

Patron Behavior Policy

Rita and Truett Smith Public Library

Approved by the Library Advisory Board March 23, 2026

The Rita and Truett Smith Public Library provides library services in a safe, welcoming, and orderly environment for all members of the public. To ensure that library facilities are available for their intended purposes, patrons are required to comply with this Patron Behavior Policy while on library property.

Library property includes all interior and exterior areas of the library building, including parking lots, sidewalks, landscaped areas, and any other property owned or operated by the Library.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- A warning from library staff
- Removal from library property for the remainder of the day
- Suspension of library privileges
- Issuance of a criminal trespass warning
- Referral to law enforcement when appropriate

Library staff are authorized to interpret and enforce this policy and may determine whether conduct interferes with the safe and orderly operation of the library.

Prohibited Conduct

Patrons may not engage in behavior that disrupts library operations, interferes with the use of the library by others, dominates staff time, or threatens the safety of patrons or staff.

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

Harassment

Harassment of library staff or patrons is prohibited, including but not limited to:

- Verbal abuse
- Sexual harassment or misconduct
- Stalking or leering
- Offensive gestures
- Cursing or using obscene, abusive, profane, or threatening language

Damage or Misuse of Library Property

Abusing or vandalizing library facilities, furnishings, or materials, including but not limited to:

- Using furniture in a manner that may cause damage
- Operating drones or other flying devices inside the building or on library property, including the courtyard and parking areas
- Moving furniture in study rooms
- Mutilating library materials
- Removing library materials without properly checking them out

Personal Hygiene

Activities related to personal grooming that are inappropriate for a public facility are prohibited, including:

- Cutting or polishing nails
- Cutting or styling hair, including facial hair
- Using restrooms for bathing or washing clothes
- Performing dental hygiene in public areas
- Excessive body odor or excessive use of perfume or cologne that interferes with others' use of the library

Illegal Activity

All federal, state, and local laws apply on library property. Prohibited conduct includes:

- Possession or use of illegal drugs
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages
- Smoking, vaping, or use of tobacco products (City Ordinance Section 74-3)
- Gambling
- Littering

Disruptive Noise

Creating excessive noise that disturbs others, including:

- Using sound-generating devices without headphones
- Loud conversations or rowdy behavior
- Using personal devices at a volume that disturbs other patrons

Other Prohibited Behavior

- Bringing animals into the library, except service animals as defined by law
 - Sleeping
 - Spitting
 - Loitering (assembling without a legitimate purpose)
 - Using or riding bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, Heelys, or other wheeled footwear on library property
 - Eating where food is not allowed
 - Running
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Solicitation and Surveys

Solicitation and surveys not related to library events are prohibited on library property.

Solicitation includes requests for money, donations, signatures, memberships, sales, or support for a cause, organization, or business.

Surveys include attempts to question, interview, or collect information from patrons for research, marketing, political, or other purposes.

Prohibited activities include:

- Distributing materials or promotional items
- Posting notices or advertisements
- Directing patrons to external content through web links, QR codes, or similar digital methods
- Interrupting patrons or staff to request participation in surveys

Requests to promote or present personal work during library programs are considered solicitation. The library does not promote or market individual authors or commercial works.

Patron Responsibilities

Patrons using the library must:

- Wear appropriate attire, including shirts and shoes (no wet clothes or bathing suits)
- Be responsible for their personal belongings
- Secure bicycles at designated outdoor bicycle racks
- Report damaged or malfunctioning equipment to staff
- Follow all posted signage and staff instructions

Failure to comply with posted signs or staff direction may result in removal from the library.

Supervision of Children During Open Hours

Children aged nine (9) and under must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. The parent or legal guardian must remain within reasonable proximity and within sight of the child.

If a child aged nine (9) or younger is found unattended and a responsible adult cannot be located, library staff may contact law enforcement.

Library staff are not responsible for supervising children.

Adult patrons who are not accompanying children and who are not selecting materials or consulting with staff should not remain in the Children's Area.

Disruptive Children

Children and teens ages 17 and under who are disruptive may be asked to leave the library. Staff will allow the child to contact a parent or guardian. Depending on the circumstances, staff may contact law enforcement.

Unattended Children at Closing

Children aged nine (9) and under who have not been picked up at closing will be allowed to contact a parent or guardian. If they are unable to reach a responsible adult, library staff will contact law enforcement.

Teen Services

Teen programs are intended for students in grades seven through twelve.

Only students in grades 7–12 may use the Teen Room. Individuals not in this age group who are not selecting materials or consulting with staff may be asked to move to another area of the library.

Parents may accompany their teen children in the Teen Room; however, younger siblings should not remain in the Teen Room for extended periods. Teen Room resources, including Chromebooks, board games, Makerspace materials, and gaming equipment, are reserved for teen use.