

Patron Conduct Policy

The Tenaflly Public Library (“Library”) Patron Conduct Policy has been established to promote a welcoming and safe atmosphere for all. The policy is intended to ensure every individual’s ability to make use of the Library and its associated resources to the fullest extent possible and to have reasonable access to Library facilities without interference. The policy cannot anticipate every possible event or situation; therefore, staff members are empowered to act and make decisions based on this policy.

The use of Library facilities and resources constitutes acceptance of this policy.

Library patrons shall be engaged solely in activities associated with the use of a community library while in the Library (e.g., reading, studying, accessing library materials or services, attending programs or events, etc.)

The Role of Library Staff

The Library staff has the right to a safe and respectful work environment. Patrons are expected to comply with requests from Library staff. Patrons that disregard staff requests, interfere with their performance of duties, or demonstrate hostile or aggressive behavior will be asked to leave the Library.

Library employees are pleased to help patrons use library resources, but library staff may not interpret, provide guidance, or complete documents for patrons. Patrons who need assistance completing a document due to uncertainty of the content are welcome to ask librarians for help locating instructions or contact information for assistance. Library employees are not permitted to provide legal or medical advice.

Library employees do not act *in loco parentis* (in place of parents) and do not provide supervision of children. The Library assumes no responsibility for unattended minors.

Children in the Library

Parents or guardians are responsible for the welfare and behavior of their children under the age of eighteen (18) while in the Library, regardless of whether or not they accompany those children. Minors aged eleven to seventeen (11 to 17) are permitted to use the Library unaccompanied by a parent or guardian; however, it is with the understanding that these minors are unsupervised. Library staff do not stand in place of a parent or guardian and are not charged with a parent’s or guardian’s rights, duties and responsibilities.

Children under the age of eleven (11) must have an adult caregiver in the library building at all times. Children under the age of eight (8) must be directly and actively supervised by an adult caregiver at all times. A library employee may not stand in for the aforementioned adult caregiver. Children under age eleven (11) in the Library without an adult will be requested to call

their parent or guardian to pick them up or chaperone them while in the Library. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the children will be walked to the police station.

Disruptive Conduct

Disruptive conduct, which includes any behavior that interferes with the normal functioning of the Library, is not tolerated. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Stealing, damaging, defacing, altering, misusing and/or unlawfully removing Library materials, equipment, installations and/or furnishings
- Possessing firearms and/or dangerous weapons of any type on Library property, with the exception of law enforcement officers authorized by law to do so
- Yelling or making any exceptionally loud noises that disturb others
- Running, pushing, shoving, and/or throwing any item
- Making derogatory comments or prominently displaying offensive content based on religion, race, gender and/or sexual orientation
- Using sports equipment, skateboards or any other skating devices in the Library
- Bringing bicycles, scooters or any other vehicles into the library
- Bringing in meals, messy food (anything that can drip grease, sauce, fillings, condiments, etc.), uncovered beverages, or having food delivered to the Library; only wrapped snacks and covered beverages are permitted
- Neglecting to dispose of trash and/or clean messes
- Gambling
- Trespassing in non-public areas of the Library
- Being in the Library without permission from an authorized Library employee before or after Library operating hours
- Recording Library patrons without their consent or recording staff-only areas of the Library
- Using or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs and/or any controlled or contraband substance

- Smoking, vaping and/or using any tobacco, tobacco products, marijuana, electronic cigarettes or electronic cigarette products in the Library
- Using restrooms for unconventional purposes, such as, but not limited to, meetings, loitering, bathing, shampooing, sleeping, doing laundry or changing clothes
- Entering the Library without shoes or without a shirt
- Bringing in garbage, empty bottles, articles with a foul odor, or articles which, alone or in their aggregate, impede and/or interfere with the use of the Library by others
- Neglecting to provide active supervision of children under the age of eight (8)
- Unreasonably interfering with Library staff or other patrons, including but not limited to blocking access to public and non-public areas and failing to comply with Library staff requests or instructions
- Engaging in lewd, obscene or salacious conduct or conduct of a purely prurient nature
- Engaging in any activity in violation of federal, state, local or other applicable law or Library policy

Enforcement of the Patron Conduct Policy

For the purposes of identification, Library staff may request that patrons provide proof of identity (e.g., driver's license, school ID, etc.) at any time.

The Library reserves the right to inspect all bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, etc.

Library staff have the authority to interpret and enforce the Patron Conduct Policy. Library staff will inform patrons if they are violating the Patron Conduct Policy and may warn them that continued violation will result in loss of privileges. Staff have the right to ask patrons to leave the Library if they are uncooperative, combative, hostile, or argumentative.

Repeated violations of this policy will result in expulsion for the day or longer depending on the nature of the violations. Continued violations will result in a six-month ban and may result in a permanent ban. The Library Director reserves the right to immediately eject and ban a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening.

The Library may pursue all available remedies under federal, state, or local law where applicable.

A banned patron has the right to appeal the decision by writing to the Library Board of Trustees.

Appeal Process

A patron who has been banned may choose to appeal the decision by writing to the Board of Trustees, c/o Tenafly Public Library, 100 Riveredge Road, Tenafly, NJ 07670. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final. The ban will continue during the appeal process.

Approved 06/2024