

Louise Adelia Read Memorial Library

Unacceptable Conduct Policy

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

I. Purpose

(A) The Louise Adelia Read Memorial serves people of all ages. It provides many community services and programs. The purpose of this policy is to assure that the library environment is safe and that everyone feels comfortable as they use the library, according to the library's Guidelines for Using the Library.

(B) No person shall engage in unacceptable conduct when using the library facility or participating in library programs.

II. Definition

(A) Unacceptable conduct shall include any individual or group activity which is disruptive to other persons using library facilities, or is otherwise inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying or other similar conduct normally associated with a public library or is unlawful or unsafe.

(B) The term "premises" includes inside and outside areas of the public library property.

III. Unacceptable Behavior

(A) The following conduct shall be deemed "inappropriate" including but not limited to:

- Excessive and disruptive conversations/discussions
- Eating or drinking at computer terminals
- Failing to wear shirt and shoes in the building
- Obstructing others' work by overuse of computer workstations
- Selling, soliciting, or engaging in any commercial activity
- Preventing staff from normal, reasonable clean-up activities after the closing announcement has been made
- Smoking or use of alcohol in the library building
- Bringing any animal into the library building, except working animals which assist the disabled
- Distributing handout materials outside designated area
- Other activities which are inconsistent with reading, studying, and any other activities normally associated with the use of public library facilities.

(B) Offenses will be treated as follows:

- First infraction will result in warning that loss of library privileges may result.

- Second infraction will result in loss of library privileges for one week
- Third infraction or continuous repeat infractions will result in loss of library privileges for up to one year.

IV. Serious Offenses

(A) Serious offenses include but are not limited to:

- Stealing, damaging or vandalizing library property, including removing protective covers from books, magazines, and other media with the intent to damage and/or steal library property
- Exhibiting abusive, indecent, profane or drunken conversation and/or behavior toward library staff or other library patrons
- Committing any crime or violation of a municipal ordinance on the premises of the library
- Engaging in behavior that is harassing, or threatening in nature to library patrons or staff, including following or stalking of patrons or staff
- Knowingly entering non-public areas of library facilities
- Using the Internet for illegal purposes
- Leaving children under the age of five or any minor children unattended for extended periods of time or after library hours.

(B) Any patron who commits a serious offense will be immediately reported to the Hancock Police Department for removal from the building. At the discretion of the Director, the patron may lose their library privileges for a period of three months or more depending on the nature of the offense which required removal, the extent of damage or disruption caused, any history of prior infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.

V. Appeal Procedure

(A) The Library Director may reconsider a decision to suspend library privileges upon written request of the patron if information submitted by the patron warrants such modification. The Director will respond in writing to the individual with a notice to the library staff and Library Board President of the reconsideration decision.

(B) Any person who enters or remains on library premises after losing library privileges will be reported to the Hancock Police Department for immediate removal.

LOUISE ADELIA READ MEMORIAL GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

Staff members who observe or receive a complaint of inappropriate behavior may:

- Handle the problem directly with the patron. Staff should use their judgment as to whether the situation requires assistance from another staff member.
- Contact the supervisor in charge if the situation is of a nature that the staff member chooses not to confront the patron.
- At any time, contact the police if the patron is not responding to staff requests to conform to the library's rules of conduct.

When a staff member has confronted a patron who exhibits unacceptable behavior and has given a first warning, the library director or supervisor in charge should be notified as soon as possible. Incident reports must be filed in all cases. A police report must be filled out if the police are involved.

LOSS OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES

If it is determined that a person should lose their library privileges:

- Supervisor in charge will make a written recommendation to the library director detailing the reasons.
- Library director will consult with the supervisor in charge and provide a written decision.
- The written decision shall take into account previous infractions and shall set forth the period during which the patron may not use the library and shall specify the reasons for the determination.
- The patron and all staff will be notified in writing of the reasons for the loss of library privileges and length of time. A copy will also be sent to the library board president.