

GANGS

For the protection of visitors, staff and others, the following is adopted:*

1. The use of this facility for any form of meeting or gathering of groups is authorized only by advance application and approval.

2. Unauthorized gatherings by social clubs, organizations, or gangs are not permitted.

3. Members of any group who gather within the institution or use the facility in any manner which may discourage or exclude use by any member of the public may be asked to disperse, or leave the facility.

4. Persons who violate this policy may be excluded from the library. Refusal to leave the facility when asked to do so by a member of the library's staff shall result in criminal prosecution and arrest.

Display of gang signs, symbols, or paraphernalia is discouraged. There's no known sure-fire method of avoiding gang presence in the library. The policy states that gang activity, gatherings, colors, hand-signs, or other related conduct on the property will not be tolerated. The policy must be enforced firmly and fairly.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. It may be more effective to talk to the leader separately so he may save face with his fellows. The staff member might approach the group and ask to speak with him away from the group.
2. Calmly review the library's policy stated above.
3. Avoid engaging in an argument.
4. If the group does not disperse within a reasonable amount of time (i.e., 5 or 10 minutes), contact a supervisor or Director.
5. If the group refuses to leave, contact the police. Never physically touch a patron to try to remove them from the premises.
6. Fill out an Incident Report Form.

* Layne, Stevan. The Cultural Property Protection Manual, Layne Consultants International 2nd ed. c.2002 p. 76

WHAT TO SAY:

To the leader: Excuse me, sire. My name is _____ and I work here at the library. May I speak to you (in my office, away from the rest of the group, etc.) for a few minutes? We seem to have a problem. We have a group of people here but no formal meeting room reservation. Here is a copy of our rules regarding meetings of groups of people here at the library. If you cannot follow these rules, I will need to ask you and your friends to leave the library.

Hello, I am _____ with the library. If you would step over here please, I would appreciate it. You may not be aware of the library's rules on talking and other disruptive behavior. Here is a copy of our policy. If you need to have a discussion, it would be more appropriate to do it some other place than here. If you have some information needs, I would be pleased to help you but we are not equipped to help all of you at once.

If they refuse to leave:

Gentlemen, we need to ask you to follow the library's policies on meetings. If you refuse to do so, you will need to leave the library. If you do not leave, my job requires that I contact the police.

If this does not happen promptly, call the police.

COMMENTS: It is essential that a library staff learn all it can about gangs in order to deal effectively with them. The local police department is a good source of information on gangs, signs, clothes, etc. and to give staff training on procedures they should use in handling gang members individually or in groups.

HOMELESS

POLICY: Homeless individuals are to be offered the same respect and attention as any other member of the public and are subject to the same expectations of appropriate behavior. Homelessness is not the determining factor, behavior is. Reports from all sizes of public libraries indicate that homelessness may be associated with a variety of other issues which include, but are not limited to the following: mental illness, alcohol and/or drug abuse, harassment, loitering, untreated health problems, sleeping, solicitation, stalking, panhandling, swearing, anger management problems, hygiene/cleanliness problems, and individuals who come into the library with large bundles of belongings and/or overloaded shopping carts.

Please refer to the specific problem-behavior policies included in this manual.

Library personnel should familiarize themselves with the available resources offered to this population within their community (shelters, food banks or free meal distribution, counseling, etc.). Utilize these materials when reinforcing the policies stated within this manual. The person will feel supported rather than remanded when they are given information and/or reinforcement to obtain such services.

INAPPROPRIATE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

See also: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

POLICY: The library strives to protect the rights of both customers and staff and to provide a safe, comfortable, and convenient library environment. Inappropriate public displays of affection are not permitted.

Personal contact of a nonsexual nature is acceptable. The following behaviors are not acceptable:

- prolonged kissing
- prolonged hugging
- sitting on another's lap
- engaging in affection of a sexual nature, petting, engaging in sexual intercourse (actual or simulated), or touching of the genitals.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If customers are acting in violation of this policy, explain the rule and firmly request that they follow the rule.
2. Follow up and repeat again if necessary.
3. On the third warning, the staff member should insist that the customers leave the library premises for the day.
4. Fill out an Incident Report Form detailing the incident to the Director.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here at the library. You might not know our rule about public displays of affection. This kind of behavior makes some people uncomfortable. We appreciate your adherence to this policy. Thanks.

INSECTS (LICE, ROACHES, ETC.)

POLICY: Customers, packages and materials infested with insects such as lice or roaches are not allowed in the library.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Making sure that the customer's privacy is protected, repeat the above policy and give the customer a copy of the written policy.
2. If library decides to withdraw materials, they will be charged for the materials and privileges may be cut off.
3. Have a copy of the agencies that might be able to help your customer rid their home of insects.
4. File an Incident Report Form noting the verbal warning.

WHAT TO SAY:

I am afraid we have noticed that the materials you just returned are full of roaches. We are concerned because this causes a public health concern for our staff and other customers. Your borrowing privileges may be suspended if you continue to return library materials infested with insects.

There are social service agencies that can help you rid your home of insects. I will be glad to help you identify the names of those who might be able to help you. We appreciate your understanding.

WHAT TO DO:

Place the returned materials in plastic bag. Spray insecticide into the bag and seal it for several days.

