

Behavior & Use of Facilities

The Missouri River Regional Library Board of Trustees strives to maintain safe and secure facilities for public library service. The Library Board and staff have the right and responsibility to protect the safety of all library patrons and to maintain order on library property, which includes setting rules of behavior and regulations for the use of library buildings. These rules do not replace or preclude the use of good judgment on the part of library staff in specific situations.

Approved: November 20, 2018

Regulation

Patron Code of Conduct:

In order to fulfill its mission, the Missouri River Regional Library is committed to providing a safe and positive atmosphere for patrons in our libraries. Any behavior that threatens this atmosphere will not be tolerated. Such behavior includes the harassment of patrons or staff, any interference with staff members in the performance of their duties, lingering in the youth services area without library intent, and any other behavior that would interfere with legitimate library activity. Library users who fail to behave responsibly, or who act in violation of our policies, may be asked to leave.

In accordance with the patron code of conduct:

- Patrons must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws on library premises.
- Patrons must obey the reasonable direction of a library staff member.
- Noise levels must be kept to a minimum within the library.
- The library and its grounds are an alcohol, smoke, tobacco, vapor and drug-free environment.
- Service animals are welcome in the library and must be on a leash and under control.
- Solicitation of funds and sale of goods by the general public are not allowed on library property except as requested by the Library or on behalf of the Library Friends or Foundation.
- Drinks with secure lids are permitted. Food is not allowed unless it is in a meeting room or at a Library-sponsored event.
- Theft or damage of library property will result in suspension of library privileges.
- Visitors must wear clothing, including shirts and shoes, in the library.
- Patrons must maintain a level of personal hygiene that does not interfere with library use of others.

The following behaviors and actions are prohibited on Library property:

- Harassment of any kind or the intentional annoyance of any patron or staff member.
- Behavior that is disruptive to library use.
- Interfering with staff members in the performance of their duties.
- Using another person's library card without permission.
- Any state of undress, including lack of shoes.
- Indecent conduct or exposure of one's person.
- Using loud, abusive, threatening, or profane language. Making unreasonable noise, including loud talking and using devices (with or without headphones) at a volume that disturbs others.
- Being in non-public areas of the library without permission or being in the library after business hours.
- Being visibly intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.
- Smoking, chewing and using other tobacco products, including vaping and electronic cigarettes, and other inhalants in the library or on library property. **(Smoke-free Environment policy)**
- Leaving belongings unattended for an extended period of time or storing items in non-designated areas. The library provides storage lockers for extended use. Lockers are provided on a first come basis and one locker is allowed per person.
- Monopolizing library space, equipment or outlets to the exclusion of others.
- Excessive odor that interferes with library use by others.
- Using blankets or bedding in the library with the exception of small children.
- Having feet on furniture or blocking exits, aisles or entrances.
- Adult patrons are not allowed to sit, lay or sleep on the floor.
- Linger in the youth services area without library intent.
- Leaving children 10 and under unattended and/or neglecting to provide the proper supervision. **(Youth in the Library policy)**
- Having animals on library property with the exception of service animals recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act and animals allowed at library events.
- Soliciting, petitioning, canvassing or distributing written materials inside a library building, including the doorway or vestibule of any library building or in a manner on the library premises that unreasonably interferes with or impedes access to the library. **(Petitioning at MRRL policy)**

The following items are not permitted in the Library:

- Weapons of any kind unless authorized by law. **(Weapons policy)**
- Bicycles or motorized vehicles. Individuals with mobility impairments are permitted to use wheelchairs, walkers and other appropriate mobility aids.
- Strollers, when not intended for use with small children, or store carts and wagons.
- Non-motorized skates, skateboards and collapsible scooters (except when carried).
- Any personal items that appear to be infested or have foul odor that disturbs other persons.
- Large personal items that block access or impede safety.

Animals on library property:

Trained service animals are welcome at the library, as are animals participating in library-sponsored events. No other animals are allowed on library property or in library facilities. We do not allow emotional or companion animals because they do not meet the definition of a service animal and do not have the same public access rights.

