

LIBRARY USE POLICY

(See also *Unattended Children Policy*)

The Mechanicsville Public Library is supported by the taxes of the people of Mechanicsville and rural Cedar County who expect our facility to be clean, comfortable and a safe place for selecting materials, reading, researching, studying, writing, and attending programs and meetings. The Library Board of Trustees has the authority under state law to establish reasonable rules and behavior guidelines for patron conduct while on Library property. Failure to comply with the following guidelines may result in the loss of Library privileges and removal from Library premises.

Unacceptable Use

Any behavior that is disruptive or disturbing to other Library patrons and staff, endangers the health and safety of the public and facility, or infringes on the provision of Library property.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- A. Acts in violation of any local, state, or federal law.
- B. Behavior, verbal or physical, which threatens or endangers the safety of patrons, staff, or volunteers.
- C. Behavior that disrupts in the provision of Library services
- D. Deliberate destruction of Library property
- E. Deliberate use of the library for unintended or inappropriate purposes, such as but not limited to:
 - Disruptive behavior, such as creating noise at a volume that is disruptive to staff and other patrons.
 - Using a cell phone, pager, audio player or other electronic device in a manner that disrupts library patrons or staff operations.
 - Misuse or abuse of Library property.
 - Verbal or physical harassment towards other patrons or staff.
 - Failure to wear appropriate attire. Patrons must be fully clothed with shoes at all times.
 - Soliciting, panhandling or gambling.
 - Distributing literature, gathering signatures, or soliciting contributions.
 - Sleeping activity that interferes with public use of Library services or facilities.
 - Operating, pushing, or riding wheeled devices on library premises. These restrictions do not apply to ADA assistive devices or baby strollers.
 - Possessing, consuming, selling or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other substances.
 - Physical acts of an intimate and/or inappropriate nature
 - Unauthorized entrance into nonpublic areas
 - Taking pictures or videotaping people, except at events, unless authorized by the Director or designee and by the patrons involved or parents if minors are present.
 - Allowing any child under the age of eight (8) years old to use the library without direct supervision by a responsible person. (Please note: Children attending Library programs designed for independent activity is allowed).

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- Failing to exit the building or failure to leave as directed by library staff.

The Mechanicsville Public Library will maintain a healthy and clean environment for all Library users. Considerate consumption of snack food or a covered beverage is allowed in public areas of the library, except near electronics and areas otherwise noted. Examples of prohibitive behaviors that are not conducive to providing a clean and hygienic environment include but are not limited to:

- Using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco or other tobacco on Library property
- Personal hygiene, odor or scent that constitutes a nuisance to others or poses a health risk.
- Bringing animals inside Library buildings, except for service animals and those allowed during special Library programs.
- Use of restrooms for bathing or personal grooming.

ENFORCEMENT

In most cases, patrons who are behaving inappropriately will be given one warning by Library staff and asked to behave in an appropriate manner. Patrons who refuse to behave more appropriately after one warning will be asked to leave Library property for the remainder of the day.

Repeated or serious violations, which include behaviors that are absolutely unacceptable, do not require a warning, but can result in the loss of library privileges for as long as the Library Director deems necessary.

In extreme cases where a patron is consistently disruptive every time, he/she visits, the Library Director may ban a patron from Library property. Reinstatement of Library privileges will be authorized by the Library Board of Trustees. Appeals for such decisions may be made at any regularly scheduled library Board of Trustees Meeting. The Library Board of Trustees President or Library Director must receive a written letter of appeal at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. A parent or legal guardian must appeal a loss of privileges for a minor.

In the cases in which a patron poses a clear danger to him/herself or to others, deliberately violates the law, or refuses to leave Library property after being asked to do so, police will be called immediately to handle the situation.

Security cameras are located in public areas of the library to protect the safety and security of people, the building, and its contents.

Adopted: December 11, 2001 | Revised: 2015 | Revised: 11/8/17 | Reviewed: 8/5/20 | Revised/Approved: 4/5/23