LOITERING

POLICY: Loitering inside or outside the library is not permitted. Individuals who are lingering within the building with no clear purpose or who are not using library facilities for their intended purposes will be considered to be loitering. If individuals are loitering on library grounds after the library has closed for the day, staff may remind them that people are not permitted on library grounds after hours.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If an individual appears to be loitering on the premises with no intention of engaging in valid library-related activities, these individuals may be asked to leave.
2. If the situation warrants, the police may be contacted.

WHAT TO SAY:

1. We have a library policy against loitering. If you are not going to use the library for its intended purposes, we will have to ask you to leave the premises.
2. The library is closed for the evening. We need to ask you to leave the property.
3. Do you have a place to go? We have some information on overnight shelters you may find useful. Please allow me to give you some of these materials before you leave. Thank you and please let us know if we can answer any other questions for you about local community services.

COMMENTS: It would be useful to establish a comprehensive listing of local resources (if available) along with brochures or handouts provided by local agencies. Utilize these resources to help enforce library policy. There may be a city ordinance against loitering. If so, cite it in the policy but try to encourage the individual, if appropriate, to take information on community resources before he or she leaves. See **APPENDIX XIII**.

MISBEHAVING CHILD

See also: UNATTENDED CHILD

POLICY: The Board of Trustees has established certain standards of acceptable behavior on library property in order to maintain an atmosphere that promotes the use and enjoyment of the resources and services of the library, promotes the safety of the general public and the library staff, and protects the building, furniture, equipment, and materials of the library.

Any activity that interferes with the rights of other customers to use the library, disrupts the normal functioning of the library, could result in physical, emotional, or mental injury to oneself or others, or could result in damage to the facilities, equipment, or materials is considered disruptive and unacceptable behavior.

The library reserves the right to require anyone who engages in disruptive behavior to leave the premises, the right to restrict privileges for a specified period of time, and the right to ban the individual from the library for a specified period of time or permanently. In most cases, a staff member will notify the individual that he or she is in violation of the standards of conduct and will provide one verbal warning. Unlawful activities will be reported immediately to the police.[?]

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If a child is in violation of the library's Rules for Considerate Library Use, explain the rule and firmly request that the child follows the rule.
2. If the child continues with the behavior, locate the parent or caregiver and explain the appropriate rule.
3. If the behavior continues to persist, ask the parents or guardian to leave the library, taking the child with them. Give them a copy of the Rules for Considerate Library Use to take with them.
4. If the child is left unattended, depending on the age of the child and the situation, either instruct the child to leave the building for the day, or see policy on UNATTENDED CHILD.

[?] Delphi Public Library, Patron Behavior Policy, <http://www.carlnet.org/dpl/behavior.html> . Accessed March 24, 2003.

5. The Staff person in charge will fill in an Incident Report Form detailing incident to the Director.

WHAT TO SAY:

To child: My name is _____, and I work here at the library. You might not know our rule on _____. (Explain rule). Now that you understand, I am sure this won't be a problem again, right?

To parent/caregiver: My name is _____, and I work here at the library. You might not know our rule on _____. (Explain rule). Now that you understand and your child has stopped the behavior, enjoy your visit at the library.

To child 2nd offense: You are not following the rule on _____ again. We need to ask you to leave for the day. Here is a copy of our Rules for Considerate Library use to take with you.

To parent/caregiver 2nd offense: The child is not following the rule on _____ again. We need to ask you to leave with the child for the day. Here is a copy of our Rules for Considerate Library use to take with you.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XIV**, **APPENDIX XV**, and **APPENDIX XVI**.

MISSING CHILD

POLICY: The library welcomes children of all ages to use its materials and services. The responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children lies with their parents, both within the library building and on library grounds.

A child under age 6 should never be left alone in the library even for a short period of time.

A child 6-9 years old need not be in the immediate presence of a parent or caregiver (someone 16 years or older entrusted with the care of the child), but the parent or caregiver of the child must be somewhere in the building.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

If a parent/caregiver reports a child missing, staff will follow this procedure:

1. Obtain name, age, and description of child. Ask parent/caregiver how extensively they have searched. Check children's area thoroughly, including bathrooms and offices.
2. Request assistance from other library staff to search their areas.
3. Check outside the library.
4. Call police if unable to locate child.
5. The staff person in charge will fill in an Incident Report Form detailing the incident to the Director.

COMMENTS: A library may determine different age break downs for the above policies. See **APPENDIX XVII** and **APPENDIX XVIII**.

OBSCENE TELEPHONE CALLS

POLICY: Staff members should not tolerate obscene phone calls.

Example: Sometimes obscene calls are not immediately detectable. A person calls and asks you to get a definition of something sexual or asks for an explanation of a sex act, etc. It may take a reference person a while to determine that the caller is getting a sexual thrill from the definition or the reading of a technical explanation.

Staff members do not have to read sexual informational details aloud to customers. They can ask for a fax number and fax printed information to the caller, mail copies to the caller, give the caller medical web sites to use or put the material aside for the caller. This will take care of legitimate inquiries and deflate an obscene caller.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Staff members who receive an obscene telephone call should hang up immediately.
2. If caller ID is available, note the phone number, date, time, and the message.
3. Notify the police department of the incident.
4. Fill out an Incident Report Form.
5. If caller is identified, press charges.