Staff may ask a person to remove a service animal when that animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the safety of others or if its behavior is disruptive or disturbing other library users. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, limited inquiries are allowed. Staff may ask two questions: (1) is the service animal required because of a disability, and (2) what work or task has the service animal been trained to perform. Staff may not ask about the person's disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the service animal, or ask that the service animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task. If a patron's response indicates the animal is not a service animal, staff may ask the patron to remove the animal.

Staff Procedures for Trespass:

Patrons who break the above patron code of conduct and list of prohibited behaviors may be approached by a library employee and asked to stop the behavior. If they refuse to cooperate, they will be asked to leave the library. If the patron refuses to leave, law enforcement will be notified. Incidents of prohibited or illegal behavior may result in banishment from library property. In such cases, the library director will notify the patron in writing, if possible, and may notify local authorities. It is the Library's goal that all patrons remain in good standing with the library system and have full library privileges. When violations of the Code of Conduct occur, however, a library manager or evening/weekend supervisor can use a temporary library ban (where a patron is asked to leave for a period of time) or an official trespass (where law enforcement is called and a trespass order is issued to assist with enforcing the suspension). These guidelines outline when and how to officially trespass a patron.

Guidelines for an official trespass:

Members of the library management, including evening/weekend supervisors, are authorized to work with law enforcement to order an official trespass. An official trespass is a local decision that is enforced system-wide. Official trespasses are reserved for those who have actively threatened staff or other patrons, or who are so disruptive that the library cannot be used safely. This includes, but is not limited to, any observable behavior that is prohibited by law including, but not limited to, threatening or harassing behavior (e.g. threatening to fight, brandishing a weapon, stalking, verbally threatening to harm others or their property); assaulting staff or other patrons (e.g. fighting); sexual

misconduct or harassment (e.g. exposure, offensive touching, sexual acts); selling or using alcohol or drugs; theft of library materials, equipment, or items belonging to staff and/or other library users; intentionally damaging or destroying library materials, equipment or property; and viewing or printing illegal materials (e.g. child pornography).

Implementing a trespass:

An official trespass is issued by law enforcement at the request of a member of library management who has determined that a person willfully violated any rule or regulation prescribed for the use of the library or its facilities or any person whose physical condition is deemed dangerous or offensive to other library users. Library managers may consult with other staff or review the security camera system to aid in making this determination. ([Confidentiality of Library Records policy](#)) Library managers may use the circulation management system to look up patron information and give it to the police for the purpose of implementing an official trespass order. An official trespass is generally no shorter than one (1) month or longer than one (1) year. Law enforcement must issue the official trespass in person. If the patron leaves before an officer arrives, a library manager or supervisor may call to request an officer to issue the trespass when the person returns. If possible, the trespass notification will include the length of trespass. A library manager will complete an Incident Report and enter the trespass information into the Incident Report form. The trespassed individuals' name, photo and length of ban will then be uploaded to Staffweb.

Violation of a trespass:

If a trespassed individual enters and/or is found in the library or on library property, first contact a library manager or supervisor on duty. The manager or supervisor should communicate the length of the trespass to the trespassed individual and ask them to leave the library property immediately. If the individual leaves peacefully, the police do not need to be notified. If a manager or supervisor is not readily available, a library staff member should call 911. The dispatcher should be informed that the individual was trespassed and that they have returned. It is important to tell the dispatcher whether the trespasser is potentially threatening by either past or current conduct. The library manager or supervisor must also complete an Incident Report once the situation has been addressed. Individuals may request a review of a ban or trespass verbally or in writing. The Library Director or Assistant Director shall have the power to affirm, reverse or modify any ban, loss of privileges or trespass. If the initial decision is upheld by the Library Director or Assistant Director, then for any ban, suspension of privileges or trespass extending for a period of more than thirty (30) days, an individual may request, in writing, a review of the decision of the MRRL Board of Trustees. The MRRL Board of Trustees, or its designee, will review timely filing appeals, and will hold a review within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the appeal. The individual shall be notified in writing at least

thirty (30) days before the review. At such hearings, the individual and the MRRL Board may be represented by counsel and may present evidence. Within thirty (30) days of the hearing, the Board or its designee shall issue a written decision. The Board or its designee shall have the power to affirm or reverse any ban, loss of privileges or trespass or to refer it back to the Library Director or designee with further instructions for reconsideration. All bans, suspensions and trespasses issued shall remain in full force and effect during any appeal period.