

SPRINGDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY Policies and Procedures			
Patron Conduct Policy			
Affects: All Functions	Effective Date: January 16, 2003 Rev. May 23, 2007 Rev. August 8, 2007	Review Date:	Number
Signature: Name: Title:			

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Patron Conduct Policy is to establish regulations regarding public behavior on library and city property.

B. Policy

Persons using the library and its resources have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate library services.

The Springdale Public Library Board supports the rights of all persons to use the facility and all library resources. In order to protect the rights of all, the Board has identified conduct that may lead to denial of library privileges. This includes but is not limited to the following behaviors or activities:

Failure to Identify Oneself in a Forthright Manner

The failure to identify oneself includes using false identification to obtain a library card or use services, the use of another person’s card without permission, or the failure to identify oneself in a forthright manner when in conflict with rules. When a member of the public is in conflict with the rules, library staff may ask that person for photo identification. Failure to produce identification may result in loss of the privilege to remain in the facility as well as additional sanctions as set forth in this policy.

Illegal Activities

All activities prohibited by law, such as the sale of drugs, public indecency, gambling, etc., will be reported to the Springdale Police Department.

Weapons

The possession of weapons is restricted in the library pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated 5-73-120. Specifically, unlawful is the carrying of a handgun, defined as a firearm with a barrel length of less than twelve inches (12) that is designed, made, or adapted to be fired with one (1) hand, the carrying of a knife or any bladed hand instrument with a blade 3 ½ inches long or capable of inflicting serious injury or death (ACA 5-73-120 and 121), the carrying of a “club,” meaning any instrument that is specially designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious physical injury or death. (ACA 5-73-120).

It is unlawful for any person other than a law enforcement officer or security guard to carry a licensed handgun into any publicly owned buildings (ACA 5-73-122) or public parks (ACA 5-73-306).

Alcohol or Drugs

The use of all alcoholic beverages and the use of illegal drugs are forbidden. Patrons under the influence of either alcohol or narcotics will not be allowed on the Library premises.

Tobacco Use

All forms of tobacco use including smoking and chewing are prohibited. Persons should not enter the facility with tobacco in their mouths with the intent of spitting in a concealed container, in a waste receptacle, or on the floor.

The entrance to the facility is also maintained as a smoke-free zone. Persons may smoke or extinguish their cigarettes (cigars), at the northern edge of the entrance where an ashtray is provided.

Soliciting and Panhandling

Offering items for sale or requesting money from others is prohibited within the library.

Unwelcome Presence

Behaviors included in being considered an unwelcome presence are entering non-public areas, remaining in the library after closing, entering restrooms not of ones' gender, refusal to leave when not abiding by the rules, opening emergency exits or setting off emergency alarms except in emergency situations, loitering in groups, blocking entrances or passageways, and other similar behaviors.

Harassment

Harassment, including but not limited to, staring, stalking, or making unwelcome advances to other patrons or to staff members is prohibited. The use of offensive or derogatory comments based on race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin is also prohibited.

Skateboarding, rollerblading, scootering, bicycling

The use of skateboards, skates, rollerblades, scooters, bicycles, or any other form of equipment is prohibited within the library and around city building entrances and adjoining sidewalks.

Sports equipment may be carried or held at a service desk.

Audio Equipment

All audio equipment must be used with headphones and should be used at a decibel level so as not to be heard by others.

Cell Phone Use

Upon entering the building, as a courtesy to other library patrons, users are asked to set cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode.

The use of cell phones is permitted inside the library provided the user speaks in a low voice and does not use speaker phone; extended conversations are best conducted outside the building.

The use of cell phones is prohibited in the computer lab due to the enclosed space and proximity of other lab users. The use of cell phones is also prohibited during library events.

The Library reserves the right to ask anyone using a cell phone to go outside the building or into the entryway area when staff has determined that conversations are disruptive to other patrons.

Disorderly Conduct - including but not limited to:

Disruptive, disturbing, sustained noise including loud talking, shouting, singing, whistling, screaming, crying, or anything similar.

Running.

Throwing objects.

Misusing furnishings such as standing on chairs, standing or sitting on tables or counters; using library facilities to bathe, shave, launder, or for other domestic purposes.

Using abusive or obscene language or gestures, including swearing or lewd language.

Using offensive behavior including shoving, fighting, or making threatening gestures.

Using disruptive behavior including inappropriate physical contact with another patron or a staff member.

Food and Beverages

The use of food and beverages in the library is limited to items needed by infants, the use of bottled water, and refreshments served at library functions. Staff may request that other items be taken out.