COMMENTS: Sometimes a library may have someone calling repeatedly with obscene messages. If the library does not have the ability to identify the telephone number it should notify police and the telephone company. The phone company can place a tap on the phone to track numbers. Staff members *must* track the obscene calls. They need to keep a log with dates, times, and messages. Prosecute anyone caught making the calls.

ODOR PROBLEMS

POLICY: All library users must conform to acceptable standards of hygiene and cleanliness in order to prevent the disturbance of other library users and their use of the facility. Customers exhibiting unsanitary hygiene or whose odor initiates a complaint from other customers and/or staff will be asked to leave the library until they can meet the standards of hygiene and cleanliness. Customers whose perfume or other scents may trigger allergic reactions will be asked to refrain from wearing such scents in the future.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

Security Officer
Staff member, if the
Library does not have
Security

WHAT

1. Discretely ask the customer to leave for the rest of the day.
2. If progressive discipline is used, check previous incident reports to see if a longer suspension is warranted.
3. Hand the individual a copy of the posted expectations for appropriate behavior and point out the specific expectation that applies.
4. Let the individual know they will be allowed back when they are clean and free of body odor.
5. If applicable, hand them a list of places where they can get a free shower and/or clothes.

WHAT TO SAY:

I will need to ask you to leave the library until you have bathed and changed into clean clothes. Your body odor is disturbing others.

For public health reasons, you need to leave the library until you bathe and wear clean clothes. (If the smell of urine is present, you may also add) Incontinence is a health risk to others.

Excuse me, it has been reported that your (cologne, after-shave) is disturbing other people. Many people are allergic to various scents. We need to ask you not to wear it in the library in the future.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XIX.**

PACKAGE INSPECTION

See also: THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY

POLICY: The library reserves the right to inspect any package, purse, backpack, stroller, tote bag, or container of any kind brought into the library. Large objects such as grocery carts or bicycles will not be allowed in the building. This policy is adopted for the safety of people and the protection of the collection.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Ask the person politely but firmly to empty the contents of their bag or other container on the desk.
2. Give them a copy of the policy.
3. If the person resists, call security or administration.
4. If there is resistance, fill out an Incident Report Form.
5. If library property is found, see instructions under Theft of Library Property.

WHAT TO SAY:

1. Would you please empty your backpack for us to inspect the contents?
2. We've been experiencing some vandalism so we're doing spot checks of bags. Would you please empty your bag?

PANHANDLING OR SOLICITING ON LIBRARY PREMISES

POLICY: Soliciting of any kind is prohibited on library premises.*

DEFINITION: Premises means library buildings, parking lots and sidewalks. Examples of soliciting include: Asking for money, campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey taking, selling.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If a customer is asking for money or it is reported to you that a person is asking for money, have the individual point out the person who approached them and/or get a description and time.
2. Give the customer the printed library rules and point out the appropriate rule.
3. If the problem persists, inform the offender that the police will be called.
4. If the behavior continues, call the police.
5. File an Incident Report Form.

* The exception is The Friends of the Library. They may sell goods and/or services for the purpose of fundraising to benefit the library and its mission to the community.

WHAT TO SAY:

It is illegal to panhandle on our property.

If panhandling, say: We have information available on resources for food, shelter and other support through local social services. May I give you this information?

PARKING LOT PROBLEMS

See also: ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, OR ILLNESS ON LIBRARY GROUNDS

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

ANGRY OR IRATE CUSTOMERS

ASSUALT/VIOLENCE

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

DISURTIVE, NOISY OR ROWDY BEHAVIOR

DRUGS

GANGS

LOITERING

PANHANDLING

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

SEXUAL DEVIANTS

SLEEPING

SOLICITING

STALKING

A. AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS: All automobile accidents occurring on library property must be reported to the police.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Check to see if anyone needs medical assistance. If someone is hurt in the, call for medical help. If the injury is serious call 911.
2. Telephone the police to report the accident. Ask customers involved to remain near their cars until the police respond.
3. Fill out an Incident Report Form detailing the names of the people involved and their license plate numbers.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here at the library. Was anyone hurt in the accident? I will call for medical help if it is necessary. I am also going to call the police. It is our policy to notify the police if an accident takes place on library property. Please stay at the library until the police respond to my call.

B. PARKING

Policy: Cars must be parked in designated parking spaces in the library parking lot. Cars blocking drivers or cars abandoned in a parking space may be towed from the premises at the owner's expense.

A car is considered abandoned if it has been ticketed for an expired meter and/or left in the parking space for over ___ hours.

Security guards or a designated library employee should check the library parking lot regularly.

PROCEDURE

WHO

Staff member/
Security guard

WHAT

1. Notify your library supervisor.
2. Check with your customers in the building to see if the car belongs to one of them. If it does belong to someone in the building ask the owner to move his or her car.
3. If you do not identify the owner, call the non-emergency police number to arrange to have a car towed.
4. Write up an Incident Report Form on a car blocking the drive or abandoned in a parking space for library records. Be sure to note the license plate number.

