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Unacceptable Conduct Policy - Library Privileges

The Watertown Public Library serves people of all ages, providing many community services and programs. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone is able to experience the library environment safely and productively. **No person shall engage in unacceptable conduct when using the library facility or participating in library programs.**

A. Definition

Unacceptable conduct shall include:

- * Any individual or group activity which is disruptive to other persons using library facilities.
- * Any individual or group activity that is inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying and other similar conduct normally associated with a public library.
- * Any individual or group activity which violates any federal law, state law or municipal ordinance.
- * Any individual or group activity which is determined by a library employee to be unsafe.

B. Examples of unacceptable conduct

Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- * Excessive and disruptive conversations / discussions in the library building.
- * Selling or soliciting in the library building.
- * Smoking or use of tobacco products in the library building. For the purposes of this policy, “smoking” includes electronic devices that simulate smoking (“vaping”). Smoking is not allowed within 30 ft of any public entrance to the library.
- * Bringing any animal into the library building, except a service animal which assists the disabled.
 - For the purposes of this policy, a service animal is defined as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. For purposes of this definition, other species of animals, trained or untrained, are not service animals.
 - Documentation must be provided to verify that this is a service animal.
 - The owner/keeper of the service animal must be in full control of the animal at all times.
- * Stealing, damaging or vandalizing library property, including removing protective covers or barcodes from books, magazines and other media with the intent to steal library property.
- * Chronic sleeping in the library
- * Exhibiting abusive, obscene, or profane conversation and/or behavior toward library staff or patrons, or being in a general intoxicated state.
- * Committing any crime or violation of local, state or federal laws and ordinances on the premises of the library.
- * Engaging in behavior that is harassing or threatening in nature to library staff or patrons.
- * Knowingly entering non-public areas of library facilities without permission.
- * Leaving children unattended for extended periods of time or after library hours.
- * Viewing pornography.

C. Treatment of offenses (Depending on the severity of the offense. Staff who feel threatened by a patron's behavior should call the police for assistance)

- * Offenses will first be addressed by library staff that witness the behavior or are involved with the behavior in question.
- * Staff will document behavior using an excel spreadsheet.
- * If the behavior continues, library staff will speak to the patron.
- * Visitors who do not follow the Library's Unacceptable Policy can be asked to leave the building and can lose their library privileges. They can also be arrested or subject to other legal action. The director will determine the length of time privileges will be suspended depending on the nature of the offense and the extent of damage or disruption, any history of prior infractions of library policies and other Relevant circumstances.