



Safety and Security Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, welcoming and secure environment for all Waterloo Grant Township Public Library users and staff, as well as ensure equitable access to materials and services for all library users.

II. POLICY

1. Overview.

The library welcomes all and is dedicated to free and equal access to information. The library is in a unique position to educate and serve as a gathering place for the community. In order to facilitate an environment conducive to the library's mission, patrons shall be engaged in activities typically associated with the use of a public library while in the building. No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct on library premises. Inappropriate conduct includes any individual or group activity which is unreasonably disturbing to other individuals, misuse of library facilities, materials, equipment and/or premises or is otherwise inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying, properly using library materials and other similar conduct typically associated with a public library. When possible, staff will first educate individuals about the applicable policies before taking stronger measures to enforce those policies. In situations where library staff members feel that the health, safety or security of library users or staff members are threatened, they may take appropriate action such as calling law enforcement for assistance.

2. Monitoring.

Library staff will monitor public behavior and conduct, using staff and security equipment. The library reserves the right to monitor computer and internet usage.

3. Enforcement.

Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of all library staff. Staff members are expected to address any inappropriate behavior they encounter and handle it accordingly.

a. *Asking for Help.* Staff members have the right to ask other staff members and/or the police for assistance and should provide assistance to other staff when able and requested.

b. *Contacting Law Enforcement.* Staff members are encouraged to contact law enforcement at any time to preserve their own safety and/or the safety of the public, and to request assistance in enforcing this policy and preserving the library environment as defined by the policies adopted by the library Board of Trustees.

4. Responses to Inappropriate Behavior.

Inappropriate behavior will be addressed with a response proportionate to the severity of the behavior.

a. *Eviction.* The library reserves the right at all times to immediately evict a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening library staff or other patrons. Additionally, all staff have

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the ability to evict patrons for the remainder of the day should patrons ignore staff requests to comply with library policies. Staff also may ask a patron to leave to address a problem. This response may be used in situations where once the issue is remedied, the patron is welcome to return immediately. For example, in the case of wearing inappropriate attire.

b. *Trespassing*. Repeated violations may result in permanent suspension of library privileges. Anyone refusing to leave the library when requested is subject to prosecution under Indiana Code 35-43-2-2, Criminal Trespass.

c. *Use of Equipment*. Staff members may stop a patron from using library equipment or may contact a supervisor about a patron's use of equipment, if the use violates a rule or policy. Should the violation warrant, the library director or assistant director may determine to restrict a patron from using the library in its entirety. Misuse or abuse of computers or internet access may result in suspension of internet access, restriction from the library in its entirety as described in this policy and may also be subject to prosecution by local, state or federal authorities.

d. *Warnings*. Staff members may issue a verbal warning or may refer a problem to law enforcement depending on the severity.

f. *Communication*. Library staff will communicate disciplinary actions with one another and will provide reports to their supervisor. All disciplinary actions must be documented by library staff.

5. Video Surveillance and Photography.

Security cameras are used to enhance the safety and security of library users and staff to discourage violations of this policy, to assist library staff in preventing the occurrence of violations and when necessary, to provide law enforcement assistance in the investigation of a criminal occurrence on library property and in prosecuting criminal activity.

a. Cameras are not continuously monitored. Personal safety is the responsibility of the individual. The library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged on library premises. Items left unattended may be removed.

b. Staff members have the right to take photographs of patrons as needed to identify them for security purposes.

6. Classes of Behavior and Response.

No policy can list all prohibited behaviors. Therefore, the guiding principle for acceptable behavior is: Everyone has the right to use the Waterloo Grant Township Public Library without being disturbed by others. Disruptive, unsafe, threatening, illegal, or damaging behaviors are not allowed.

a. *Serious Danger or Overt Criminal Behavior*. Staff response must include calling law enforcement and may result in the patron being immediately restricted from the library. Violating federal, state or city ordinance is not allowed in the library. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. Fighting or combative behavior,
- ii. Exhibitionism,
- iii. Any sexual behavior regardless of if it is unwelcome or consensual,
- iv. Threats,
- v. Refusal to leave when asked,
- vi. Physical abuse,
- vii. Stalking,

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- viii. Possession of illegal drugs,
- ix. Tampering with any library security equipment,
- x. Child pornography,
- xi. Theft, including theft of library materials,
- xii. Vandalism,
- xiii. Intentional entry into restricted areas of the building

b. *Potentially Serious Behavior*. Staff response will vary according to the severity of the disruption or threat, ranging from a warning to calling law enforcement for immediate restriction from the library. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. Alcohol or drug intoxication,
- ii. Possession of weapons,
- iii. Possession of alcohol,
- iv. Verbal abuse of staff or other patrons,
- v. Loitering in a manner that interferes with others,
- vi. Excessively emotional, hostile, threatening or uncontrolled behavior,
- vii. Use of loud profanity, obscenity or obscene gestures,
- viii. Panhandling,
- ix. Using another person's card without permission to check out materials,
- x. Using another person's card to use the internet computers,
- xi. Leaving bags and other personal items unattended, or
- xii. Harassing and intrusive behavior, including staring at, stalking or following staff or patrons with the intent to annoy or harass, violating privacy, or interfering with staff performance of duties or patrons' use of the library.

c. *Disruptive Behavior*. Staff response will vary according to the severity of the disruption, ranging from tolerance to warning. In severe or repeated cases, eviction, calling law enforcement or a library restriction may follow. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. Being a nuisance to patrons and staff,
- ii. Loudness,
- iii. Monopolizing the time of staff or otherwise interfering with staff members' performance of duties. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes the attention of a staff member for an inappropriate amount of time, making inappropriate personal comments or refusing to comply with staff requests,
- iv. Inappropriate public displays of affection,
- v. Blocking the library entry, sidewalk in front of the building or otherwise interfering with free passage of the library staff or users,
- vi. Loud profanity or obscenity in front of the building or in the parking lot,
- vii. Sleeping, napping or dozing in or on library premises,
- viii. Unhygienic behavior such as spitting or changing diapers in public areas,
- ix. Bathing, shaving, washing hair or washing clothing in the restrooms,
- x. Use of any cellphones or other communication or entertainment devices at a volume that disturbs others, with or without headphones,
- xi. Vaping and use of tobacco products,
- xii. Entering the library without being fully clothed or in just a swimsuit. Garments must cover the upper and lower torso of their bodies. Shoes must also be worn at all times.
- xiii. Neglecting to clean up any personal trash,
- xiiii. Visible presence of pests on person, belongings or library materials