WHAT TO SAY:

If the owner of the car towed comes into the library to check on their car: My name is _____, and I work here at the library. Your car was towed from the library parking lot because – it was blocking the drive or your car was considered abandoned because it was at an expired meter or had not been moved for over ___ hours. You will have to check with the police department in order to reclaim your car. Here is the non-emergency police number _____.

C. KEYS LOCKED IN CAR

CAR KEY POLICY: Library employees will assist customers who have locked their keys in their car by calling for professional assistance. Library employees may not provide hangers to customers seeking to unlock a car or assist in any way other than calling a locksmith.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Hand the library customer our policy. Give them a prepared list of locksmiths or give them the yellow pages of the phone book.
2. Assist them in making a phone call to a locksmith.

Note: Most police departments will not respond to calls to open locked cars. They request that you call a locksmith.

3. Fill out an Incident Report Form.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here at the library. I will be happy to help you find a locksmith to get you into your car. Here is a list of locksmiths who are willing to come to the library to assist you. If you need me to place a call for you please let me know.

COMMENTS: If the library has employee only parking lots, it may want to be sure that the lot is clearly posted, "Employee Parking Only, Violators Will Be Towed". Trespassing cars should be ticketed or small informational leaflets put on the windshields saying, "This parking is for employees only. We appreciate your cooperation in parking in the public parking lot at _____ (location)." Staff should file incident reports of violations with license plate numbers noted.

PATRONS IN NON-PUBLIC AREAS

POLICY: The Code of Conduct contains a statement forbidding entrance into non-public or restricted areas.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff Member

1. Unfamiliar person is seen in a staff area of the library.
2. All staff have a responsibility to speak to anyone they don't recognize.
3. Offer to escort the person to the appropriate office or nearest public area.
4. Customer may not be aware that he or she is in a non-public area, or he/she may have been directed to an office for a specific reason. Offer to escort the person to the public area or the appropriate office.
5. Handle the matter as quietly and professionally as possible.
6. If the customer refuses to leave the area, call a supervisor or security.
7. Fill out an Incident Report Form.

WHAT TO SAY:

Excuse me, may I help you find something? This is a staff area of the library. I will show you how to get back to the public area.

COMMENTS: All staff members have a responsibility to speak to anyone they don't recognize.

See **APPENDIX XX** and **APPENDIX XXI**.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY – FLASHERS

See also: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

It is against the law to expose yourself in public.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If a customer reports that someone has exposed himself/herself to them, call the police immediately.
2. Notify your supervisor and try to determine if the accused person is still in the library. If the accused person is in still there, do not approach him.
3. Try to keep the complaining customer calm and in the building. They will need to talk to the police.
4. Let the police make the contact with the person. The police will remove the accused person from the premises.
5. Fill in an Incident Report Form.

WHAT TO SAY FOR 911 CALL:

This is _____. I work at the _____Library. A library customer has reported that someone exposed himself to her. Please come right away. The accused person is still in our building and our customer is very upset.

Or

The person has left the building but the customer is very upset and she is here at the desk. The address is _____.

SEXUAL DEVIANTS – GIRL/BOY WATCHERS

See also: **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

Men or women will only be allowed in the children's activity area of the library if they are accompanying a child or they are researching children's literature.

Adults may not stare at or follow children in the library.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Approach the customer. Tell them that it is inappropriate for them to be observing children in the library. Hand them a copy of the above policy. Ask them to leave.
2. If they refuse to leave, call the police.
3. Notify your supervisor.
4. Fill out an Incident Report Form. Take good notes. You may be asked to testify.

WHAT TO SAY TO 911:

This is _____. I work at _____ Library. There is a man/woman near our children's area who is staring at the children which is against library policy. I believe that he/she may approach a child here. We need you to intervene. The address here is _____.

WHAT TO SAY TO THE WATCHER:

It is inappropriate for you to be watching children in the library. The children's department is for children and their parents or assigned guardians. I must ask you to leave the children's area immediately.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XXII.**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF LIBRARY EMPLOYEES OR LIBRARY CUSTOMERS BY LIBRARY CUSTOMERS

See also: **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AS OUTLINED BY THE EEOC:

Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature.

Conduct commonly considered to be sexual harassment which the Library will not tolerate includes:

Verbal: sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, insults, humor and jokes about sex, anatomy or gender specific traits, sexual comments, threats, repeated requests for dates, or statements of a sexual nature about other employees or customers.

Nonverbal: suggestive or insulting sounds (whistling, catcalls, smacking, or kissing noises), sexually suggestive bodily gestures, leering, or obscene gestures, visual displays such as posters, signs, or slogans of a sexual nature.

Physical: touching, unwelcome hugging, or kissing, pinching, brushing the body, coerced sexual intercourse, or actual assault.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

Staff member

WHAT

1. Confront customers observed engaging in activities that can be construed as sexual harassment in the library or on library property.
2. Tell customer to stop the problem behavior.
3. If the customer disregards your warning, ask them to leave.
4. If they do not leave, call the police.

WHAT TO SAY:

Your behavior (or language) is considered sexual harassment. Please do not continue(approaching people and asking them for dates, telling lewd jokes). If you continue this behavior you will be asked to leave the library.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

It is against the law to engage in sexual activities in public places.

