

Manchester Community Library Patron Conduct Policy

The Manchester Community Library (MCL) Patron Conduct Policy has been established to promote a welcoming and safe atmosphere for everyone. The policy ensures every individual's ability to use the Library and its associated resources to the fullest extent possible and reasonably access Library facilities without interference. The policy cannot anticipate every possible event or situation; however, staff members are empowered to act and make decisions based on the good faith nature of this policy.

The Manchester Community Library supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Friendly, courteous, and respectful service
- Free and equal access to information
- Privacy and confidentiality in their use of Library services and collections (see Patron Privacy Policy)
- A welcoming, clean, and comfortable environment
- Use of the Library without threat of harm, interference, or discrimination by others

The use of Library facilities and resources implies acceptance of our Patron Conduct Policy, which is based on the following principles:

- Respect other patrons and their right to a positive experience at the Library
- Respect for Library staff whose responsibility it is to maintain a safe and comfortable atmosphere for all and to assist patrons in optimizing their Library experience
- Respect for all Library facilities, materials, computers, equipment, and resources, and rules regarding their use

Respect for Other Patrons

Disruptive conduct, which includes any behavior that interferes with the normal functioning of the Library or Library programs by disturbing or being a nuisance to others, is not permitted. Patrons engaged in such conduct may be asked to leave the property.

Respect for Library Staff

The safety and security of the Library staff are of the utmost importance. The Library staff has the right to a safe and respectful work environment.

Accordingly, patrons will use polite language and maintain a respectful tone and volume when engaging with staff. Patrons are expected to comply with Library staff's requests and instructions. Conduct that causes or threatens harm to staff, interferes with their performance of duties, or constitutes persistent, unwanted, hostile, or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated.

Respect for Facilities, Materials, Technology, Equipment, and Resources

All patrons are expected to treat Library materials, furniture, and equipment with care and use Library facilities, materials, and furnishings as intended. Such practices will help ensure clean, comfortable, and safe facilities for the use and enjoyment of all. Patrons are also expected to respect all signs posted throughout the building.

Enforcement of the Patron Conduct Policy

- Library staff have the authority to enforce the Patron Conduct Policy. They will inform patrons if they violate the Policy and warn them that continued violations will result in losing privileges. Staff have the right to ask patrons

to leave Library property if they are uncooperative, combative, hostile, or argumentative.

- Patrons are expected to follow federal, state, and local laws and policies. Library staff are authorized to contact the police for assistance in cases of theft, violent, aggressive, hostile behavior, or illegal activity to ensure enforcement of this policy.
- The Library reserves the right to immediately eject a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening to staff or other patrons.
- Where applicable, the Library may pursue remedies under federal, state, or local law.

Suspension of Library Privileges

- Library staff and law enforcement officers are authorized to enforce the Library's Patron Conduct Policy up to and including long-term suspension of library privileges, permanent banning from the Library, or criminal prosecution.
- Banning or suspension from Library premises denies the patron access to Library property (e.g., building and grounds), programming, and services. Banned and suspended individuals will receive a written copy of their status, a copy of which will be kept by the Executive Director. Suspended patrons may still access, from an offsite computer, the Library's web page and any databases available through its site.
- Individuals who have had their Library privileges suspended may appeal the suspension. An appeal must be made in writing and will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees and Executive Director of the Library within 15 business days.
- It is the sole responsibility of the individual banned to apply for reinstatement of Library privileges at the end of their suspension.

Minor Children

Parents or guardians are responsible for the welfare and behavior of their minor children (under 18) in the Library or on Library grounds. Minors under 12 must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult unless participating in a Library program. Minors aged 12 to 17 are permitted to use the Library unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.

The Manchester Community Library assumes no responsibility for unattended minors in all circumstances.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs

The following policies apply equally to staff, vendors, patrons, and visitors:

- Smoking, including vaping, is prohibited in the Library building and on the grounds.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited unless approved permits have been acquired in advance.
- A zero-tolerance policy applies to illicit drug use.

Dangerous Weapons

Except for law enforcement officers, possessing any dangerous weapon (e.g., guns, knives) on library property is prohibited.

Revised May 30, 2025, by Paige Vignola, Assistant Director

Approved, pending Board ratification, by Edward Surjan, Executive Director, May 30, 2025