

## Public Behavior

Effective June 25, 1990

Revised May 22, 2006

The purpose of this and other public behavior policies at the Manitowoc Public Library is to ensure a safe, orderly, and comfortable atmosphere in which all library patrons can use the library's materials and services most effectively. Staff and patrons should be mindful of the effects of their behavior on others using the library's facilities. This policy addresses standards of public behavior in general. From time to time, the Library Board may adopt additional policies governing public behavior.

### General Public Conduct

General rules of behavior are designed to protect the rights of library patrons, to outline for staff members acceptable and appropriate behavior on the part of patrons, and to preserve library materials and facilities.

Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 43.52 (2) states: "Every public library shall be free for the use of the inhabitants of the municipality by which it is established and maintained, subject to such reasonable regulations as the library board prescribes in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number. The library board may exclude from the use of the public library all persons who willfully violate such regulations."

Unacceptable behavior on the part of the public will result in loss of library privileges. Depending on the severity of the offense, the Library will institute discipline ranging from verbal warning, through denial of specific privileges (such as use of computers), and finally to denial of the right to use the Library (banning) for a specified time period, often a year. In the event of inappropriate behavior by a minor, the child's parent or guardian will be notified by the Library, usually after the second offense.

Staff members observing unacceptable behavior shall take appropriate action. At their discretion, staff members shall also fill out an Incident Report of the behavior problem and forward it to the Business Office. When a patron is banned from the Library for a time longer than one week, a letter of explanation is sent to him or her. In the case of a minor child under 16 years of age, a copy of the letter is also sent to his or her parent or guardian. When deemed appropriate by the Library Director, copies of the Incident Reports and/or copies of letters shall be forwarded to the Manitowoc Police Department or other appropriate law enforcement agency. In the event that the patron seems to use more than one library in the Manitowoc-Calumet Library System (MCLS), copies of the Incident Reports and/or copies of letters may also be shared with one or more of the MCLS libraries.

Listed below are examples of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. This list provides examples only and is not exhaustive or exclusive.

1. Loitering in the library building or on library property and parking lots is not permitted. Overnight parking in Library parking lots is prohibited. Skateboarding, rollerblading, riding scooters or bicycles, etc., on Library property or parking lots is not permitted.
2. Noise level in enclosed areas of the building is to be kept to a minimum.

3. Bicycles, tricycles, wagons, and similar equipment are not to be brought into any enclosed area of the building. A bicycle rack is provided adjacent to the parking lot. Skateboards, rollerblades, folding scooters, and similar equipment may be brought inside the building but must be checked at the Circulation Desk. At the discretion of Library staff, patrons may be required to check other objects, equipment, etc., which may pose a potential hazard to the safety of other patrons or staff members or to Library collections, equipment or facilities.
4. Eating is not permitted except in the Balkansky Community Room and the Board Room according to Policy. Consumption of non-alcoholic beverages is permitted under certain conditions. Beverages must be in covered containers. Library staff shall be the sole determinants of what constitutes a covered container and its adequacy. Any container that staff may deem unsuitable for use in the Library shall be removed immediately from the premises by patrons or shall be confiscated by Library staff. Beverages may not be consumed in computer areas or near computers in the building. Accidental spills must be reported immediately to staff at a service desk.
5. Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco or similar products is not permitted inside any enclosed area of the building.
6. No pets or animals of any kind, with the exception of assistive animals or animals being trained as assistive animals, are allowed in the library unless part of an official library program.
7. Littering on Library property, or in any way defacing or vandalizing Library property, is not allowed. Stealing, defacing, vandalizing or in any other way tampering with Library materials is prohibited per the policy entitled "Theft of Library Materials."
8. Patrons are not allowed in non-public areas of the library unless conducting official library business or as part of a library tour.
9. Patrons needing to make phone calls are to be directed to the pay telephone in the lobby. In extremely unusual situations, a patron may be allowed to use a business phone at the discretion of library staff. In most instances, Library staff will make calls for patrons and will not permit direct use of a business phone by patrons. Phone calls, either on the pay phone or in unusual situations, a business phone, should be kept to a minimum: under 5 minutes for voice calls and under 10 minutes for TTY calls. Use of cell phones in the Library building is discouraged, and patrons who disturb others with their use of cell phones will be required to terminate the call immediately.
10. The public address system is not used to summon patrons except in emergency situations as determined at the discretion of Library staff.
11. Patrons are expected to use Library equipment and facilities in an equitable manner. Additional policies cover use of specific Library equipment. Patrons are expected to surrender the use of equipment when their scheduled time is over and/or when staff so request.

12. Patrons shall not send receive, or display on computer screens any text or graphics which may reasonably be construed to be obscene. Patrons shall refrain from using language or gestures which a reasonable person would find inappropriate for use in a public library.
13. Appropriate apparel, including footwear, should be worn in the library. All patrons must wear shoes at all times. Out of consideration for others, personal cleanliness is expected. Patrons whose body odor proves offensive to other patrons will be asked to leave.
14. Sleeping is allowed, provided it does not disturb others.
15. Permission must be obtained from the Director or his/her designee prior to taking photographs, videotaping, or doing similar types of filming in the Library.
16. Board-type games and computer games may be played in the library, provided it does not disturb others.
17. Running, playing, or jumping in the library, or purposely rearranging library materials or furniture is not permitted. Patrons shall not place their feet on chairs, tables, or other furniture or equipment where it is inappropriate to do so and shall not sit on furniture or equipment other than chairs or benches.
18. Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children. For specifics, please see the "Lost/Unattended Children," "Internet & Other Computer Services," and "Access and Borrowing" policies.
19. Patrons shall not harass other patrons or Library staff members per the provisions of the Library's "Harassment Policy."
20. Any other behavior disturbing to library patrons or staff, endangering other persons, or damaging physical property is not allowed. Patrons will be asked to cease such activity and/or be excluded from the building.
21. Patrons must leave any enclosed area of the building by closing time. Requests for meetings scheduled in one of the meeting rooms to run past closing time, or to begin prior to opening time, may be made in advance and will be granted as Library staff deem suitable. Exceptions are also granted for library-sponsored or co-sponsored programs that are scheduled to extend beyond closing time. When patrons attend meetings that run past closing time, they must conclude all business with Library staff, such as check out of materials, prior to closing time, and must agree to be escorted from the building in a group.