

## NEW GLARUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

### POLICY ON PATRON RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

**Approved by:** New Glarus Public Library Board of Trustees

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#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Under provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, specifically section 43.52(1), the New Glarus Public Library Board of Trustees may enact regulations that serve to insure the safety of all library staff and patrons, protect the usefulness of the materials collection, and maintain order in the library.
- B. The Board of Trustees is committed to providing an atmosphere where people of all ages may come to read, browse, do research, or study. This policy does not prohibit quiet conversation between patrons and/or staff members, or conversations required to carry on library programs or business. It is designed to foster, within the constraints of the current facility, an atmosphere where library patrons may use library services and materials without disturbance.
- C. Inappropriate behavior includes any activity that disturbs others, interferes with library operations, or damages the facility or its furnishings. It also includes rudeness, profanity, or any other behavior generally considered unacceptable in a public place.
- D. This policy is established for all patrons. If a patron is not responsive to the needs of other library users or disregards the policies protecting patrons, staff, and library property, the patron will be asked to leave the library.
- E. It is a charge of the library staff to see that the rights of individuals to use the library are upheld. The staff is obligated to enforce these guidelines so that the facility can be used to the fullest by all persons. Questions regarding interpretation of these guidelines will be referred to the library director or staff member in charge.

#### **II. Specific Guidelines**

- A. The rights of individuals to use the library should not be abridged or denied. To guarantee these rights for all persons, no library patron shall

engage in the following prohibited behaviors:

1. Smoking, including the use of eCigarettes or other tobacco vapor devices. The library and the entire Village Hall is a smoke-free facility. All smoking materials must be extinguished prior to entering the building.
  2. Willfully annoying, harassing, or bullying another person (this includes electronic devices).
  3. Damaging or defacing public property.
  4. Engaging in loud or disruptive behavior.
  5. Uttering profane, obscene, or offensive language.
  6. Possessing, selling, distributing, consuming or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance.
  7. Entering the library without a shirt or shoes.
  8. Use of roller-skates, roller-blades, skateboards, or scooters.
  9. Loitering on the premises under circumstances that warrant concern for the safety or health of others.
  10. Remaining in the library after its regular closing hours (except as part of a library-sponsored program or event).
  11. Interfering with other library patrons' use of the facilities through extremely poor personal hygiene.
  12. Sleeping in the library.
  13. No pets or other animals are permitted in the library unless they are service animals or are part of a library-sponsored program.
  14. Canvassing – for example, soliciting signatures for a petition or nomination papers – is not permitted on library property.
  15. Engaging in any inappropriate contact, activities, or conduct including viewing of inappropriate material, is prohibited.
  16. Violating the library's rules for acceptable use of the internet and library public computers. A user accepts these rules before accessing the Internet through a library computer. Copies of these rules will be made available by staff upon request.
- B. The role of the New Glarus Public Library is to maintain a healthy and clean environment for all Library users. Considerate consumption of snack food or non-alcoholic beverages in spill-proof containers is allowed in public areas of the Library unless otherwise noted. Food and drink are not permitted at the computer stations.
- C. Personal electronic devices (including - but not limited to - cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, e-readers, hand-held gaming devices, and MP3 players) are allowed to be used in the library as long as they do not infringe on the rights of other library patrons or staff.
1. Earbuds or headphones should be used when listening to music, watching videos, or playing games, so that the sound cannot be heard by others.
  2. Out of respect for others, cell phones should be silenced, and conversations should be taken outside of the library.
- D. Only persons on library business will be allowed to solicit for the sale of

goods and services in the library. Salesperson may meet with authorized library personnel only. Exceptions may be made for library-sponsored activities and organizations affiliated with the library.

- E. Surveying of groups or individuals may only be done in conjunction with output measures or other similar surveys designed to quantify library use or satisfaction with library services.

### **III. General Guidelines for Disruptive Behavior**

- A. It is a patron's responsibility to maintain necessary and proper behavior standards in order to protect his/her individual rights and the rights and privileges of other patrons.
- B. Occasionally staff members may have to deal with patrons who violate the rights of others or who create a disturbance in the library. If a patron creates a public nuisance, that patron may be restricted from the library and from the use of library services. If said patron is unwilling to leave or does not leave within a reasonable amount of time after being instructed to do so by the staff, law enforcement will be summoned.
- C. All staff members are expected to deal with problems they encounter. Actions taken by library staff may include but are not limited to, asking others for assistance, asking a patron to leave the library, meeting individually with a patron in an open place after notifying a co-worker of the action, and contacting police or 911 to preserve his or her own safety, the safety of library users, or for assistance in enforcing policy and preserving the library environment as defined by policies adopted by the Library Board of Trustees.

### **IV. Behavioral Expectations for Minors**

- A. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, running up and down the bookstack aisles, crawling under and climbing on bookstacks, unsupervised use of library equipment, pulling library materials off the shelves, or any other behavior that interferes with other people's use of the library or damages library property.
- B. A child who is repeatedly and willfully disruptive will be given a verbal warning by staff. If the child continues to be disruptive, he/she will be asked to leave the library. If the child needs to contact a parent, he/she may do so and then wait in the library entryway until the parent arrives.
- C. New Glarus Public Library's Safe Child Policy addresses the responsibilities of parents and caregivers with regard to child safety in the library.

### **V. Theft of Library Materials**

- A. According to section 943.61(3) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, "the concealment of library material beyond the last station for borrowing library material is evidence of intent to deprive the library of possession of the material. The discovery of library material which has not been borrowed in accordance with the library's procedures or taken with

consent of a library official, agent or employee and which is concealed upon the person or among the belongings of the person or concealed upon the person or belongings of another is evidence of intentional concealment on the part of the person so concealing the material.”

- B. According to section 943.62(4) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, “an official or adult employee or agent of the library who has probable cause for believing that a person has [committed a theft] in his or her presence may detain the person in a reasonable manner for a reasonable length of time to deliver the person to a peace officer, or to the person’s parent or guardian in the case of a minor.”
- C. “The detained person shall be promptly informed of the purpose for the detention and be permitted to make phone calls, but shall not be interrogated or searched against his or her will before the arrival of a peace officer who may conduct a lawful interrogation of the accused person.”

## **VI. Disciplinary Process for Violation of Library Policies**

- A. The library director, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may suspend the library privileges of any individual who willfully violates library regulations when the severity or continued reoccurrence warrants such action. [Wisconsin State Statute 43.52(2)]. The Library Director will inform the Library Board of any such action taken.
- B. The person whose library privileges are suspended shall be advised in writing of the suspension and the reason for such action. If that person wishes to appeal the suspension, he or she may do so by requesting to be placed on the agenda and appearing in person at the next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.
- C. Process for Suspensions:
  - 1. 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.
  - 2. An incident report shall be written by library staff upon violation of the Conduct Policy 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.
  - 3. 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. A copy of the letter, and if necessary, a report will be filed with the New Glarus Police Department.

4. 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 an incident narrative and 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 promptly. Until such time as the matter has been reviewed, modified or reversed on appeal by the Library Board, the individual shall not use the library. The appellant will be notified of the decision of the Library Board of Trustees, which is final.
5. 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.