

**Geauga County Public Library
Operating Policy Manual**

SECTION: BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT IN THE LIBRARY
NUMBER: 951
EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 19, 2022

Geauga County Public Library is committed to providing employees and visitors with an environment that is safe, secure, and free from threats, intimidation, harassment, and violence. To promote an atmosphere that encourages productive employment and exploration of topics of interest, quick responsive action will be taken if violence or the threat of violence arises. The policy will be courteously, but firmly, enforced by library staff.

Geauga County Public Library encourages the use of its facility for learning, enrichment, and the legitimate use of the library's resources and services. In order to preserve that opportunity, we ask patrons to be respectful of each other, GCPL employees, and the library space.

Any behavior that disrupts the orderly use of the library is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, any behavior that interferes with:

- The use of library property, materials, and services by other patrons;
- The ability of library employees to conduct library business;
- The safety of library patrons and employees; and/or
- The library's materials, facilities, or property.

Disruptive/inappropriate activities include:

- Leaving unsupervised or unattended children who are unable to care for themselves
- Running, throwing, or engaging in horseplay
- Making unreasonable noise including but not limited to loud talking, singing, other loud or disruptive noise, or noise from cell phone or audio/visual equipment usage
- Making racial, ethnic, religious, gender, or sexual orientation epithets
- Eating or drinking in other than designated areas
- Moving furniture or putting feet on furniture (unless footstools are available.)
- Sleeping or lying down
- Gambling
- Inappropriate public displays of affection or indecent exposure
- Improper dress including bare feet, no shirt, and uncovered swimsuits
- Proselytizing, soliciting, selling, and distributing leaflets
- Use of tobacco products including electronic delivery systems or similar products such as e-cigarettes
- Bathing, shaving, or washing clothes
- Bringing animals other than service animals to the library
- Entering staff work areas or other non-public areas

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- Violating the library's internet and Electronic Resources policy, or otherwise misusing computers
- Blocking entrance to and exit from building / monopolizing/obstructing space, seating tables, or equipment to the exclusion of others
- Trespassing, violating an eviction, entering library property when banned, or remaining on library property after having been restricted or directed to leave
- Any other activities which disrupt the library. Any illegal activities, including vandalism, will not be tolerated

Examples listed are not a complete list of violations, but instead are intended to provide guidance. The Director and other library staff are authorized to determine what constitutes disruptive behavior.

Patrons who are behaving inappropriately or disruptively will be warned that the behavior must stop. If the behavior is not immediately corrected, the person will be told to leave the premises. For serious violations, patrons may be asked to leave even if they correct the problem. Anyone who does not leave after being told to do so will be considered a trespasser and will be treated accordingly, including involving the police. Habitual abusers of the library rules may be banned from the premises for a period ranging from one day to and including a permanent suspension. A minor (anyone under 18 years of age) who creates chronic problems may be required to bring a responsible adult who will remain with him or her in the library.

The library will not tolerate the following conduct or behavior:

- Threats; direct or implied;
- Physical conduct that results in harm to people or property;
- Possession of deadly weapons on library property;
- Intimidating conduct or harassment that disrupts the work environment or results in fear for personal safety.

Acts of workplace violence committed by a visitor or anyone not affiliated with the library will be met with immediate response with the purpose of defusing the situation, protecting the library's employees and customers, and preventing further incidents of violence. The library will take legal action when warranted.

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance onto public library premises.

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Each Library Manager is responsible for training all library staff to consistently enforce library rules of conduct. Continuous and positive communication with local police is important to maintaining a positive and welcoming atmosphere in each library.

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