

PURPOSE:

To provide a comfortable, safe library environment for all patrons and staff.

POLICY:

Citizens using the library have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that does not threaten the safety or interfere with the rights of any other patron or staff member. The library reserves the right to restrict a person's use of the library if they violate the Library's Code of Conduct.

With a graduated system of warnings, restrictions, and suspensions of library privileges that have been documented, the following guidelines will provide a process for follow-through when violations of the Library's Code of Conduct occur. After appropriate warning, the supervising manager will assess the situation and recommend the appropriate next step.

GUIDELINES**• Immediate One Day Suspension -Supervising Staff Member Enforced**

○ Includes, but not limited to:

- **Causing noise which disrupts others**
- **Public intoxication, smoking**
- **Roughhousing or running**
- **Inappropriate dress (no shoes, shirt, etc.)**
- **Panhandling or soliciting**
- **Offensive personal hygiene**
- **Inappropriate Internet usage**
- **Playing radios or tape players without headphones**
- **Abusive, obscene, or offensive language**
- **Wearing clothing that displays obscene words or pictures**
- **Harassment of staff or other patrons**
- **Inappropriate displays of affection and touching**
- **Stalking or following**

The library manager will attempt to identify the patrons, and document the incident, if warranted. If the person is a juvenile, he/she will be asked to contact his/her parent/guardian.

• Immediate One Week Suspension -Library Manager Enforced

○ Includes, but not limited to:

- **Any continued behavior that resulted in a one day suspension.**

The library manager will present the offender with 2 copies of the suspension form letter (see Attachment), have the person sign both copies and document the incident.

- **Immediate One Month Suspension – Library Manager Enforced**
 - Includes but not limited to:
 - **Any continued behavior that resulted in a one week suspension.**
 - **Public nudity**
 - **Public sexual acts, masturbation, fondling/exposure of private parts**
- *The library manager will present the offender with 2 copies of the suspension form letter (see Attachment), have the person sign both copies and document the incident*
- **Three to Six-Month Suspension -Administration Enforced**
 - Includes, but not limited to:
 - **Repeat of continued behavior that resulted in one day or one week suspension of library privileges.**
 - **Threat of bodily harm to any person**
 - **Assault and Battery - Section 46-3 of the Chesapeake City Code and Section 18.2-57 of the Code of Virginia.**
 - Assault is defined as: an attempt to commit a battery.
 - Battery is defined as: an unlawful application of force to the person of another.
 - **Theft of or damage to library property - Section 16-132 of the Chesapeake City Code: It shall be unlawful and a class 1 misdemeanor for any person to willfully, maliciously, or wantonly write upon, injure, deface, tear, cue mutilate or destroy any book, plate, picture, engraving, map, newspaper, magazine, pamphlet manuscript record or other library property belonging to or in the custody of any public library or any of its branches. Any person who willfully or without authority removes any book or other property of a value of less than \$200.00 from any public library or any of its branches, mobile units or collections shall be deemed guilty of petit larceny, which shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.**
 - **Trespassing - Code section 18.2-119 of the 1950 Code of Virginia: If any person without authority of law goes upon or remains upon the lands, buildings or premises of another, or any portion or area thereof, after having been forbidden to do so, either orally or in writing, by the owner, lessee, custodian or other person lawfully in charge thereof, or after having been forbidden to do so by a sign or by a court of competent jurisdiction...shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.**
- **One Year or Permanent Suspension -Administration Enforced**
 - **Dangerous behavior (assault, use of drugs, violence)**
 - **Displaying a dangerous weapon**
 - **Violation of 3 to 6-month suspension**
 - **Violation of other suspensions**
 - **Other offenses as deemed appropriate by Library Administration and/or the police/courts**

PROCEDURE:

Using a graduated system of warnings, restrictions, and suspension of library privileges, with documentation, the library will have a process for follow-through with violations of the Library's Code of Conduct.

NOTE: If the patron looks suspicious or dangerous, staff should not approach him/her alone. If the patron displays dangerous behavior, staff should withdraw and immediately notify the police of the emergency. Staff will clear the library of other patrons if the situation warrants.

Employee: Upon witnessing disruptive or inappropriate behavior, staff will politely request that the patron discontinue the behavior. If the behavior continues, the staff member will notify the supervisor, or call the security guard (if necessary). It is the supervising manager's responsibility to assess the situation and recommend the appropriate next step.

Department Head/Library Manager: The supervising staff member will firmly tell the patron to stop the behavior or to leave the library for the rest of the day/evening. If the offender refuses, the police (382-6161 if non-emergency) will be called. The Library Director will be contacted when a call to the police has been made.

Assess the situation and proceed following the GUIDELINES (see page 1)

NOTE: With juvenile, it is recommended that calling the parent/guardian is the first step.

Follow up with an incident report. Sign and make copy of the completed Incident Report form. Sends original to Library Administration within 24 hours of the incident.

For Three to Six Months, One Year, and Permanent Suspensions:

Library Manager. Get a copy of police report (if warranted). Document incident; provide complete history (*include all past incident reports*) and recommend suggested action to administration.

Library Administration: Adults: A certified letter is sent to the offender addressing the incident, the consequence, and directions for petitioning the Director for reinstatement of privileges.

Juveniles: A certified letter is sent to the parent/guardian addressing the incident, the consequences, and directions for petitioning the Director for reinstatement of the juvenile's privileges.

REFERENCES

- Section 46-132 of the Chesapeake City Code
- Code Section 18.2-119 of the 1950 Code of Virginia

ATTACHMENTS:

- One Week and One Month Suspension Letters
- Code of Conduct Statement
- Unacceptable Use of the Internet Guideline for staff
- Incident Report Form