

Phillips Free Library Patron Conduct Policy & Procedure

The public library is open to all. Library staff will request patrons stop any conduct that significantly interferes with the use and enjoyment of the library by others.

Zero Tolerance Policy

If any individual shows abusive or disrespectful behavior, in speech or actions, towards a staff member or another patron, they will be asked to leave the library, and may be banned from the library indefinitely.

Any staff member has the authority to ask an individual to leave the library for the remainder of the day. The Director has the authority to suspend or ban an individual for an extended period of time.

Specific behaviors that are unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

Any behavior deemed disruptive by library staff that interferes with others use of the library.

Speaking to anyone, staff or other patrons, in a disrespectful manner. Harassing a staff member or another patron. ***Harassment** (includes but is not limited to exhibitionism, following other patrons or staff around, staring, repeated unwanted personal questions or attention, repeated requests for information if the intent appears to be to embarrass or upset the staff member, belligerent questioning of staff)

Abusive language

Failing to follow the directions of a staff member

Yelling, or speaking so loudly that a reasonably tolerant person cannot work

Eating or drinking unless in designated areas (water in a closed container may be allowed at tables, but not near books or computers)

Handling library furniture and property inappropriately (this includes having shoes on furniture, lifting furniture up or moving it without staff permission, damaging furniture or other fixtures)

Running

Smoking

Theft of, or vandalism to, library materials, equipment or facilities

Using the library while noticeably intoxicated

Hitting

Leaving children under the age of 8 unattended in the library, unless they are registered for a particular library program

Using skateboards or skates in the library

Entering the Library barefooted, without a shirt, or being otherwise attired, so as to be disruptive to the Library environment.

Lying in the aisles

Sleeping, if it is disturbing because the patron is snoring, or if seating is limited and the patron is preventing others from using needed space

Extremely offensive odor (to the point it is nauseating, permeates an area, and/or prevents use of needed resources).

Public displays of affection

Soliciting, panhandling and political activity

Loud, continuous crying or screaming

Response to Inappropriate or Illegal Behavior

1. The patron will be given a verbal warning.
2. If the behavior continues, the patron will be asked to leave for the rest of the day
3. If the patron exhibits poor behavior again, a written warning will be given
4. Upon a third infraction, the patron will be given a Loss of Library Privileges letter and will not be allowed on library property for three months
5. If the infraction is severe enough, the library director may immediately revoke the patron's privileges for a length of time commensurate with the severity of the infraction.
6. If a patron refuses to leave library staff should **call law enforcement**.
7. If a staff member feels unsafe, they should call another staff member to help them confront the patron. If they are alone, they should call the police. Staff's first responsibility is to their own and the other patron's safety. If it is felt that evacuate everyone is necessary, they should do so.
8. An incident report should be filled out for every patron who receives a verbal warning. Incident report sheets are located under forms at the circulation desk. Let other staff members, volunteers or substitutes know what the offender looks like. If at all possible, a name of the patron should be included.
9. If a patron is barred from coming to the library for an extended period of time, to reinstate their privileges they will need to make an appointment with the director to apologize for their behavior and sign an agreement outlining appropriate behavior for the future.

Safety is more important than library materials or library rules. Don't put any other concern before your own safety and that of other staff and patrons.

Phillips Free Library's Patron Behavior policy is based on the American Library Association Guidelines.

Adopted on 10/17/16

Phillips Free Library Board of Trustees