



Purpose

The Memorial Library of Nazareth and Vicinity has implemented this Patron Behavior Policy to ensure the safety, comfort, and equitable access to library facilities, services, and materials for all users. Appropriate conduct within the library includes activities like reading, studying, and using library resources (including computers) in a manner that does not disturb or interfere with others who are doing the same.

Overview and Definitions

All individuals using the library or attending onsite or offsite library-sponsored programs must adhere to appropriate behavior. This policy outlines what is considered inappropriate behavior and the steps the library may take to address it, including issuing warnings, restricting privileges, or banning individuals from library property. Each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

- **Loss of Privileges:** Depending on the nature of the violation, this refers to a temporary or permanent restriction of a patron's ability to borrow items, access online resources, or attend library programs.
- **Ban:** Refers to a restriction that prevents a patron from entering library property, including areas used for library-sponsored programs. Bans may be temporary or permanent based on the severity or frequency of violations.
- Certain violations may also involve legal action if they constitute breaches of local, state, or federal laws.

Behavioral Expectations

Patrons should conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of others and ensures everyone has access to the library's educational and recreational resources. Disruptive behavior that interferes with other users' experiences is prohibited. Specific behaviors that violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

1. **Offensive Language and Noise:**
 - No swearing, cursing, or use of offensive language, including slurs, either verbally or on clothing.
 - Patrons should maintain a reasonable noise level and refrain from loud conversations, shouting, or making other disruptive noises.
 - Patrons engaging in library programs should adhere to the specific guidelines for conversations and discussions set for that program.
2. **Physical Conduct:**
 - No running or engaging in horseplay.

- Patrons should refrain from climbing library shelving, tables, or any furniture.
- Furniture may not be moved without staff permission.
- 3. **Electronic Device Use:**
 - Personal audio or visual content must be enjoyed with headphones.
 - Headphones can be borrowed from the library, or patrons may purchase wired earbuds for \$2.00.
- 4. **Blocking Walkways and Spaces:**
 - Patrons should not block circulation desks, walkways, entrances, exits, or any other library spaces.
 - Congregating in vestibules or near entrances is prohibited.
 - Sitting on the floor is restricted to designated areas such as the children's area or Teen Room.
- 5. **Personal Items:**
 - Patrons are limited to bringing no more than two carryall-sized bags. Sleeping bags and bedding are not allowed in the library.

Appearance Standards

- Patrons are required to maintain proper personal hygiene. Individuals with soiled shoes, hands, or clothing, or those carrying dirt, paint, or excrement, are not permitted to enter the library.
- Patrons with strong or offensive odors may be asked to leave the library.
- Proper attire is required, with top and bottom clothing secured and shoes worn.
- To help reduce crime and to protect our patrons and staff, anyone entering our building is asked to remove their hats, sunglasses and hoods or other items that might potentially conceal their appearance. We understand there might be special circumstances in which patrons may not be comfortable removing their hat in public. In situations like these, library staff is authorized to allow members to wear their hats if their face is visible.

Conduct Standards

- Patrons must refrain from unwanted attention, such as leering, following, or initiating unsolicited conversations.
- Physical contact, fighting, or any sexually explicit behavior is strictly prohibited.
- Threatening or abusive language or behavior toward any individual is strictly prohibited.

Illegal Substances and Weapons

- Alcohol, nicotine, tobacco, and controlled substances are prohibited on library property.
- Possession of illegal drugs or underage alcohol/tobacco possession will be referred to law enforcement.
- Weapons, including firearms and blades, are not allowed unless explicitly authorized.

Distribution of Materials

- Selling, soliciting, surveying, or distributing materials is prohibited without prior written permission from the Library Director.
- Panhandling or canvassing for political, religious, or charitable purposes on library grounds is prohibited.

Appropriate Room and Space Use

- Patrons should respect personal space and avoid blocking walkways or impeding others' use of library spaces.
- Library furniture and seating cannot be reserved except in the case of meeting rooms (see Meeting Space Policy).
- The Teen Room is designated for the use of patrons aged 12-18.
- Adults may browse the Children's Department but must be accompanied by a child to use specific spaces and facilities.

Parking Lot

- The library parking lot is monitored 24/7. Only those using library services or attending library programs may park here.
- Accessible parking spaces are reserved for those with a valid disability parking placard.
- Unauthorized vehicles or those left unattended after hours will be towed at the vehicle owner's expense.
- The library reserves the right to ask any person to remove their vehicle at any time.
- Skateboarding, skating, and biking are prohibited on the library grounds. Additionally, these parking lots are not available for parking after the library closes.

Animals

- Pets are allowed on library property with prior permission from the Library Director, provided they comply with Pennsylvania leash laws and owners clean up after them.
- Service animals, defined by ADA regulations, are permitted in the library and at library-sponsored events, provided they are under control.
- Emotional support animals are not recognized as service animals and require prior authorization to enter the library.

Compliance with Laws

Any violation of local, state, or federal laws while on library property will result in a permanent ban from library services, and offenders will be referred to law enforcement for trespassing if they attempt to return.

Appeal Process

Patrons who believe they have been unfairly reprimanded can file a written complaint with the Library Director. If unsatisfied with the Director's decision, patrons may escalate the issue to the Library Board of Directors, whose decision is final.

Adopted by the Memorial Library of Nazareth and Vicinity's Library Board on 2_25_25.