

## Little Falls Public Library Patron Code of Conduct

**Policy Statement:** The Little Falls Public Library is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for all patrons. To ensure a positive and respectful atmosphere, we have established the following Code of Conduct. All library users are expected to comply with these guidelines to maintain a space that is conducive to learning, reading, and community engagement.

The Little Falls Public Library encourages people of all ages to visit the library. Those using the library and its resources have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate library services. While in the building, visitors are expected to engage in activities associated with the use of a public library. Interference with the use of the library by other patrons or library employees in the performance of their duties is not permitted.

### **Regulations:**

**Behavior and Respect for Others:** Patrons must treat library staff and fellow visitors with courtesy and respect. Harassment, intimidation, or any form of disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

People demonstrating disruptive behavior will be required to leave the library. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, noisy, boisterous actions (see Little Falls Township Code §147-1; §147-2; inappropriate behavior, including eating and drinking in areas other than in designated areas, smoking or vaping on the Library property, which includes the building and the outside areas, (see Little Falls Township Code §147-2), running, or loud talking; misuse of library property (see Little Falls Township Code §118-2); uncooperative attitude; or actions that deliberately annoy others or prevent the legitimate use of the library and its resources.

Patrons shall not use alcohol, narcotics, or other controlled substances or be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or any controlled substances on the Library property. (see Little Falls Township Code §11-22; 33-12).

Abusive language and behavior will not be tolerated.

Anyone who harasses staff or another patron will be asked to leave the library and a report will be filed with the director. Repeated acts of harassment or acts that may escalate into violent or illegal actions will be immediately reported to The Little Falls Police Department.

Engaging in sexual activity, contact, or assault, or any act of lewdness or exposure is prohibited. Lewd acts or sexual misconduct are not appropriate in the library (see Little Falls Township Code §147-2). Serious acts and acts involving minors will be immediately reported to The Little Falls Police Department and the director.

**Quiet Spaces:** Maintain a quiet atmosphere in designated areas. Keep conversations at a low volume in areas to respect the diverse needs of library users.

**Personal Belongings:** Do not leave personal belongings unattended. The library is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

**Food and Drink:** Consume food and beverages in designated areas only. Patrons are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and for disposing of trash appropriately.

**Technology Use:** Use electronic devices with headphones to avoid disturbing others. Respect posted rules regarding computer usage and adhere to time limits to accommodate all patrons.

**Children and Minors:** Children under the age of ten (10) must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Parents, guardians, and assigned chaperons are responsible for their children's behavior.

Children and young people (ages 11-17) are expected to adhere to the same standards of patron conduct as adults. Parents, guardians, or assigned chaperones are responsible for the behavior of their children while in the library.

Young children (ages 11-17) may not be safe when left unattended in the library. Parents, guardians, and/or the responsible caregiver—not the Library—are responsible for children in their care. Staff cannot know if children are leaving with a parent, a friend, or a stranger. With the exception of library programs, children under the age of ten (10) should never be left unsupervised in any area of the library.

Older children (ages 11-17) who violate this Code of Conduct will be asked to leave the library. If the child cannot safely leave the library to return home on his or her own, staff will call a parent or guardian.

The Little Falls Police Department will be notified if:

1. The parent/guardian of a young child cannot be located;
2. An older, disruptive child does not leave when asked; or
3. An unsupervised child remains at closing.

Under no circumstances will library staff take a child out of the building or transport children to another location.

**Attire:** Clothing should be appropriate for a public space. Shoes, shirts, and pants/shorts/skirts are required at all times.

**Personal Hygiene:** Patrons are expected to maintain good personal hygiene to ensure a pleasant environment for all library users. Patrons whose personal hygiene is considered to be unpleasant may be asked to leave the building.

Patrons, whose bodily hygiene is considered offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other patrons of the Library, shall be required to leave the building.

**Loiter in the Library:** Patrons shall not loiter in the Library building, Library entryway, or Library property, thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter or exit the building, or to use the library resources.

**Library Materials:** We ask that all our patrons handle the library materials with care. Report damaged items to library staff. Respect due dates for borrowed materials and return them promptly.

Patrons shall not deface or destroy library property (see Little Falls Township Code §118-2). This includes but is not limited to books, magazines, newspapers, library furnishings (desks/tables/chairs), walls, computers, or other items in the library collection as well as outside property (digital sign, garden benches, patio stones, bicycle rack).

Any material(s) and/or property of the library to be removed from the library must be charged out in accordance with established procedures before leaving the library premises.

**Public Use of Library Telephone:**

Telephones in the library are to be used only by staff. In the event of an emergency staff will place calls for patrons. In the event of repeated request by a child, a note from a parent or guardian stating the need for this service will be requested. The Staff is not responsible for taking or relaying telephone messages.

**Use of Personal Devices:** Personal battery-powered devices such as laptops, iPods, calculators, etc. may be used if the noise/volume level is low and usage does not interfere with other patrons. Patrons who need to

charge their devices do so at their own risk/safety. The library provides free Wi-Fi service (see Front Desk for details). Cell phones should be muted and all incoming/outgoing calls should be taken/made outside of the library.

**Public Use of Non-Library Equipment:**

Personal appliances, such as computers, iPods, and calculators, may be used if the noise level is low and use does not interfere with others. Because of the lack of outlets and safety concerns all appliances should be battery-powered. Portable telephones and pagers should be turned off or switched to a non-audible signal and should be answered outside the library.

**Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards:**

All bicycles (pedal, electric, etc.) must be parked in the rack provided outside of the Library building. All scooters, skateboards, and other small vehicles may remain outside of the building away from entrance doors or stored with staff at the circulation desk.

**Restrooms:**

Restrooms are expected to be available for the public with minimal wait time; therefore, use is restricted to reasonable time periods; laundering or changing clothes, bathing, or phone calls are not permitted.

**Animals:**

Only registered service animals or animals participating in Library programs are permitted in the building.

**Photographs/Photography:**

Photographs may not be taken on library premises without the permission of the library administration and all library users to be photographed. Photographs and recordings are not allowed in non-public areas (restrooms and staff only areas) unless consent is given by the Library Director. Please see the library's Photography policy for further details.

**Solicitation:**

Solicitation of contributions, signatures, and/or sales is strictly prohibited.

**Enforcement:**

**Compliance with Policies:** Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in a request to leave the library premises, suspension of library privileges, or involvement of law enforcement, if necessary. Any patron whose privileges have been suspended or revoked may have the decision reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

**Reporting Violations:** If you witness a violation of this Code of Conduct, please report it to the library staff immediately.

Any person not abiding by these rules and regulations will be notified by staff that their behavior is unacceptable. If a patron does not correct his/her conduct, the patron will be asked to leave. If the patron will not leave, Library staff will call the Little Falls Police Department (see N.J.S.A. 2C:18-3).