Such activities might include: peeping through bookshelves to look up women's skirts, solicitation in person or through the Internet, having sexual relations, masturbation or touching oneself while staring at customers or staff members, rape, child molestation.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If you observe sexual behavior or if a customer reports sexual activity, call the police. The police will remove the offender from the premises.
2. If there is a victim, give them privacy, and make them as comfortable as you can. Be sympathetic and understanding.
3. Once the police have been called, immediately report the incident to your supervisor.
4. You must be ready to talk to the police if you observed the activity. Be sure to note description, date, time of day, etc. in writing as soon as you can. You may need to testify against the offender.
5. If victim leaves, staff can press charges for others.

WHAT TO SAY FOR 911 CALL:

This is _____. I work at the _____ Public Library. A library customer has reported that there is a person _____. We need your help. The address here is _____.

SLEEPING

POLICY: Sleeping is not considered to be a problem behavior unless it interferes with the rights and privileges of others or becomes a habitual pattern. Sleeping customers may be monopolizing seating, snoring loud enough to disturb others, or blocking aisles or passageways.*

PROCEDURE:*

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If one of the above situations occurs, remain at arms length and awaken customer by making a loud noise. Do not touch him/her.*
2. In a low, calm tone, so as to not draw attention to the patron, identify yourself as a staff member. Assume that he/she is unaware of the violation and politely state what the policy is.
3. Check back in few minutes. If the customer is still sleeping, get the support of a colleague and ask the person to leave.

WHAT TO SAY:

We want to keep the library's furniture looking nice. Please don't put your feet on the furniture.

We need to keep the aisles and passageways clear for safety reasons. Please find a chair.

I'm afraid you're making noise, which is disturbing other customers.

Our seating is limited. Please use only one chair.

COMMENTS: If a library chooses the view that customers are to use libraries only for library purposes, sleeping is a problem behavior. See **APPENDIX XXIII**.

* Problem Behavior Manual. Fairfax County Public Library. 1997. p. 40.

* Ibid.

SMOKING, USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS, EATING, DRINKING

POLICY: Smoking, the use of tobacco product, eating, and drinking are not allowed in the public areas of the library, restrooms, or any place on library property where secondary smoke can disturb customers.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If one of the above situations occurs, politely introduce yourself and remind the customer of the posted policy which forbids that action in the library.
2. Ask the customer to go outside of the building and away from the entrance to continue the behavior.
3. If the customer persists in smoking, using tobacco products, eating, or dinking in the restricted areas, get the support of a colleague or refer to supervisor and ask the person to leave the library building.
4. If he/she is still not willing to leave, call the police.

WHAT TO SAY:

Excuse me, my name is _____. The library's policy, which is posted by the entrance, forbids (smoking, use of tobacco products, eating, drinking) in the library or restrooms. If you want to continue (smoking, using tobacco products, eating, drinking), please go outside of the building.

COMMENTS: Smoking is a petty offense under the Illinois Clean Indoor Air Act 410 ILCS 80/1.

STALKING

POLICY: The law defines stalking as transmitting threats of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint or placing a person in reasonable apprehension of receiving threats of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint. 720 ILCS 5/12-7.3

Stalking behavior will not be tolerated. Incidents occurring in the library will be reported to the police.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If a staff member is being followed, they should report it to their supervisor so they can deal with the issue.
2. If a staff member notices any such behavior, they should talk to the victim and see if he/she needs help.
3. Notify the supervisor.
4. If talking to the stalker does not change their behavior, then ask them to leave and/or call the police.
5. Staff should offer to walk with the victim when they leave the building or be willing to call someone if the customer feels the need to have another person with them.
6. Fill out an Incident Report Form and file in the Director's Office.

WHAT TO SAY:

Hi, I'm _____ from the library staff. I'm sure that you didn't know that your behavior is making someone very uneasy. You have been "following" this person and I'll have to ask you to leave for the rest of the day. This behavior is inappropriate. You may come back tomorrow if this behavior stops and as long as you do not repeat the behavior.

COMMENTS: Also read 720 ILCS 5/12-7.5 on Cyberstalking.

SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

POLICY: If you observe behavior that is suspicious but you cannot actually tie anything specific to existing library rules and policies, it is probably still important to document what you witness. The documentation may be important in creating a history of ongoing problems.

Remain calm. Descriptively write down what you have seen. If you know the individuals involved, be sure to report any pertinent information regarding those persons (name, physical features, address).

If appropriate, contact your supervisor and/or local authorities. By reporting any suspicious activity, you can help prevent the threat of criminal activity.

See **Form III**.

TALKATIVE PEOPLE

See also: EMOTIONALLY AND MENTALLY DISTURBED

POLICY: It's not against policy for people to be talkative. They don't threaten you or your customers. However, they may be disruptive to Library business and/or they may prohibit Library personnel from completing their duties. They are often friendly and well-meaning but their excessive conversation may be disruptive. One of the nice aspects about working at a library is meeting people, but we usually don't have time for in-depth conversations with them.

