



ST. JOHNS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

www.sjcpls.org

Policy Title: CODE OF PATRON CONDUCT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to guarantee the rights of patrons to a pleasant, productive and safe atmosphere in the use of the Libraries and bookmobiles, by establishing basic conduct rules. All members of the community are welcome in the Library regardless of age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, being differently abled, or appearance as long as they do not disrupt or interfere with another's ability to use the Library for its intended use. This code is supported by related Library policies and procedures.

POLICY

Animals

Animals, with the exception of service animals and animals brought in for special programs or as permitted by the Library Director, are strictly prohibited in the Library. See the Americans with Disabilities Act website for current service animal requirements: www.ada.gov

Attire & Hygiene

In the interest of public health and safety, appropriate clothing attire, including shoes and shirts, must be worn at all times while inside all Library buildings. Exceptions may be made for infants and toddlers. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other persons shall be required to leave the building.

Decorum and consideration for other patrons

Patrons are expected to behave with decorum and consideration for other patrons. This includes, but not limited to, the following:

- maintaining reasonable quiet
- the cooperative sharing of work tables and computer facilities
- parental restraint of lively and noisy children
- patience and respect while waiting for services such as Reference, Circulation or computer assistance
- respecting the privacy of other patrons who are using the Library, maintaining a reasonable distance with regard to reading and use of Library computers.

Disruptive or Illegal Activity

Anyone who does not follow the *Code of Patron Conduct* by engaging in disruptive or illegal activity will be asked to leave. When necessary, the appropriate law enforcement agency may be called.

Unacceptable conduct may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- fighting
- use and/or the possession of alcohol and other illicit substances
- use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes
- unlawful possession of firearms or other weapons
- abusive use of Library facilities and/or equipment
- harassing or intimidating others, including Library and security staff and patrons
- creating any disturbance that interferes with normal operations of the Library
- use of abusive, disruptive, loud, obscene, or threatening language/behavior toward Library and security staff or patrons
- solicitation or panhandling
- consuming food and beverages in non-designated areas
- loitering
- sleeping, loud talking, or running
- defacing, cutting, destroying, or stealing Library property or materials
- accessing web sites containing material involving illegal activity, pornography and obscenity
- refusing to leave Library at closing time or during any emergency evacuation
- improper use of public restrooms including, but not limited to, bathing and laundering
- refusing to respond and/or comply with direction from Library or security staff

Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Use of mobile telephones or other electronic communication devices in the Library must be kept to a minimum. These items should be set to “silent” or “vibrate” mode with no audible alerts. While we understand that use of these devices is sometimes necessary, the Library System reserves the right to ask patrons to cease this activity when it interferes with other patrons’ use of the Library. Out of respect for the privacy of our patrons, we discourage the use of cameras within the Library buildings and bookmobiles.

Trespass Warnings

Those persons whose behavior is judged to be illegal or dangerous to patrons or staff will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency* and the Police Department or Sheriff’s Office will issue a “Trespass Warning” to the person if deemed necessary and appropriate. A “Trespass Warning” means the person is denied use of the Library facility. Removal of the “Trespass Warning” is at the discretion of Library Administration in consultation with the Police Department, or Sheriff’s Office.

**Upon recommendation of the Library Director or designee.*

Unattended Children*

The Library welcomes Library use by children. The Library, however, is a public building with staff trained to provide public Library services. The Library is not equipped-and it is not the Library's role-to provide long- or short-term child care. For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or caregiver should accompany children while they are using the Library. While in the Library, parents or caregivers are responsible for monitoring and regulating the behavior of their children.

** The State of Florida defines a minor as a person under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, the terms "child", "minor", and "youth" are interchangeable.*

Violation of the *Code of Patron Conduct*

The Library reserves the right to require anyone violating the *Code of Patron Conduct* to leave the Library for the remainder of the day. Serious or repeated misconduct may lead to legal action or criminal prosecution.