Proper Attire and Personal Hygiene

Library users are expected to dress according to norms for indoor, public spaces. Adults should wear shirts, shoes, and be clothed so as not to be disruptive in a public setting. Children should be clothed appropriately for their ages, with shoes if walking freely. All clothing should be dry.

Persons with body odor, odors emanating from their clothing, or soiled clothing may be offensive or repugnant to others. Staff may ask them to move to a different area or to return to the library after resolving the offensive situation.

Animals

The presence of animals in the library is limited to service animals.

Library Telephone Use

The use of the courtesy phone near the Information desk is limited to short calls. The phone is not available for business calls.

Destruction or defacement of property

This behavior includes maliciously accessing, altering, disconnecting, deleting, damaging or destroying any library equipment, computer system network, program or data.

It includes mutilating library materials by marking, underlining, removing pages or portions of pages, removing binding, end covers, bar code labels, cards, accompanying discs or booklets or removing electronic or magnetic theft prevention devices.

It also includes vandalizing or defacing any part of the library building, furnishings, or equipment.

Theft or attempted theft of materials or property

The Springdale Public Library adheres to the Arkansas Library Materials Security Law, ACA 13-2-801 – 13-2- 806, in the treatment of theft or mutilation of library materials.

It is unlawful for any person to remove library materials without checking them out from the library or to retain possession of library materials without authorization, which is defined as “contrary to rules.”

It is unlawful for any person to willfully mutilate any library material. This includes removing any of the parts such as end covers, bar code labels, cards, accompanying discs or booklets, etc.

If a library employee has reason to believe that a person has committed or attempted to commit any offense that includes the unlawful removal of materials and/or mutilation of materials, they may detain and question that person in a reasonable manner. They may require that person to open and disclose the contents of any bags, purses, briefcases, and other containers that are in the person’s possession. If library materials or parts of materials are found in the possession of a person, the person may be subject to loss of the privilege of using the library and possible prosecution under the above stated law.

If items are found which have not been checked out, the person, if a cardholder in good standing, will have the choice of checking out the materials or surrendering them to the library staff. If the cardholder is ineligible to check out due to fines or billed items or the person does not have a library card, the materials will be confiscated by the library staff. If mutilated materials or parts of materials are found in the possession of a person, the person may be subject to loss of the privilege of using the library and possible prosecution under the above stated law.

Disorderly Conduct on City Property

As the library is located within Murphy Park, which is city property, staff is obligated to report to the Springdale Police Department unlawful or disorderly conduct when observed or reported by the public in the park or parking lots.

Unattended or Unsupervised Children

Parents are responsible for ensuring the appropriate behavior and safety of their children while in the library. (See Policy: Children’s Use of the Library) Parents may be reminded that the library is a public place and that staff members are not given the responsibility or authority to provide oversight for children.

An adult must accompany children under the age of eight. Parents visiting the library with their young child(ren) are advised to remain in the Children's area with the child(ren). A parent may be asked to return to their unattended child.

A parent may be called to pick up a child who has been left unattended. If the parent can't be reached, a letter may be sent for future reference.

Consequences of Failure to Abide by Rules

An initial warning is given verbally by the staff member observing the conduct. The person may be asked to cease the conduct, to move to another location in the library, or some other simple solution.

A second warning for the same or similar offense will be given verbally by a senior staff member on duty and may result in loss of privileges for the remainder of the day. An incident report is submitted to the Director.

In severe situations, a senior staff member may deny immediate access or access for the remainder of the day. The Springdale Police Department may be called to assist staff in enforcing rules of conduct and in maintaining a safe environment.

Situations that evolve into a longer suspension are followed by written notification to the individual or to the parent if the individual is a minor. One letter of notification is sent via First Class U.S. Mail and a second mailing is sent via Certified Mail. A copy of the notification may also be retained at service desks to be presented if the person appears at the library before receiving the mailed copies. The standard suspension is for three weeks. An incident report is submitted to the Director and notification is sent to the Springdale Police Department.

Longer suspensions are used in the most egregious situations and may be applied only by the Library Director. An incident report is submitted to the Library Board, the Mayor's Office and the Springdale Police Department.

In the case of theft of library materials, the following penalties are established by ACA 13-2-803:

(b)(1) A violation of this section is a Class B felony if the value of the property is two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) or more.

(2) A violation of this section is a Class C felony if the value of the property is less than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) but more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

A violation of this section is a Class A misdemeanor if the value of the property is five hundred dollars (\$500) or less.