

OAK CREEK PUBLIC LIBRARY
PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY

Purpose

The Oak Creek Public Library has established this Behavior Policy to ensure that the Library is safe, welcoming and provides equitable access to materials and services for all.

Rules for Personal Behavior

- The rules outlined below apply to all Library interactions, including interactions that occur electronically or over the phone.
- Use of false identification to obtain a Library card, or use of another person's Library card will not be tolerated and may result in a ban from the Library.
- Personal property brought into the Library is subject to the following:
 - The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.
 - The Library does not guarantee storage for personal property.
 - Personal possessions shall not take up seating or space if needed by others.
- Patrons shall leave the Library promptly at closing time or at the request of Library staff.
- Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in such activities will be required to leave the building.
- Patrons shall wear shirt and shoes while inside the Library building.
- Patrons may not eat while in the library. All beverages must have a secured lid. Beverages are not allowed near any library owned computers.
- Patrons shall not engage in threatening behavior, including, but not limited to violence, threats of violence, verbal abuse or harassment, directed at other patrons, volunteers, or staff.
- Patrons shall not engage in soliciting, canvassing, or conducting surveys not authorized by the Library.
- Patrons shall not use the Library to gamble.
- Patrons shall not sleep in the Library or on Library grounds.
- Patrons are responsible for the behavior and supervision of children in their charge while at the Library and shall be liable for any damage caused by aforementioned children.
- Patrons may be required to leave the Library if their personal hygiene interferes with the ability of other patrons or staff to use and/or enjoy the facility.
- Patrons are not allowed to create a disturbance or engage in other disruptive behavior. This includes, but is not limited to using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that disturbs others and using cell phones, pagers, and other communication devices in a manner that disturbs others. Cell phone and pager audible ringers shall be turned to a low level or vibrate.

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Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property

- Patrons shall not deface, vandalize, damage or improperly remove Library materials, equipment, or furniture, from the buildings
- Patrons shall not steal, damage, alter, or inappropriately use Library property.
- Patrons shall abide by established time limitations and the Oak Creek Public Library Internet Use Policy.
- Library phones are for staff use only.
- Library materials shall only be removed from premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
- Library materials shall not be taken into restrooms.
- Theft of Library materials may be prosecuted.

Rules for a Safe Environment

- Patrons shall follow all policies and procedures as set for by the Library.
- Patrons shall not engage in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local or other applicable law or Library policy.
- Patrons shall not carry firearms and dangerous weapons of any type (except by law enforcement officers).
- Patrons shall not be under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs nor sell, use, or possess alcohol/illegal drugs while in the Library.
- Patrons shall not enter “Staff Only” areas without permission.
- Patrons shall park bicycles or other vehicles in authorized areas only. The Library is not responsible for loss or theft of property.
- Patrons shall not misuse the restrooms (i.e. using the restrooms for bathing or shampooing or doing laundry).
- Patrons shall not litter in the Library or on the Library grounds.
- Patrons shall not smoke, chew, or use other tobacco products inside the Library. This includes the use of e-cigarettes.
- Patrons shall only bring service animals used to assist disabled persons into the Library, or with the permission of the Library staff for Library sponsored programs.

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Rules for the Safety of Youth

The Oak Creek Public Library welcomes children of all ages. It is a doorway through which life-long learning takes place. The public library is, however, a public building. As such anybody can come into it, law-abiding or otherwise. Parents/caregivers are responsible for their child's safety and behavior while in the Library whether the parent/caregiver is present or not. Library employees cannot function as caregivers or babysitters. The Library is not equipped – and it is not the Library's role – to provide long or short-term childcare. The Library assumes neither responsibility nor liability for the actions, care, supervision or safety of minors.

For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or an older responsible individual shall accompany children under age ten (10) when they are using the library. This responsible individual shall supervise, guide and control the behavior of their charge or charges at all times. A person under the age of twelve (12) will not be considered a responsible caregiver; this includes siblings.

When a child is unattended or under-attended/ignored and

- The behavior of the child is in violation of library rules or policy (or)
- The child appears to be a danger to herself or himself or others (or)
- The child appears to be threatened by others (or)
- The child appears to be ill or upset (or)
- The child has not been met by a parent or caregiver at closing

Library staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of the child. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be located, staff will contact the Oak Creek Police Department. In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911.

School aged youth shall be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or school official when in the Library during school hours.

Staff may restrict adult use of Youth areas, including youth internet terminals and restrooms.

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Disciplinary Process for Violation of Library Policies

A. INCIDENT REPORTS:

Library Staff shall record in writing or electronically a violation of the Library Patron Policy. An Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director, or the Director's designee, for logging and review. The report shall be as detailed as possible and may include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron and the patron's Library card number (if applicable). A copy of a suspension of privileges notice should be attached, if applicable.

B. SUSPENSIONS:

- a. Library users violating this policy may be asked to cease the violation with a verbal warning. If the patron does not respond or comply with the request, they may be asked to leave the building for the remainder of the day. If necessary police may be called to assist or intervene. If the conduct constitutes a violation of law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue.

- b. The Director, or the Director's designee, may limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges based on the nature of the infraction. Subsequent violations may further limit or revoke the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, up to and including a permanent ban. The length of the suspension may depend on the nature of the infraction. Patrons will be notified by U.S mail. A copy of the letter, and if necessary, a report will be filed with the Oak Creek Police Department.

C. RIGHT OF APPEAL:

Patrons may appeal any decision in writing to the Library Board of Trustees within 3 days of the date of receipt of the notification letter. The appeal shall state why Library privileges should be restored. The Library Board of Trustees President, in consultation with the Library Board of Trustees, will respond to the appeal within 10 days of the date of the Library Board's next regular meeting. Until such time as the matter has been reviewed, modified or be reversed on appeal by the Library Board, the individual shall not use the library.

The decision of the Library Board of Trustees is final.

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D. REINSTATEMENT:

The patron whose privileges have been limited or revoked may be asked to attend a meeting with the Director, or the Director's designee, to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges are reinstated.

Adopted by the Library Board April 8, 2014