



Code of Conduct

The Board of Trustees has adopted a Library Code of Conduct to ensure a comfortable and safe environment for all library patrons. This policy is intended to provide clear and reasonable rules to guide patron behavior while in the library and on library premises. The library strives to provide an atmosphere conducive to the safe and orderly use of the facility and requests the cooperation of patrons in refraining from behavior that disrupts library services. Parents or guardians, not the library staff, are responsible for the safety, care, and supervision of their children at the library. For the purposes of this policy, any authorized person performing a task on the behalf of the library is considered a staff member. All persons must leave the library premises by closing time, when evacuation of the building is necessary, or at any time when requested to do so by library personnel.

The Board subscribes to Article IV of the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights, which states that “library facilities should be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals requesting their use.”

Unacceptable behavior includes actions in the library or on library premises that interfere with the use of the library by others, creates a risk of injury to oneself or others, inhibits the work of

library staff, disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the library or creates a risk of damage to library, personal or staff property.

For those reasons the Library Code of Conduct is to be observed by everyone in the building or on library grounds. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Any activity that constitutes a violation of federal, state or local criminal statutes or ordinances.
- Snacks and nonalcoholic beverages may be consumed by patrons seated at the cafe area on the second floor, work tables and armchairs throughout the library, provided the beverage has a cap or a securely fitting lid on it and the snack is not messy, foul-smelling or greasy. Library staff have a constant and absolute right to direct patrons to immediately remove any food and beverages that do not conform to this policy in the library staff's sole judgment. No food or beverages may be consumed at any of the computer stations throughout the library.
- Damage, defacement, or theft of any library property or material, or any personal property or material.
- Possession, distribution, or use of alcohol except at authorized library events.
- Possession, distribution or use of controlled substances.
- Use of tobacco products or e-cigarette devices.
- Sexual conduct and overt displays of affection.
- Use of profanity, abusive or threatening language or threatening gestures, bullying, or unwanted physical contact.
- Unreasonable noise levels including shouting, loud talking or disruptive conversation, uncontrolled or repeated ringing of cell phones, and cell phone conversations.
- Solicitations, petitions or canvassing in the library or on library premises.
- Rollerblading, roller skating, skateboarding, or wheeled shoe use in the library or on library premises. With the approval of library staff members, children may store skateboards, scooters or similar devices at the circulation desk on the first floor.
- Bringing animals inside the library with the exception of service animals or those allowed at a library-approved event.
- Prolonged sleeping that interferes with the use and enjoyment of the library by others.
- Use of the library restrooms for anything other than their ordinarily intended purpose, it being understood that such purposes do not include bathing, shaving, or washing hair.
- Use of personal electronic equipment at a volume that disturbs others.
- Leaving unattended children or adults who are in need of supervision.
- Removing or not wearing footwear within the library building.

Enforcement

The Board of Trustees authorizes library staff to suspend the library privileges for those whose behavior prevents or interferes with the effective use of the library by others. Violation of these rules may be cause for a temporary or permanent prohibition from future use of library facilities.

Anyone unable or unwilling to abide by the Library Code of Conduct may be required to leave. Any person who repeatedly violates these rules, or any person who commits a single, serious violation of the rules, in addition to being required to leave the library, may not be allowed to return to the library, and if allowed such right may be conditional upon their agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Anyone whose privileges have been revoked may have the decision reviewed by the Director. Further appeals may be taken, upon prior written request, to the Library Board of Trustees.

Safe Child Policy

Safe Child Policy & Procedures

The Clark Public Library is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for families and children. While children of all ages are welcome and encouraged to use the library's materials, programs and services, parents and caregivers must be aware that the library is an open, public building and the well-being and safety of young children left alone or unsupervised is a serious concern. It is for the safety of each child that the library has adopted the Safe Child Policy.

An unattended minor may be defined as a child unable to care for himself/herself when left in the library without a parent or responsible adult within sight or sound range, any child left unattended for long periods of time, or any child not picked up at closing time.

The responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library always rest with the parent or caregiver and not with the library staff.

Policy

- Children ages 10 and under must be immediately supervised at all times by a parent or caregiver (age 16 or older).
- Middle School & High School aged children (grades 6-12) are welcome to use the library unattended provided they comply with the library's **Patron Code of Conduct**, which includes, but is not limited to, the prohibition of food and drink, foul language, disruptive cell phone usage, horseplay and loitering. Those children using the library unaccompanied are still the legal responsibility of their parents.

- A child under the age of 10 with no means of getting home when the library closes is considered a stranded minor.
- Parents/caregivers are responsible for being aware of the library's hours of operation if leaving their child unaccompanied at the library.
- Library staff will not physically prevent a child from leaving the library, assume responsibility for a child, accompany or transport an unrelated child off library premises.

Procedures

If the library is closing due to inclement weather or other emergency, and an unattended minor is left at the library without transportation home, the library staff will allow the child to call for a ride home using a library phone. At all regular or early closings, if a child is unable to contact a parent, guardian, or caregiver, the Clark Township Police will be contacted and the child will be placed in their care. Library staff will remain no longer than 15 minutes after closing.

If a child is found without a parent or caregiver during library hours, the following procedures will be followed:

- Staff will attempt to comfort the child, if necessary.
- Staff will try to locate the parent or caregiver in the library and provide a Safe Child Policy to the parent or caregiver.
- Staff will call the Clark Township Police to pick up the child if the parent or caregiver cannot be located within the library. Staff will notify the Director and Librarians of the situation when police are called.
- Staff will encourage an unattended child to contact the parent or guardian if it is within 15 minutes of closing time. If a parent or caregiver cannot be reached or does not arrive upon closing, the library will call the Clark Township Police to pick up the child. Staff will notify the Director that police have been called.
- The Librarian-in-Charge will remain with the child until the parent or caregiver or police arrive.
- A sign will be left on the library door stating "Unattended child is in the custody of the Clark Township Police, 315 Westfield Ave, Clark, NJ 07066 [\(732\) 388-3434](tel:7323883434)," once the child is in the care of the police. The child's identity will not be stated on the sign.
- Under no circumstances will library staff provide transportation to stranded children or other patrons.

VIOLATION OF THE SAFE CHILD POLICY MAY RESULT IN SUSPENSION OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES FOR THE FAMILY.

Approved August 2018 by the Board of Trustees