



POLICY

Patron Conduct

Updated August 2020

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This code of conduct is intended to encourage behavior, which supports the Library’s mission to provide the best possible resources in a warm, welcoming environment. Behavior becomes unacceptable when it interferes with this mission, impinges on the rights of others, causes damage to buildings or equipment, or causes injury to oneself or others. Those willing to modify unacceptable behavior are always welcome to stay. However, those unable to comply will be asked to leave. If necessary, the authorities will be called.

Principles of Conduct

The Library serves various functions for library members, including that of a community information center, a place to study, and a place to find cultural and recreational materials and activities. All of these require traffic, movement, and discourse. In balancing these various roles and functions, a reasonable noise level is expected and generally believed to be acoustically unavoidable. When in Palm Harbor Library, library members must observe the following principles of conduct:

- Speak in normal or quiet tones of voice
- Respect others, including their rights and personal property
- Respect Library property and staff
- Maintain responsibility for the safety, well-being, and conduct of children in their charge
- Refrain from actions that are disruptive to other library members

Library Member Prohibited Activities

The following are examples of behaviors (but not limited to) that seriously interfere with the activities normally associated with the use of a public library and are prohibited in Palm Harbor Library:

- Smoking/Vaping
- Sleeping
- Eating, drinking, or displaying food in open containers (Only permissible item is a water bottle with cap)
- Disturbing or annoying anyone by loud/unreasonable noise or movement, including, but not limited to, using audible devices without headphones, or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others. Cell phones and pagers are to be placed on vibrate feature. Cell phone conversations are permissible if conducted in a normal speaking voice. All other conversations are to be held either in the foyer or outside of the building
- Use of abusive, threatening, harassing or insulting language

- Having body odor or personal hygiene that is offensive or that interferes with others' use of the library
- Animals (except trained assistance animals)
- Improper acts which are subject to prosecution under criminal or civil codes of law
- Vehicles and other objects which constitute potential safety hazards to patrons
- Objects placed adjacent to any exit or entrance on the inside or outside of the facility which poses a safety hazard to persons entering or exiting the facility
- Lack of shirt or footwear
- Personally monopolizing library space, seating, tables, or equipment to the exclusion of other patrons or staff
- Soliciting, selling, or begging
- Unattended children under the age of 10
- Bathing, shaving, washing clothes, or other misuses of restrooms
- Distribution or posting of printed materials not approved by Palm Harbor Library administration
- Loitering, including refusal to leave at closing or emergency evacuation
- Possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Unruly/offensive behavior such as viewing pornography
- Misuse of the library facility
- Unattended items found on library grounds will be placed in "Lost & Found" for up to one month. Thereafter the item will be discarded.

Violations of Library Member Principles of Conduct and Library Member Prohibited Activities

Maintenance of proper conduct in the Library is one of the responsibilities of Library staff. The Staff has the authority to deal firmly but courteously with library members who are violating the Library Member Principles of Conduct and Library Member Prohibited Activities. Actions taken by staff may include making the library member aware that the behavior violates the principles of conduct or is a prohibited activity, warning the library member that they will have to leave if the behavior does not change, and telling the library member to leave the library. In some cases, the library member may be escorted from the building by staff or the police.

Anyone known to have violated the principles of conduct and prohibited activities of the Library may be excluded from the Library and its programs as a matter of administrative policy. If the behavior involves illegal activity, such as child molestation, indecent exposure, or destruction of Library property such as computer equipment, library staff has full authority to call the police. Based upon the severity of the situation, a suspension of library privileges may be applied without advance warning or prior suspension.

The suspension shall remain in effect pending periodic administrative review and/or a trespass will be issued for an indefinite period of time. The library administrator's decision shall be final.

Unattended Child Policy Statement – Updated August 2020

The Palm Harbor Library welcomes the use of its services and facilities by children. Staff members are committed to the well-being and safety of children. However, library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide basic childcare needs or emergency care if the child becomes upset or ill.

Any public place may be dangerous for a child who is left unattended. Arrangements should be made ahead of time for children to be picked up after programs.

The Library reminds caregivers to consider the safety and well-being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages. Children should be supervised at all times and reminded that the materials in the library are to be respected and treated with care.

Children under the age of 10 may not be left unattended in the library and must be directly supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver 16 years or older, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS. This does not apply to children in library-sponsored programs.

Children age 10 and over may use the library unattended provided that their behavior is not disruptive. Caregivers are responsible for the actions of their children in the library whether or not the caregiver is present. Caregivers will also be responsible for any disturbance or damage done to the library by their child. Disruptive children, ten years of age or older may be asked to leave the library after one warning. In such instances, caregivers will be contacted or, if the caregiver is unavailable, police custody will be utilized.

The library must not be used as a childcare service. Any child unaccompanied by a responsible adult or a caregiver for an extended period of time may be approached for information concerning their parent's availability. The caregivers will be notified of the library policy. If the situation continues, proper authorities will be notified.

If a minor under the age of 18 is left unattended at the time of closing and attempts to reach the caregivers have failed, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office will be called to take responsibility for the child.