

Patron Behavior & Conduct Policies

1. Patron Conduct Guidelines

To ensure that all patrons may have considerate use of the Meyersdale Public Library, appropriate behavior is expected. Violation of any of the following rules will result in a warning and/or expulsion from the property. Whenever necessary, police will be contacted. The Director and supervisory staff have authority to carry out all powers of this policy.

- a. Smoking or use of tobacco products is not allowed in the building.
- b. Patrons are not allowed to consume food in the library unless otherwise stated.
- c. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Library staff will not assume responsibility for unattended children.
- d. Bathing or doing laundry in the restrooms is not permitted.
- e. Soliciting on library property is not allowed.
- f. Patrons may not behave in a disruptive manner or allow their children to behave in a disruptive manner.
- g. Patrons may not harass library personnel or other library users.
- h. Shirts and shoes are required.
- i. Patrons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol are not permitted.
- j. Firearms or other weapons are not permitted.
- k. Patrons must abide by the Meyersdale Public Library computer use policy.
- l. Patrons are not allowed in non-public areas of the library without permission.
- m. Use of staff equipment is not allowed under any circumstance.

2. Patron Behavior Policy:

- a. If a patron's behavior is abusive or causes problems for other patrons or threatens the safety or well-being of patrons or staff or threatens to cause damage to library property, the library may require the offending patron to leave library property.
- b. If a patron's behavior is such that confrontation with a library employee might, in the employee's best judgment, result in physical harm to any person or in damage to library property, the library may request assistance from police.
- c. Under no circumstance should employees offer resistance to or attempt to physically restrain or apprehend a patron.
- d. Patrons who exhibit a pattern of offensive behavior or who violate any policies outlined in this section may be denied access to the library for a period of time determined by the Library Director, or permanently as required. An appeal can be submitted to the board of trustees for review at the next available meeting, and a written decision shall be mailed to the patron.
- e. Employees, who observe patrons deliberately attempting to steal, deface, or damage library property must immediately request police assistance and be prepared to cooperate with police in pursuing legal action against the patron.

3. Criminal Prosecution

The following behavior will result in criminal prosecution:

- a. Loud, abusive, aggressive, threatening, and/or obscene language or behavior. (Disorderly Conduct)
- b. Destroying and/or damaging library material(s), furniture, and/or other property. (Criminal Mischief)
- c. Using and/or distributing illegal substances. (Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance)

- d. Circumventing or attempting to circumvent the library security system. (Petty or Grand Larceny)
- e. Tampering with, altering, editing, and/or damaging computer hardware/software.
(Computer Related Offenses)

4. Children Alone Policy

The library welcomes children. Library staff members are trained to help children with library materials and services. We want to provide a safe and appropriate environment for all library users. However, childcare is not the library's role. Parents and caregivers are responsible for the safety, comfort, and behavior of their children while in the library. Please make sure your child comes to the library with a responsible person or that the child is mature enough to function in a safe and confident manner that observes the library's policy on conduct.

Library staff members will intervene when a child alone is:

- a. Frightened or crying in the library
- b. Doing something dangerous, or another person in the library seems to be a danger to the child
- c. Not following the policy on conduct.
- d. Not met by a caregiver at closing time

Library staff members will evaluate the situation and try to contact the child's parent or guardian. If staff cannot reach the parent or guardian, they will place the child in the care of the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

5. Drug-Free Environment Policy

It is the policy of the Meyersdale Public Library to provide a healthful, safe, and secure, drug-free environment for patrons and employees. The unlawful possession, distribution, dispensation, manufacture or use of intoxicants, illegal drugs or controlled substances is prohibited in and around Library facilities and premises. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as granting a patron, employee, or volunteer immunity from disciplinary action under other policies; arrest or prosecution by appropriate law enforcement authorities for activities involving drugs or alcohol which are in violation of state law or county ordinance.

- a. *Patrons.* Any patron who violates this policy shall be required to leave the premises.
- b. *Employees.* Library staff shall be required to report to work in a condition fit to perform their duties, unimpaired due to the use of alcohol or other drugs. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees using any prescription or over-the-counter drugs which might impair their work performance should notify the Director. The Director shall have the option of placing an employee on sick leave if their performance might pose a threat to the public or to the safety of the employee or others. The library recognizes that employees are valuable resources and it is committed to helping employees maintain health and well-being. Employees who voluntarily seek treatment may use unpaid leave to attend a treatment or counseling program.
- c. *Volunteers.* This policy shall apply to Volunteer Staff.