

PERTH AMBOY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Standards of Acceptable Behavior

The Perth Amboy Free Public Library is a limited public forum. The following standards of acceptable behavior are intended to protect the rights and safety of library users, protect the rights and safety of staff members, and preserve and protect the library's materials, facilities and property.

All patrons of the Perth Amboy Public Library are expected to use the Library, and its resources in a responsible, lawful and courteous manner. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the library building. Customers not engaged in reading, studying, or using library materials may be required to leave the building.

Regulation

Enforcement of Library rules will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. In situations where Perth Amboy Public Library staff members feel that the health, safety or security of Library users or staff members are threatened, they may take any and all appropriate action including, but not limited to, calling the police for assistance.

Violations of patron conduct rules will result in expulsion from the Library, or arrest and criminal prosecution, or both. To prevent theft of books and library materials, State law authorizes the detention for a reasonable period of time, of any person using these facilities who is suspected of committing a theft of library materials.

The Library's Administration may impose a further suspension of Library privileges. If the Director decides to impose such a suspension, the patron or visitor will be so advising in writing. Any patrons whose Library privileges are suspended under these rules has the right to appeal. Appeal of suspension must be in writing, to the Board of Trustees, Perth Amboy Free Public Library 196 Jefferson Street Perth Amboy, NJ 08861, within ten (10) days of receipt of notice of suspension.

Guidelines

Library users must adhere to these Rules of Conduct and NOT engaged in the following prohibited behavior.

Illegal Activities, including but not limited to:

- Committing or attempt to commit any activity that constitutes a violation of any federal, state or local statute or ordinance.
- Engaging in sexual conduct or lewd behavior on Library premises, as defined under New Jersey Law. (New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice, Section 2C:14-4 Lewdness)
- Use of controlled substances on Library premises (New Jersey Statutes, Section 24:21)

- Smoking or other use of tobacco inside or outside the Library building. (NJ SFAA, P.L. 2005, c.383 ; Perth Amboy Municipal Code 377-2 & 377-11)
- Drinking alcoholic beverages on Library premises.
- Public intoxication. (Perth Amboy Municipal Code 137-19)
- Damaging, defacing, disfiguring, destroying, any book, periodical, pamphlet, artistic reproduction, audio visual material or any other article, or any part thereof, which is borrowed from, owned by or in the custody of such library. (Perth Amboy Municipal Code 274-2)

Harmful, Disruptive or Destructive behavior, including but not limited to:

- Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the Library, or disturbs staff and Library users. Such conduct includes:
 - The use of abusive or threatening language or gestures
 - Creation of unreasonable noise
 - Loud or boisterous behavior or talking, on a cell phone or otherwise.
 - Monopolizing library equipment, resources, or staff time.
 - Photographing, filming, or recording other patrons without their consent.
- Using any behavior that presents an imminent danger to the life, or safety of others, including intentional non-emergency activation of alarmed exits or fire alarms.
- Carrying any instrument which could reasonably and commonly be classified as a weapon or a dangerous instrument, or could be reasonably used as a means of aggression or defense against another, into the Library or onto Library grounds, unless authorized by law to do so. Any person authorized to carry a weapon must notify Library staff of the fact.
- Using Library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures or building in a destructive, abusive or potentially damaging manner, in a manner likely to cause personal injury to any person or in any other manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof.
- Disobeying the reasonable direction of Library staff members.
- Soliciting, petitioning or distributing written materials or canvassing on Perth Amboy Free Public Library premises for any purpose without express permission of the Library Director. Such conduct extends to any soliciting, petitioning, distributing or canvassing outside of the Library premises in such a manner as to impede access to or egress from the facility.
- Interfering with the free passage of Perth Amboy Free Public Library staff members or users in or onto Library premises including but not limited to, placing objects such as bicycles, strollers, shopping carts or bags in such a manner as to impede free passage in or onto the premises. The Library also reserves the right to limit the size and number of items brought into the Library. Personal belongings should not be left unattended. Library management has the discretion to discard personal items left unattended on Library property in order to preserve a safe environment for library patrons, volunteers and staff.
- Bringing bicycles and other means of transportation inside the Library building, including but not limited to vestibules or covered doorways.
- Use of scooters, roller-skates, skateboards, wheeled footwear or similar wheeled devices.

- Use of open flame or any burning/heating elements.

