equipment, and materials must be used properly and for their intended purpose. Do not relocate library furniture or equipment without permission of library staff. Check out all books and other materials before leaving the building. The library staff reserves the right to check library users' belongings when the security alarm sounds.

8. THE LIBRARY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS.

Do not leave your personal belongings unattended in the library. Destruction, damage, or theft of personal belongings should be reported immediately to the library staff, who will then call the police.

Personal belongings are not held by library staff at any desk. The library only shares surveillance footage with law enforcement officials.

9. BEVERAGES ARE ALLOWED IN THE LIBRARY WITHIN CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS. FOOD IS NOT ALLOWED

Balancing the comfort of the community with the need to protect collections and resources from damage can be challenging. The Six Mile Regional Library District Board of Trustees strives to create welcoming, clean, and comfortable environments for the public. To create a more pleasant environment for all library users, guidelines for the consumption of beverages have been developed and all library users are required to follow those guidelines. Food is allowed in the library only when provided by Library staff for special programs.

10. VEHICLES SHOULD BE PARKED WITHIN MARKED SPACES ON THE LIBRARY PARKING LOTS OR ON THE STREET.

Please do not park in spaces reserved for library vehicles. Parking spaces reserved for the disabled are so marked, and should be used only by those individuals who have the appropriate license tags or plates issued by the state and displayed on their vehicles as required by law. The owner of a vehicle parked improperly will be issued a warning. Repeat violations will result in the vehicle being towed at the owner's expense.

11. LIBRARY PARKING LOTS, SIDEWALKS, AND LAWNS ARE NOT INTENDED FOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

The library prohibits the use of skateboards, bicycles, rollers skates, etc., on library property.

12. ANIMALS, EXCEPT THOSE SPECIALLY TRAINED TO ASSIST THE DISABLED OR ANIMALS USED IN LIBRARY PROGRAMS, ARE PROHIBITED IN THE LIBRARY.

We discourage library users from leaving their pets, whether secured or unsecured, outside the building or confined in vehicles parked on the library parking lots, out of concern for the safety and well-being of the animals.

Any animal, including a service animal, may be excluded from the library when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

13. SLEEPING IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE LIBRARY.

Persons who fall asleep will be awakened by library staff. If repeated, the person may be asked to leave the library. If individuals are not responsive staff will contact emergency services.

14. RESTROOMS SHOULD BE USED ONLY FOR THEIR INTENDED PURPOSE.

Bathing, illegal drug use, and sexual activities are prohibited.

15. LOITERING ON LIBRARY PROPERTY IS NOT ALLOWED.

Patrons must be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, or using library resources will be required to leave library property.

16. SOLICITATION OF ANY KIND FOR ANY PURPOSE IS PROHIBITED ON LIBRARY PROPERTY.

Solicitation includes, but is not limited to, requests for monetary donations and requests to sign petitions.

17. ENTERING NONPUBLIC AREAS IS NOT ALLOWED UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY STAFF.

Nonpublic areas include offices, storage rooms, and behind service desks.

18. ANY BEHAVIOR THAT DISRUPTS THE ORDERLY CONDUCT OF THE LIBRARY, INTERFERES WITH ANOTHER LIBRARY USER'S RIGHT TO ACCESS LIBRARY RESOURCES, OR PREVENTS ANY LIBRARY STAFF MEMBER FROM CARRYING OUT HIS OR HER DUTIES IN AN ORDERLY AND TIMELY MANNER, IS PROHIBITED.

Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to, abusive language or gestures; threatened or actual physical assault; indecent actions; and deliberate harassment of any individual on library property, whether such harassment is verbal or nonverbal and regardless of whether it involves actual physical contact.

Anyone who engages in such behavior will be asked to leave the library for the remainder of the day. If such persons refuse to leave the library premises when requested, the police will be called for assistance in evicting him or her from the library. If police assistance is required, the offender may be prosecuted at the discretion of the library director or proxy.

19. THE ILLEGAL POSSESSION OR USE OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL, OR WEAPONS ON LIBRARY PROPERTY IS PROHIBITED AND WILL RESULT IN REMOVAL OF THE LAWBREAKER FROM THE PREMISES AND PROSECUTION UNDER THE LAW.

The lawbreaker will also be permanently barred from using the library.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
March 9, 2010
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