We have to put limits on our time in a polite but firm way. The following are a few options.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. State clearly that you need to resume your work. Put as much physical distance as possible between you and the talker.
2. Use a little teamwork. If you see a coworker stuck and he/she is near a phone, call from a back work area and ask them if they would appreciate the intervention or go up to them and tell them they are needed in the workroom.
3. Do some preparation. Arrange signals with your coworkers such as a tug on the ear to let them know it's time for the phone call. Most talkers are regulars and recognizable so it is possible to plan for them.
4. Give referrals. For example, if a talkative person is really lonely and has a specific interest, refer them to a club or organization.
5. If the person is not making sense (paranoid fantasies, disconnected ramblings,...), go to the section on "EMOTIONALLY AND MENTALLY DISTURBED."

WHAT TO SAY:

It is nice talking with you but I need to stop chatting and resume my work.

Excuse me, I have some work I have to do elsewhere in the Library. Have a nice day. Goodbye.

Pardon me, I have to take this call. *Then after the call:* I'm sorry, I am needed elsewhere. It was nice talking to you. Goodbye.

TELEPHONE USE AND ABUSE

POLICY A-- No Payphone:

The library does not have a public payphone. If there is an emergency, customers may ask to use the phone at the circulation desk.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. When a customer asks to use the library phone, ask if it is an emergency.
2. If it is, dial the number for them.
3. Ask them to keep conversation short.

WHAT TO SAY:

Please remember this is a business phone and all calls need to be short so the phone line is kept open. Just a reminder: your phone conversation can be heard by the staff and fellow patrons.

Please end your conversation. We need to use the phone.

POLICY B--Payphone:

The library's payphone is to be used to place calls and is not to be used to conduct business nor to receive calls.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. When a customer asks to use a phone, refer them to the payphone in the lobby.
2. Give them a copy of the above policy.

WHAT TO SAY:

If they are too loud: Excuse me, but your conversation can be heard in the library and is disturbing others. Please lower your voice.

If using for the wrong purpose: Pardon me, but this phone is not to be used for business purposes. I have to ask you to hang up so others may use the phone.

THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY AT A THEFT DETECTION SYSTEM

See also: **THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY**

POLICY: The primary purpose of security system is to protect library property. There may be frequent false alarms, unintentional removal of library materials or even staff errors that may cause an alarm. When an alarm is activated, the incident will be investigated in a firm, but courteous manner and as privately as possible. If the incident does turn out to be a matter of theft, the theft will be handled as outlined in the **THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY** policy.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Security Officer
Staff Member

1. If an alarm sounds, the person activating the alarm will politely be asked to step to a private place where it will be explained that an alarm, has indicated that the staff needs to investigate the cause. They should then investigate and try to determine why the alarm was activated.
2. If no cause can be determined or if the alarm sounded as a result of error, the staff member should apologize but affirm that the Library has a security system to protect the public's investment in its Library.
3. If it is determined that there is an attempted theft, the Staff Member should proceed to measures outlined in the **THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY** policy.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here at the Library. Our security system alarm has sounded and I need you to step over here so we can find out why.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XXIV**.

THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY

See also: **VANDALISM**

POLICY: Taking any material or property owned by the Library without properly checking it out is theft, and is against the law. See: 720 ILCS 5/16B-1.

Examples of theft include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Knowingly and intentionally removing any library material from a library facility without authority to do so.
2. Knowingly and intentionally concealing any library material upon his or her person or among his or her belongings with intent to circumvent checking out that material.
3. Using a stolen or fraudulent library card.
4. Failing to return checked out library material as described in the above citation.
5. Leaving the library facility with any material not intended for circulation, i.e. rare documents, local history/genealogy, special collections or equipment.

PROCEDURE

WHO

Security Officer
Staff Member

WHAT

1. If a person caught violating this policy seems harmless, the Staff Member should explain that the action/theft is against the law and must stop. The incident should be reported to the Staff Person in charge who will determine if the police will be called or will discuss means of restitution.
2. If the person is acting in violation of this policy and obviously not approachable, the Staff Member should call the police immediately.
3. The Staff Member involved will send a written incident Report Form detailing the incident to the Director.
4. The Library will post a copy of the Protection of Library Materials Act 720 ILCS 5/16 B-1 at each entrance and at each circ desk, as required by that act.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here the here at the Library. Theft of Library property is against the law, and I need you to stop. My supervisor will be here shortly.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XXV**.

THEFT OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

See also: THEFT OF LIBRARY PROPERTY

POLICY: The Library must be seen as a safe place, or “Safe Harbor.” Toward this end, the Library cannot tolerate the theft of personal property within the Library. Anyone caught stealing the personal property of another customer, staff member or other personnel within the Library facility will be dealt with immediately.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Security Office

1. If someone is caught stealing the personal property of anyone within the Library facility, the police should be summoned immediately.
2. The victim has to remain until police get there as they are the only ones who can place the complaint.
3. The staff member who deals with this matter will send a Incident Report Form detailing the incident to the Director.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XXVI.**

THREATENING BEHAVIOR

See also: **ANGRY OR IRATE PATRONS**

See also: **VERBAL ABUSE/SWEARING**

See also: **ASSAULT/VIOLENCE**

DEFINITION: Included is any action or speech which threatens, has the effect of threatening, intimidates, expresses degrading comments, or seems to invade one's personal space. The behavior can be interpreted as harassment or intimidation. This behavior does not have to be tolerated and may be in violation of 720 ILCS 5/26-1. Customers have the right to express anger but not to be abusive or to harass.

