

Policy 013

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Hewlett Woodmere Public Library (the “Library”) is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and orderly public space where members of the public may read, work, and learn without undue disruption or interference. Cooperation by all Library visitors is essential to achieving this goal. To that end, the Library’s Board of Trustees has adopted this Code of Conduct to set expectations for safe responsible, and respectful behavior at the Library.

The rules in this Code of Conduct are applicable in all areas of the Library, including all indoor and outdoor areas and the parking lots. The rules must be followed by all individuals on Library property, including but not limited to visitors (registered patrons, guests and other members of the public, etc.) and employees (including volunteers and contractors). The rules apply equally to all individuals, including children and teens.

Failure to comply with the rules in this Code of Conduct may result in a warning, or a penalty such as restriction or termination of Library privileges and/or immediate removal from the Library or referral to law enforcement.

LIBRARY RULES

The Library recognizes the need to set clear and specific expectations for visitor and employee behavior on Library property. The following rules are in effect at all times, and should be actively enforced by Library employees. As a condition for entering upon Library property or using Library facilities, all visitors and employees agree that they shall be subject to the rules in this Code of Conduct.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

- All cell phones and other electronic devices must be set to a low volume level when in use inside the Library. Ringtone volume should be reduced to prevent disruption to other persons.

Loud, Disruptive, or Disorderly Conduct

- Individuals must refrain from having loud conversations, making distracting noises, or exhibiting other disruptive conduct that may annoy or inconvenience other persons in the Library.
- Individuals must refrain from using obscene, profane, or abusive language or gestures in public spaces or during conversations where they may be overheard by other persons.
- When operated in public spaces, radios, music players, video players, or other noisemaking devices must be used with headphones, so as not to disturb other persons in the Library.

- Running, jumping, sliding, throwing objects, riding bicycles/skateboards/scooters, or any other disruptive or potentially harmful physical behaviors are prohibited.
- It is prohibited to block the free movement of other persons within the Library, to block access or exits to Library facilities, or to create conditions that would constitute a safety hazard to other visitors or employees.
- Unauthorized individuals may not enter employee-only areas of the Library or remain on Library property before or after posted hours of operation.
- Individuals are prohibited from exhibiting any other behavior which could constitute disorderly conduct as defined by law, or a nuisance as defined by law.

Smoking, Vaping, and Tobacco Products

- Tobacco products are prohibited on Library property. Individuals may not smoke or use any form of smokeless tobacco. Vaping is also prohibited on Library property. Individuals may not use vaporizers or any type of e-cigarette.
- All forms of smoking and vaping are prohibited on Library property within a 100-foot radius of any door or entranceway accessible to the public.

Food and Drink

- Beverages should be consumed only in designated areas of the Library.
- Beverages are not permitted near Library computers or other electronic devices.

Damage, Destruction, or Interference with Library Property

- When handling or using Library property, individuals must exercise reasonable care to prevent accidental damage or destruction.
- Individuals are prohibited from committing any intentional damage or disfigurement to Library property.
- Individuals are not permitted to move, hide, or displace Library property in order to prevent or hinder access by other Library visitors or employees.
- It is prohibited to vandalize, write upon, make carvings in, or otherwise deface any Library materials, property, or equipment, including but not limited to reading materials, furniture, painted surfaces, etc.

Use of Publicly-Accessible Computers and Internet Access

- Individuals are responsible for the proper use of Library computer equipment (including other tablets, pads, or other types of electronic devices). Any attempt to alter, damage, degrade or tamper with computer equipment is prohibited. Individuals may not disable, unplug, or otherwise alter the hardware setup of computers.
- Individuals may not install software or apps on Library computer equipment without the express prior approval of the Library Director.
- It is prohibited to use Library computer equipment to engage in cyber harassment, as defined in Section 240.30 of the New York State Penal Law.
- It is prohibited to access or disseminate obscene or indecent materials, as defined under Article 235 of the New York State Penal Law. Such material may not be viewed on Library computer equipment or through the Library's Internet access. This includes displaying obscene or indecent images on Library computer video monitors or on personal electronic devices and computer displays, and/or the retention of such obscene or indecent images and material on Library computer hard-drives or other storage media.
- Individuals are prohibited from using Library computer equipment or Internet access to engage in prohibited file sharing of music, software, or other copyrighted materials.

Illicit Drugs

- No illicit drugs are permitted in Library facilities or on Library property. Any persons in possession of illicit drugs, paraphernalia, or materials suspected to be illicit drugs may be immediately referred to law enforcement.

Weapons

- No firearm or any other form of weapon is permitted on Library property. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, BB guns, pistols, revolvers, shotguns, rifles, machine guns, disguised guns, daggers, dirks, razors, stiletto knives, switchblade knives, gravity knives, brass knuckles, sling shots, metal knuckle knives, box cutters, cane swords, electronic dart guns, Kung Fu stars, electronic stun guns or tasers, pepper spray or other noxious sprays, explosive or incendiary bombs, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause physical injury or death when used to cause physical injury or death. The only exception to this rule is for registered law enforcement personnel who are permitted to carry weapons in their official capacity.

Restroom Use

- Library restrooms must be used only for sanitary and hygienic purposes. Bodily fluids and excrements must be deposited in appropriate receptacles.

