



Code of Conduct

Adopted by the Park County Library Board of Trustees August 24, 2023

Standards of Behavior

Welcome to the library. All patrons have a right to quality library service in an atmosphere that is calm, safe, and free of disturbances from others. While here, patrons will be considerate of others. The library has created the rules and policies in this Code of Conduct to ensure a positive library experience for all patrons of the Park County Library System (PCLS).

To this end, all patrons are required to adhere to such rules and policies while the PCLS reserves the right to take any action necessary to ensure a safe and appropriate environment.

The PCLS Board determines all library rules and policies except in the case of the Meeteetse Library which is also governed by the Park County School District #16.

Enforcement of these rules and policies will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner by the Director and designated staff, who are responsible for interpreting these rules and policies. Any person who violates these standards will be treated in accordance with the Consequences of Misconduct as spelled out below.

Prohibited Behavior

Food or Drink

Eating and drinking in the library may be allowed in designated areas at each library. Patrons are expected to clean up after themselves.

Restroom Use

Using the public restrooms for grooming or as laundry facilities is prohibited.

Selling, Soliciting, Mass Distribution of Materials, or Panhandling

Selling, soliciting, panhandling, or mass distribution of unapproved materials is prohibited.

Public Displays of Obscene Material

Public displays of obscene or visually disturbing material that interferes with the ability of others to use the library, or as prohibited by law, is prohibited.

Loitering

Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building.

Disruptive groups are prohibited. All parties of the group may be subject to enforcement of the rules.

Loitering in the library, entryway, or library property thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter or exit the building or to use the library resources is prohibited.

Sleeping

Sleeping is prohibited.

Furniture and Property

Leave furniture in its place. Avoid putting feet on the furniture. Use the library's facilities, materials, and furnishings as intended.

Inappropriate Language

Inappropriate or abusive language is prohibited.

Personal Belongings

Sleeping bags, bedrolls, and packages in bulk or quantity that cannot be stored entirely under the owner's chair are prohibited. Personal belongings should not be left unattended anywhere on library property.

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking is prohibited inside the building, in all entryways, outside patios and areas used for children's playgrounds, and in library vehicles. Smokers and vapers must be at least 25 feet from any entrance to the library.

Odors and Dress Code

Anyone whose bodily hygiene or odor constitutes a nuisance to others may be asked to leave the building. Being fully clothed, including a shirt, shoes, and pants, dress, or skirt, is a requirement of using the library.

Harassing Behavior

Harassing behavior is prohibited. Harassing behavior may take many forms: unwanted conversations, verbal abuse, advances of a personal or sexual nature that intimidate or make the other party uncomfortable, harassing or obscene gestures or sounds, offensive touching, staring at library staff or at other patrons so that performance of their duties or use of library resources is materially disrupted, and intentionally monopolizing staff time so that performance of duties is materially disrupted even after the staff member has clearly indicated that a reference or customer service transaction has ended. For the purposes of enforcing the library's Code of Conduct, harassing behavior directed at a library employee by a library patron shall include behavior which occurs anywhere both on and off library property, over the phone, by mail or any electronic source.

Disturbing Noise

Disturbing anyone by unreasonable noise (e.g., cell phones, videoconferencing applications, loud conversations, loud singing, radios, other electronic devices with headphones turned up at an unreasonable volume) is prohibited.

Following/Stalking

Stalking others in the library is prohibited. Stalking is the willful, malicious, and repeated following and harassing of another person. Following/stalking behavior directed at a library employee by a library patron shall include behavior which occurs anywhere both on and off the library property.

Abusive Behavior

Abusive behavior, such as threats or violent behavior toward staff or patrons, is prohibited.

Unsafe Behavior

Unsafe behavior such as roughhousing, climbing on furniture, running, or any other potentially injurious action, is prohibited.

Trespassing

Trespassing is prohibited. To trespass includes entering any library building during a period of suspension of library privileges, entering any non-public area of the library, failing to leave the library immediately upon closing, or being in the library before or after public hours without express permission from authorized library personnel.

Unlawful Behavior

Unlawful behavior while in the library or on library property, including, but not limited to, weapons violations, assault, indecent exposure or sex acts, unlawful use of drugs or alcohol, damage to library property, theft, attempted theft, threatening with a weapon, public drunkenness or intoxication, public urination or defecation, is prohibited.

Consequences of Misconduct

Suspension of Library Privileges Notification and Appeal Process

Patrons who do not comply with PCLS' Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the library for a period of one to 30 days by the branch manager or person in charge. The Director manages any proposed suspension of 30 days to up to one year. Misconduct, when a violation of the law, will be referred to law enforcement. Any conviction under such misconduct shall result in a loss of library privileges, as determined by the Director.