Examples of threatening behavior are:

Customer following a staff member around the library

While discussing a problem, a customer begins to yell and invade one's space

"I'm going to torch the library."

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Do not argue with a threatening person. Identify yourself as a library staff member. Remain calm and keep your voice low and firm.
2. Attempt to defuse the situation before it becomes physically abusive. Do not put yourself or other staff in danger.

Supervisor

3. Get the assistance of another staff person or refer to a supervisor.
4. Move the discussion to another more private place. With your colleague, ask the person to leave the library until he/she is able to discuss the problem more calmly.
5. Review the situation with customer.
6. Advise him/her that the police will be called if the abuse does not stop. Depending on the situation, it may be advisable to skip this step and go directly to step 7.
7. If the person refuses to leave, call 911 for the police if necessary.
8. Notify the Director and complete an Incident Report Form.

COMMENT: Do not touch the customer. If trapped or directly attacked, shout or scream for help. Persons who are attacked are privileged by law to use the same degree of force in defense as is exercised by the attacker. 720 ILCS 5/7-1 *et seq.*

WHAT TO SAY:

Please lower your voice. You are disturbing others.

If you cannot speak more calmly, I cannot help you.

UNATTENDED CHILD

POLICY: The library welcomes children of all ages to use its materials and services. The responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children lies with their parents, both within the library building and on library grounds.*

An unattended child is one who is 9 years of age or younger, and is habitually (2 or more times) left unattended in the library.

A child under age 6 should never be left alone in the library even for a short period of time.

A child 6-9 years old need not be in the immediate presence of a parent or caregiver, but the parent or caregiver of the child must be somewhere in the building.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. *Child under age 6.* A small child who is left unattended and is frightened should be taken to the children's area and comforted while another staff member tries to find the child's caregiver. When the responsible caregiver is located, our policy should be explained. If the child continues to be left unattended, the appropriate staff will contact the police.
2. *Child ages 6-9.* Caregiver will be notified by staff by phone that it is unacceptable to leave a child unattended at the library, and the policy will be explained. If the child continues to be left at the library unattended, the appropriate supervisory staff member will notify police.

Supervisor

3. If a child 9 years old or younger is left unattended and the responsible caregiver cannot be located within a 15 minute search by library staff, the police will be called by a supervisory staff member. Staff will not transport children under any circumstances.
4. *After Hours.* Unattended children should be asked 15 minutes before closing if they have a

* Burke County Public Library System, Safe Child Policy. <http://www.bcpls.org/safe-child-policy.htm>, Accessed January 20, 2003.

ride. After the library closes, the age of the child should determine whether or not to contact police. If police are called, 2 staff members should stay with the child until their arrival.

5. A letter should be sent home to the parents stressing the library's concern for the safety of unattended children and the importance of prearranging rides. Include in the letter library hours and the cost of the nearest pay phone.
6. Fill in an Incident Report Form.

WHAT TO SAY:

(Child under age 6, caregiver in building)

The library is a very busy place and our staff cannot be responsible for keeping an eye on your child. It's really not safe for him/her to be out of your sight for any time.

(Child ages 6-9, caregiver on phone)

This is _____ from the Library. Your child _____ is here with us. The library is a very busy place and our staff cannot be responsible for keeping an eye on your child. It's just not safe for him/her to be here alone. Now, our policy is that children 9 and under must be accompanied in the library by a parent or guardian. Will someone be able to come to the library to take him/her home soon?

COMMENT: Library may determine different age groups are more appropriate for their situation.

See **APPENDIX XXVII, APPENDIX XXVIII, APPENDIX XXIX, APPENDIX XXX, APPENDIX XXXI, and APPENDIX XXXII.**

VANDALISM

POLICY: Vandalism consists of the willful or malicious destruction, disfigurement, or defacement of property by means of cutting, tearing, breaking, or marking.* These activities are against the law. Examples of vandalism include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Deliberately cutting, tearing, marking, spitting, or putting other body fluids onto library materials, equipment, furniture, or facilities.
2. Defacing of walls or signs.
3. Damaging furniture or facilities such as restrooms and elevators.
4. Breaking windows.
5. Maliciously altering, deleting, damaging, or destroying any computer system, program, or data.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

If a customer is acting in violation of this policy and seems harmless.

1. Explain that the action is against the law and the customer should stop.
2. Report incident to supervisor who will determine the value of the loss and discuss means of restitution.
3. Fill out an Incident Report Form and file in Director's Office.

If a customer is acting in violation of this policy and is obviously not approachable.

1. Call the police immediately.
2. Fill out an Incident Report Form and file in Director's Office.

WHAT TO SAY:

My name is _____, and I work here at the library. Damaging library property is against the law. I need you to stop what you are doing. My supervisor wishes to talk to you, so please come with me.

See **APPENDIX XXXII** and **APPENDIX XXXIV**

* Campus Crime Prevention Programs. *The complete Library Safety and Security Manual*. Goshen, K.Y.: Campus Crime Prevention Programs, 2001, 189-190.

