

II. Library Rules of Conduct (Approved as Section II 10/26/23, Last Reviewed 1_8_26)

1. The Washington Public Library strives to maintain public spaces that are:
 - a. Comfortable and welcoming,
 - b. Safe and secure
 - c. Clean and healthy

2. Library patrons and staff should enjoy a comfortable and welcoming environment. Library users are asked to be respectful of each other and behave in a manner that does not disrupt others or interfere with the normal operation of the library. Examples of prohibited disruptive behavior include but are not limited to:
 - a. Using threatening or abusive language.
 - b. Fighting or challenging to fight, running, shoving or throwing things.
 - c. Creating unreasonable noise. Using audible devices without headphones or using headphones set at a volume that disturbs others.
 - d. Failure to comply with staff requests.
 - e. Sleeping or giving the appearance of sleeping.
 - f. Staring at or following other library patrons.
 - g. Impeding entry into the library or impeding passageways through the library with physical presence or personal property.
 - h. Engaging in audible conversation in areas designated for quiet study.
 - i. Adults may not use seating in the children's or young adult area of the library if they are not accompanied by a child or young adult.

3. The Washington Public Library is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all. Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any federal, state or local criminal law or ordinance is prohibited on library property. Examples of prohibited activities include but are not limited to:
 - a. Entering areas designated as "staff only" unless accompanied by Library staff members
 - b. Harassing, threatening or bullying another person.
 - c. Defacing or destroying library property.
 - d. Possessing, consuming, selling or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
 - e. Soliciting, panhandling or gambling
 - f. Leaving personal property unattended.
 - g. Remaining in the library after regular closing hours.
 - h. Theft of library materials or the personal property of other patrons or staff members.

- i. Stalking, harassing, or intimidating patrons or library staff anywhere on library property.
4. The Washington Public Library will maintain an environment that is clean and healthy for all users. Examples of prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to.
 - a. Consuming beverages in an unlidded container or any type of food, except during specified programs where food is offered.
 - b. Using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco or other tobacco.
 - c. Personal hygiene or odor that constitutes a nuisance to others or poses a health risk.
 - d. Bringing animals into the building, with the exception of service animals or animals taking part in library program presentations.
 - e. Introducing bed bugs or other pests via returned materials or personal belongings.
 - f. Use bathrooms for unreasonable or unintended purposes including bathing and laundering.
 - g. Intentionally creating a mess in any area of the library that interrupts or interferes with use of the library.
5. Library privileges may be suspended for engaging in prohibited behavior at the discretion of supervising library staff, either temporarily or permanently. The patron has the right to appeal the suspension of privileges to the director and/or Library Board of Trustees by submitting a written letter of appeal.
6. Unattended Children:
 - a. The library is a public building and all patrons, including minors, are welcome. However, at no time will the Library assume the responsibility of surrogate care provider for children in the Library. All children under the age of 8 years of age must have a parent or caregiver present in the library at all times. A caregiver is defined as someone 13 years of age or older who has the mental and physical capacity to care for the child should an emergency arise.
 - b. In the event a child under 8 years of age is left unattended the staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian or other care giver. If a parent, guardian, or care giver cannot be located within one half hour, the Washington Police Department will be called and the child will be given into their custody.
 - c. If unattended children are left at the library for more than fifteen minutes after normal or weather-related library closings, the Washington Police Department will be called and the child will be given into their custody.

7. Library Access for Registered Sex Offenders Subject to Exclusionary Zones:
- a. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Library is in compliance with Iowa State law that excludes registered sex offenders convicted of sex offenses against minors from public libraries. This policy adopts the definitions of Iowa Code Chapter 692A, as amended.
 - b. The Library Director acts as “library administrator” for purposes of Iowa Chapter 692A. The Library Director will not give written permission for a registered sex offender convicted of sex offenses against minors to be present on library property. Issuance of a library card to a registered sex offender convicted of sex offenses against minors does not constitute written permission from the library administrator for that offender to be present on library property. Individuals may appeal this decision, as it relates to them, to the Library Board of Trustees.
 - c. Registered sex offenders convicted of sex offenses against minors may be eligible for library service, depending on their residence address. They may register for a card directly via telephone or through a designee, making arrangements for a person of their choosing to select, check out, and return materials using that card. Under any of these circumstances, the sex offender convicted of sex offenses against minors will remain responsible for all activity on their card. They may access information resources via telephone or online. They are not eligible for homebound delivery of materials.
 - d. Registered sex offenders convicted of sex offenses against minors may not loiter, as defined under Iowa Code Section 692A.101(17), as amended, within three hundred (300) feet of library property without the written consent of the Library Director.
 - e. Violations of this policy will be immediately reported to law enforcement, and violators will lose all library privileges.
 - f. Attendance at Open Public Meetings: Sex offenders convicted of sex offenses against minors wishing to apply for written permission to attend an open public meeting at the library must submit a written request to the Library Director.
 - g. Library as a polling location: State law provides for an exemption for the purpose of voting. Persons prohibited from being on library property will be allowed on library property solely for the period of time reasonably necessary to exercise the right to vote in a public election if the library is named a designated polling location.

- h. Reinstatement: Privileges may be restored to any offender whose name has been removed from the Sex Offender Registry upon written proof of said removal. Proof may include presentation of a copy of the written notice of removal. Removal must be verified by a search of the Sex Offender Registry completed by authorized library personnel. Library personnel will have up to 24 hours to verify said removal from the registry. Upon verification all rights will be reinstated.