

# WELLS PUBLIC LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

## Introduction/Overview

The library is for everyone's enjoyment. The following guidelines for patron conduct are essential to ensure respect for individuals who use this public facility:

## Definition of Problem Behavior

Problem behavior is any behavior which either consciously or unconsciously violates or restricts the rights of patrons or staff to use the library.

## General Library Behavior Guidelines

The Wells Public Library supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Use the library without discrimination
- Receive friendly, courteous and respectful service
- Have free and equal access to information
- Have a clean, comfortable and pleasant environment
- Use the library undisturbed without threat of harm, invasion of property, or interference

**Acts of Intimidation:** Abusive language, racially or sexually harassing comments, threatening language, hitting, pushing, stalking, staring, or lurking. This applies to patron-to-patron interactions as well as patron-to-staff interactions.

**Audio Equipment:** Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it is not allowed.

**Bicycles:** Bicycles must be parked in designated areas outside the building. Bicycle racks are located in the front and rear of the building.

**Cell Phones:** As a courtesy to other library users, patrons entering the library with a cell phone, pager, or similar electronic device should turn the device off or set it to a non-audible signal (flashing light, vibration, etc.) If your conversation becomes disruptive you may be asked to move your conversation to the entrance lobby.

**Children:** Children 8 years of age or younger must not be left unattended in the library. The library staff cannot be responsible for minor children who are unsupervised. For behavioral, safety and security reasons, and the comfort of other patrons, parents/guardians/or assigned chaperons must keep their young children (8 years of age or younger) within their sight. Parents/guardians are responsible and liable for their children's actions including any vandalism to property. Please see our "Unattended Child Policy" for more information.

**Clothing:** Shirts and shoes must be worn in the library. Exposed swimsuits are not allowed.

**Daily Closing:** Patrons are responsible for knowing the closing time for that day. Personal belongings left in the library at closing time will be locked in the building until the library is next open to the public.

**Damages:** Those who damage or deface library materials or property will be prosecuted. Parents can be liable for damage done by a child under the age of eighteen.

**Disturbances:** Loud talking, raucous laughter, offensive language, or otherwise engaging in disruptive behavior is not allowed. Running or playing physically active games at the library is also not permitted, unless these activities are part of a library sanctioned program.

**Drugs and Alcohol:** Drugs and alcohol are prohibited on library property.

**Entrances:** Building entrances and exits including the ramp to the back entrance may not be blocked.

**Food and Drink:** For health and cleanliness reasons, no food is allowed in the building except for special events sponsored by the Friends, Board of Trustees, or employees of the Wells Public Library. Beverages in covered containers are allowed.

**Library Furniture (Misuse of):** In order to maintain clean and attractive library facilities and furniture, it is forbidden to sit on tables and heating units, place feet on furniture, move furniture, lie on floors, or to deface walls. Patrons should sit one to a chair.

**Loitering:** Loitering on library property is not allowed. This rule requires staff to exercise discretion with regards to what is considered unacceptable loitering behavior. In general, the determining factor will be whether the offending party prevents others from enjoying the library and its environs.

**Meetings:** Gatherings, meetings, or use of the meeting room is not allowed without proper authorization. Please see our "Meeting Room Policy" for more information.

**Personal property:** Patrons are responsible for their property. The library staff cannot guarantee the security of valuables. Care must be taken to keep the floor clear for the safe passage of others.

**Pets:** Certified service animals and guide dogs are allowed in the library at all times. Certified Therapy Dogs are allowed in the library for specific library programs under the approval of the Library Director or his/her designee. Unattended animals outside the building are not permitted; the town's Animal Control Officer may be called.

**Quiet Areas:** The Quiet Area is reserved for study.

**Restrooms:** Misusing the rest rooms (e.g. using them as a laundry or washing facility, or defacing the walls) is not allowed.

**Running:** Running is not allowed in the library building.

**Skateboards, Roller Skates and Other Sports Equipment:** Skateboarding, biking or rollerblading is not allowed anywhere on the property, inside or out.

**Sleeping:** Habitual sleepers, noisy sleepers and those who are sprawled on furniture or the floor in a manner that is disturbing to other persons will be asked to leave.

**Solicitation:** . Solicitations and petitions on library property must comply with the library's solicitation and petitioning policy. Surveys, questionnaires, or any other research projects may be conducted only with the approval of the Library Director.

**Staff Only Areas:** Patrons are not allowed to enter areas posted "Staff Only" without proper authorization from the Library Director or his/her designee. These areas include but may not be limited to, any staff work area, offices, storage areas, and the mechanical areas of the building.

**Threats:** Threatening behavior, including, but not limited to, violence, threats of violence, and possession of weapons is not allowed.

**Tobacco:** Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited on library property. Electronic cigarettes are also prohibited.

**Expulsion from Building and Suspension of Library Privileges:** It is a charge of the library staff to see that the rights of individuals to use the library are upheld. The staff is obligated to enforce these guidelines so that the facility can be used to the fullest by all persons. Library patrons who ignore staff requests to comply with the above policies will be asked to leave the library property. Patrons who repeatedly violate the behavior policy or pose a threat to the comfort and safety of other patrons or library staff may have their library privileges suspended for a time period specified by the Library Director.

**Right of Appeal:** The library has a "Policy on Appeals of Library Decisions Involving Library Policies," a copy of which is available upon request. Appeals may be made in accordance with that policy.