VERBAL ABUSE/SWEARING

See also: **ANGRY OR IRATE PATRONS**

See also: **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

See also: **THREATENING BEHAVIOR**

POLICY: It is against library policy for any individual to swear at or make degrading comments to library customers or employees. If an individual deliberately directs any inappropriate or obscene expletive at a customer or an employee, they should be instructed to stop using this type of language and, when appropriate, to leave the premises immediately.

It is also inappropriate for individuals to engage in excessively obscene and vulgar conversations or use excessive or vulgar language while in the library. Additionally, customers and employees are asked to refrain from the excessive use of colloquial swear words, which might be perceived as offensive and inappropriate by others.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. Inform the customer that their language is inappropriate in a public facility and to discontinue use of inappropriate language when addressing any staff members.
2. If the customer persists in directing expletives at a staff member or customer, ask them to leave the premises immediately.
3. If any customers are engaging in any excessively obscene or vulgar conversations among themselves, tell them to discontinue their conversations.
4. If somebody swears at you on the telephone, simply hang up and report it to the Supervisor and/or Director.
5. If the person(s) continue the inappropriate comments or conversations, call the Supervisor, Director of Security.
6. Fill out an Incident Report Form.

WHAT TO SAY:

1. I don't have to listen to this. I find your language offensive and inappropriate. Please just leave the building if you're going to continue to address us this way. (Staff should then walk away from the individual).
2. Excuse me. Perhaps you don't realize that your conversation can be heard by others. Some people might be offended by the subject of your conversation. We would appreciate it if you would refrain from engaging in this type of conversation (or, telling dirty jokes, etc.) when in the library.
3. Perhaps you are unaware that the continued use of this particular word (phrase) can be considered inappropriate or offensive to many people. We would appreciate it if you would not continue to use that word (phrase) while in the library.

COMMENTS: See **APPENDIX XXXV**.

VIRTUAL OR E-MAIL PROBLEM CUSTOMER

POLICY: Virtual customers should receive the same consistent, good service as those who call or walk into the library. They may expect that communication between themselves and Library staff will be private, except as provided by law, unless it may be considered abusive, harassing, or threatening.

PROCEDURE

WHO

WHAT

Staff Member

1. If the conversation becomes improper during a legitimate session, the patron should be warned the behavior is inappropriate and they must stop it at once.
2. Should it continue, the patron will be told the session is ending and the Librarian will then logoff.
3. If the patron reconnects and exhibits the same behavior(s), they will be told they are losing their virtual reference privileges for one day, and any further connections will be terminated without notice as soon as it is determined it is the same person.
4. Patrons exhibiting extreme or repeated instances of bad behavior will be sent a message stating that their Internet connection address may be traced and law enforcement agencies will be notified.
5. If this course of action is followed and the offender is logged on from a school, school officials will be notified and follow up disciplinary action will be expected.
6. If the contact is purely malicious from the start and no legitimate use of the virtual reference service is ever initiated, the intermediate steps may be omitted and the ultimate action phase begun immediately.

WHAT TO SAY:

Scripted message 1: This service requires that chat be polite and respectful. Please log in again if you need help finding information and can comply with this requirement. Good-bye.

Scripted message 2: Do not continue to log on. This behavior is unacceptable. If you persist, your IP address will be traced and legal action may be taken based on 720 ILCS 135/0.01 "Harassing and Obscene Communications Act."

Scripted message 3: "Do not log one. This behavior is unacceptable. We will trace your IP address and legal action may be taken based on 720 ILCS 135/0.01 "Harassing and Obscene Communications Act."

COMMENTS: Become familiar with the following law.
Harassing and Obscene Communications Act (720 ILCS 135/0.01)

(720 ILCS 135/1-2) Harassment through electronic communications.

(a) Harassment through electronic communications is the use of electronic communication for any of the following purposes:

- (1) Making any comment, request, suggestion or proposal which is obscene with an intent to offend;
- (2) Interrupting, with the intent to harass, the telephone service or the electronic communication service of any person;
- (3) Transmitting to any person, with the intent to harass and regardless of whether the communication is read in its entirety or at all, any file, document, or other communication which prevents that person from using his or her telephone service or electronic communications device;
- (4) Threatening injury to the person or to the property of the person to whom an electronic communication is directed or to any of his or her family or household members; or
- (5) Knowingly permitting any electronic communications device to be used for any of the purposes mentioned in this subsection (a)."

WEAPONS

See also: ASSAULT/VIOLENCE

See also: THREATENING BEHAVIOR

POLICY: Weapons (except for those worn by law enforcement) are not allowed in the library or on the library grounds. Weapons include any kind or size of firearm, knives, switchblades, or other objects held in a threatening manner.

PROCEDURE:

WHO

WHAT

Staff member

1. If you see a weapon in someone's hand or see a weapon on someone's person and feel there is immediate danger, call the police.
2. If the weapon does not appear to offer any immediate danger, first notify other staff and the supervisor so they are aware.
3. Then approach the person, and show them the policy on no weapons in the library. Ask them politely to leave the premises. Do not provoke a confrontation.
4. Fill out an Incident Report Form and file it in the Director's Office.

WHAT TO SAY (for #2):

Hello, my name is _____ and I work for the library. Weapons are not allowed in the library. Please leave. You may return when there are no weapons on your person.