

# HAMPTON FALLS FREE LIBRARY

## PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY

The Hampton Falls Free Library (HFFL) welcomes patrons of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections and programs offered by the Library.

The HFFL Board of Trustees believes that library patrons have the right to use library materials and services without being disturbed or impeded by other library users; that library patrons and employees have the right to an environment that is safe, secure and comfortable with materials and facilities that are accessible and in good condition. The HFFL Board of Trustees has determined the rules of behavior necessary to protect the rights of individuals to use library materials and services, to protect the rights of library employees to conduct library business without interference and to preserve library materials and facilities.

The Patron Behavior Policy extends to all library property, including parking lot, driveway, green spaces and gardens. The HFFL staff reserve the right to enforce this policy by issuing verbal warnings, asking patrons to leave the Library property and/or revoking patron privileges at their discretion depending on the severity of the violation. The Library staff reserve the right to contact the Hampton Falls Police Department for assistance related to the dismissal of a patron or for assistance with an unattended child.

### General Behavior Guidelines for Library Users

1. Appropriate clothing, including shirts and shoes, must be worn in the Library at all times.
2. Food and beverages may only be brought into the Library with the approval of the Library staff.
3. Please turn cellular ringers off while in the building and place/take calls only in the vestibule or outside.
4. Bicycles should be parked in the bike rack. No equipment or shoes with wheels (i.e. rollerblades, skateboards, etc.) shall be brought into the Library unless permitted by Library staff.
5. Animals must be left outside of the building unless they are certified service animals or are part of a Library-sponsored program.
6. Personal property should not be left unattended. The Library is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
7. Loud conversation and noise shall be kept to a minimum. All patrons shall be provided with a peaceful, quiet environment conducive to research and study.
8. Use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes, and illegal drugs is not permitted anywhere in the Library building or on Library property.
9. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to others shall be required to leave the Library.
10. Lewd acts, sexual misconduct or threatening the safety or rights of others (including but not limited to violent or disorderly behavior, threats of violence, use of abusive language and possession/display of any weapon) may result in removal from Library premises by the Hampton Falls Police Department.
11. Solicitation and distribution of non-library materials, canvassing and campaigning are not permitted without the permission of the Library staff. (from Amherst, NH)
12. Materials (books, videos, tapes, magazines) may not be removed from the Library without proper authorization (i.e. they must be checked out). Theft, damaging, or defacing of Library material may lead to prosecution under NH RSA 202-A. The Library reserves the right to inspect personal belongings for concealed library materials.

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### Behavior Guidelines for Families or Young Library Users

1. The Hampton Falls Free Library and its staff do not act *in loco parentis*, in place of the parent, and do not assume responsibility for any minor child left unattended in the library. As used in this policy, the term “parent” may include legal guardians or other persons having legal custody or control of a minor.
2. Library staff do not track when or with whom minor children arrive or depart from the Library building nor from a Library program. Children attending Library programs are supervised by Library staff only during the scheduled time of the program.
3. Children under ten (10) years of age must be accompanied and supervised by a parent at all times.
4. At the discretion of a parent, a child age 10 or older may be left unattended to read for pleasure, select materials, complete a homework assignment, or attend a program. The child must know how to reach their parent in case this need arises.
5. Parents are responsible for the behavior of minor children at all times, even if they are not in the library with the child. Disruptive behavior, including but not limited to running, shouting, pushing or other rowdy, rambunctious activity will not be permitted. In case of unaccompanied children, a parent will be called to pick them up. If the parent cannot be reached and the child’s behavior is deemed dangerous or unduly disruptive, the Hampton Falls Police Department may be called.
6. Young children accompanied by a parent may sign up to use a computer for educational and recreational purposes. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure appropriate use of online terminals and other electronic resources by young children. Pounding on the keyboards and other potentially damaging activities are not permitted.
7. If a child is left at the Library without a way home at closing time, Library staff may call the child’s home or parent’s place of business. If the parent cannot be located or if a parent has not picked up the child within one half hour, the Library staff may contact the Hampton Falls Police Department. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the Library or give a child a ride home.

*adopted 1/6/2002, adopted 2/27/2020, revised & adopted 2/22/2024*