- Individuals are prohibited from flushing any wipes, paper towels, diapers, or solid consumable matter into Library toilets.
- No Library property or materials should be brought into restrooms.
- Medical waste products or biohazardous materials may not be disposed of in standard Library trash bins or waste baskets.
- Bathing or laundering of clothes is prohibited in Library restroom facilities.

Theft of Library Property

- All Library property intended for lending must be properly checked out before being removed from Library facilities. Except as otherwise permitted, removing items without following proper check-out procedures will be considered theft of Library property.

Physically Violent Behavior and Threats of Violence

- Engaging in physical altercations, fighting, or assaults upon other persons is prohibited on Library property.
- Individuals are prohibited from exhibiting any speech or behavior that is deliberately intended to intimidate, scare, or threaten other Library visitors or employees with implied or implicit threats of physical violence.

Soliciting

- Soliciting or selling of any kind is prohibited on Library property without the express permission of the Library Director.
- Individuals may not engage in ballot canvassing, poll taking, or public petition solicitation on Library property.
- Individuals may not distribute or display pamphlets, surveys, flyers, signs, or posters on Library property without the express permission of the Library Director.

Sexual Behavior

- It is prohibited in the Library to engage in acts of sexual misconduct, including indecent exposure, sexual contact and/or sexual intercourse, public displays of affection of a sexual nature, or other lewd or lascivious acts.

Pets and Other Animals

- It is prohibited to bring pets or other animals into the Library, except with the express permission of the Library Director. However, working service animals covered by the

Americans with Disabilities Act are permitted in the Library at all times when providing a service for a visitor.

- Non-working “comfort” animals are not permitted in the Library without the express permission of the Library Director.

Dress Code and Personal Hygiene

- Socially appropriate clothing is required for entrance into the Library and must be kept on at all times. Clothing must adequately cover the body. Shoes must be worn at all times in the Library.
- The Library prohibits attire or accessories which are libelous; portray disruptive and/or obscene writing or pictures; contain sexually obscene or sexually explicit slogans or messages; or contain slogans or symbols condoning the use of violence.
- Individuals may not emit unreasonably strong or pervasive odors, including perfumes or colognes, which may interfere with other persons’ ability to use the Library.

Unattended Children

- Parents/guardians/caretakers, not Library employees, are ultimately responsible for the behavior of children of any age in the Library. Children deemed out of control or disruptive to other patrons or staff may be required to leave the Library premises. If no responsible adult can be reached, Library employees may summon the police in order to preserve the Library’s operations and/or protect the interests of the child.

Taking Photographs or Video

- The use of photographic, video and sound recording equipment is prohibited on Library premises unless specific permission is granted by the Board of Trustees.
- Media or commercial photography or filming on Library property is prohibited without the express permission of the Board of Trustees.

Loitering

- No persons may loiter on Library property without reasonable justification.
- Sleeping or camping is not permitted on Library property.

Use of Library Equipment

- Use of Library telephones by visitors is prohibited.

- Use of non-public Library computers, photocopiers, or other non-public Library equipment is prohibited without permission from Library employees.
- Visitors may not rearrange Library furniture or move furniture from one location to another location in the Library.
- Visitors are prohibited from improperly using Library equipment or furniture in a manner that may cause unreasonable wear, such as standing on furniture or resting feet on furniture or walls.

Board of Trustee Meetings

- Members of the public attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees must act in a civil manner at all times. Attendees may not shout out, jeer, or disrupt any aspect of the proceedings of a Board of Trustee meeting.

Disobeying Reasonable Instructions from Library Employees

- All individuals must follow all instructions from Library employees when such instructions are given with the purpose of enforcing the rules in this Code of Conduct or otherwise protecting the health, safety, and order of the Library, and its visitors, employees, or facilities.

Finally, it is prohibited to engage in any other behavior or activity not listed above which violates federal, state, local, or other applicable law or Library policy.

CONSEQUENCES

The Library expects all individuals to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard and respect for the rights and welfare of other visitors and employees.

Violating any of the rules listed above, or demonstrating any other conduct which threatens the health, safety, or security of the Library and its visitors or employees may result in penalties. Failure to comply with the rules in this Code of Conduct may result in a warning, restriction, or termination of Library privileges, and/or immediate removal from the Library or referral to law enforcement. Library patrons (i.e., persons registered or qualified for registration as borrowers of library books and materials or users of restricted online resources) may have borrowing privileges and permission to enter upon Library premises suspended for a period not to exceed four years. Any other visitors or other persons may be subject to the revocation of their privileges to enter upon Library premises for a period not to exceed four years.

APPEAL PROCESS

Library patrons and/or other visitors who receive penalties after violating the rules in this Code of Conduct may appeal the penalties to the Library's Board of Trustees. Appeals must be made in writing to the Board of Trustees.

Individuals shall have the right to submit a written notice of appeal to the Board of Trustees within 30 days of the date the visitor first receives notification of the penalty. After an appeal is submitted, the Board of Trustees, or its appointed designee, shall convene a hearing within 20 days of submission, at which time and place the aggrieved individual shall be afforded the opportunity to present evidence, testify and cross-examine witnesses. Within 20 days of such hearing, the Board of Trustees shall review the appeal and render a decision in writing, either restoring the aggrieved individual's library privileges, modifying the imposed penalty, or confirming the continuance of the penalty, and its reasons therefor.

Adopted and Approved, Board of Trustees (BOT), July 24, 2023