Immediate Suspension with Further Action to Follow

The following behaviors will not be tolerated:

- physical abuse or assault
- fighting or challenging to fight
- making violent or threatening statements
- damaging, destroying, or theft of library property

Authorized library staff may instruct anyone displaying these behaviors to leave the library facility immediately. Police may be called and additional legal action may occur, as appropriate. In addition, based on the severity of the situation, a suspension of library privileges for up to one year will be applied without advance warning or prior suspension. Library staff will notify

library administration immediately, where a determination of the appropriate suspension period and procedures will be assigned by the Director.

All other prohibited behaviors will be addressed in the following manner:

- First Violation - Initial warning and given copy of the Code of Conduct
- Second Violation - Library privileges suspended for the day
- Third Violation - Library privileges suspended for seven days
- Fourth Violation - Library privileges suspended for up to a year

Circumstances, including the seriousness or continuing nature of the conduct, may warrant immediate suspension of library privileges.

At the recommendation of library staff and branch managers, the Director or designee will issue a letter to the patron specifying the behavior that violated the Park County Library Code of Conduct, the penalty for doing so, which may include a suspension of library privileges from all Park County libraries and facilities, and the designated suspension time of up to one year.

At the recommendation of the Director, the Library Board may suspend a patron from Park County library facilities for a period of one year or more if the patron's conduct is deemed an ongoing threat to library patrons or staff.

Any patron who has had his or her library privileges suspended may appeal once in writing to the Board of Trustees of the Park County Library System. An appeal petition must be mailed or delivered to the Director at Park County Library System, 1500 Heart Mountain St, Cody, WY 82414 within 15 days of the suspension. The appeal petition must include all reasons the patron believes he or she is not in violation of the Park County Library System Code of Conduct or why the suspension is not appropriate.

The Board of Trustees of the Park County Library System, upon hearing the petition during a public meeting and then voted on, will issue a written determination of the appeal within 60 days of the receipt of the petition. The Board may uphold or overturn the suspension. The determination is final.

Service Animals

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (28 CFR 35.136) and Wyoming State Statute (§ 35-13-201), service animals are welcomed and permitted in all Park County Library facilities. The library also welcomes service animals in training. The library expects service animals to display proper social behavior skills and manners while in the library facilities. Service animals are expected to work calmly, quietly, and should be on a leash at all times except as indicated below. Similarly, service animal owners are expected to interact with their service animal in a quiet and calm manner. The library is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.

Exceptions/Removal of a Service Animal

If at any time service animal's behaviors or actions pose an unreasonable or direct threat to the health or safety of others, or if the service animal does not conform to these guidelines, it may not remain in a library facility. In accordance with ADA guidelines, non-compliance of guidelines can be grounds for a request to remove a service animal from a library facility.

Vulnerable Patrons

Everyone is welcome in our libraries. We are concerned about the safety and welfare of all, including children. We recognize parent/guardian responsibility for the behavior and well-being of those in their charge, and respect the privacy of all library patrons. We intervene only when we determine a patron is at risk.

Vulnerable Adults

Vulnerable adults, as defined by Wyoming Statute, who can understand and follow the rules of conduct as outlined in the library's Code of Conduct are welcome to be in the library. For their safety they should have contact information for a parent/guardian or caregiver who can assist them in an emergency.

Vulnerable adults who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves must have adequate supervision at all times. A guardian or caregiver 18 years of age or older must be responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of vulnerable adults during their library visits. The library assumes no responsibility for vulnerable adults left unattended on the library premises. Staff members are responsible for assisting all library customers and cannot adequately monitor unattended vulnerable adults.

Children

PCLS welcomes the use of its services and facilities by children. The library encourages parents to consider the safety and well-being of their children and the needs of other library users of all ages.

Staff members are committed to:

- Helping children find materials for school work and recreational reading,
- Providing an environment that encourages study and exploration,
- Planning programs that inform and enrich,

Staff members are also committed to the well-being and safety of children. However, library facilities are not designed or licensed to provide basic childcare needs. Children must be 8 years old or older to use the library on their own. Children under 8 must be accompanied by and within sight of a responsible party at least 12 years old.

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library, whether or not the parent or authorized caregiver is present. If a child is disruptive, staff will follow the library's Code of Conduct. If the disruptive behavior continues or if a child is too young to use the library alone, staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian to pick up the child immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, staff may call local law enforcement for assistance.

If a situation arises with a vulnerable adult or child which may include illness, unacceptable behavior, emergency closing, or lack of transportation after regular hours, library staff may attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or caregiver. Local law enforcement may be contacted for assistance if attempts to reach a caregiver or guardian are unsuccessful. Under no circumstances may a library staff member drive a vulnerable adult or child to any location.