Other inappropriate behavior:

- Bringing animals other than service animals inside the Library building without prior permission of the Library staff.
- Consuming food in the Library, except at special meetings and events sanctioned by the Perth Amboy Public Library. Beverages are permissible provided they are in closed containers. Spill-proof containers are strongly encouraged. No food or beverages are allowed in the Local History department or near computer stations. Patrons are reminded to clean up after themselves and throw away all garbage in nearby trash receptacles.
- Violating the Library's Internet and Computer Use Policies.
- Sleeping on Perth Amboy Free Public Library premises, with the exception of young children under the supervision of a parent or caregiver.
- Use of any communication or entertainment devices at a volume that disturbs others, with or without headphones.
- Depositing bodily fluids on Library property, including collections, equipment, and furnishings.
- Unauthorized presence in staff-designated areas and/or entering or remaining inside library facilities before or after posted hours of operation.
- Using the restrooms for bathing, shaving, washing hair or clothing, personal grooming, changing clothes, washing clothes or utensils.
- Emitting strong, pervasive odors, including odors caused by perfume or cologne that unreasonably interfere with library user or staff comfort, safety, use, or peaceful enjoyment of the library.
- Entering or inhabiting the Library building with bare or stocking feet, or bare chest.
- Moving furniture without the express consent of the library staff or use of furniture in any manner that may damage the furniture, to include placing feet on the furniture.
- Using library materials, furniture, equipment or facilities in any manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof or the theft or intentional damaging of library materials, furniture, equipment or facilities.
- Bringing in more than 2 bags. No bag may be brought into the Library facilities that exceeds the following dimensions: 26"x14"x14".
- Blocking of aisles with personal items or leaving such items unattended on library premises at any time. Items may be removed from the library premises if they reasonably appear to be abandoned or have been left unattended for 30 minutes or more.
- Interfering with the safe and free passage of library staff or patrons on the premises, including but not limited to the placement of objects in hallways, aisles, flooring or elsewhere in a manner that impedes the free passage of such persons about the library.
- Unhygienic behavior such as spitting, clipping nails, or changing diapers in public areas

Individual acts of misconduct

Visitors misbehaving or engaging in inappropriate, wrongful and/or illegal behavior on library premises, including the building and grounds, are generally given two (2) warnings by library staff at which point, the person(s) are told to leave the library premises. If the person(s) refuse, the Perth Amboy Police Department is called for assistance to escort the person(s) from the premises. Persons removed from the library for disciplinary reasons are barred for the remainder of the day and/or evening. However, the library reserves the right to have anyone removed at any time without warning if the situation calls for such.

Two week suspension

Repeated incidents of disruptive behavior will result in a two (2) week suspension of library privileges. Repeated is defined as more than four (4) warnings in a thirty (30) calendar day period, or being told by library staff and/or the police to leave the library more than two (2) times in a thirty (30) calendar day period, or where the conduct is so heinous, it requires an immediate suspension of privileges.

Procedure for two-week suspension

The Library Director will provide the person with written notice of the suspension and containing the right to appeal the suspension at the time of the suspension, either in person and/or by mail (regular and certified, return receipt requested) A copy of this notice will be sent to the Library Board of Trustees, the City Business Administrator and the Chief of Police. Loan privileges will be suspended and any items on loan need to be returned to the book drop outside the library.

Procedure for two-week suspension of a minor

The Library Director or the person in charge will contact the parent or guardian of a minor who is about to have their library privileges suspended. A written notice will be mailed to the parent, both regular mail and certified mail, return receipt requested, containing the right to appeal the suspension at the time of the suspension. The Library Director will provide the minor with a copy of the notice. A copy of this notice will also be sent to the Library Board of Trustees, the City Business Administrator and the Chief of Police. Loan privileges will be suspended and any items on loan need to be returned to the book drops outside the library. If the minor will not give their own name and provide contact information for a parent, the Police will be called.

One month suspension

Any person who commits one of the following acts will be suspended for one (1) month:

- Disruptive behavior following readmission to the library after a two (2) week suspension
- Vandalism or theft of library property or personal property on library premises
- Any other sufficient cause which justifies such a suspension

Six month suspension

Any person who commits one of the following acts will be suspended for six (6) months:

- Fighting or assaulting another person
- Threats against library staff or another visitor
- Continuing disruptive behavior or other behavior contrary to the use of the Library following one (1) or more suspensions as set forth above
- Any other sufficient cause which justifies such a suspension

Procedure for Two Week Suspension of Library Privileges

The Library Director is authorized to remove any person from the library for disruptive behavior, and to suspend any person for a two (2) week period. The Library Director will provide the person with written notice containing the right to appeal the suspension at the time of the suspension. A copy of this notice will be sent to the Library Board of Trustees, City Business Administrator and the Chief of Police.

Procedure for One-month or Six-month suspension of Library Privileges

The Library Director will immediately issue a two (2) week suspension. The Library Director will then present a request to the Board for a suspension to be converted into one (1) month or six (6) months or an immediate suspension for one (1) or six (6) months. The Director will provide to the Board a record of specific conduct by that person that constitutes a violation of Library policy concerning access and use. With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Library Director will send a notice of suspension via certified mail, return receipt requested, and regular mail to the person's last known address, or in the case of a minor child, his/her parent or guardian. A copy of this correspondence will be sent to the City Business Administrator and the Chief of Police.