

STILLWATER COUNTY LIBRARY

POLICIES

1.0 RULES OF CONDUCT

To better serve all library customers, the Stillwater County Library Board of Trustees has established standards of acceptable behavior to ensure a positive, welcoming, clean and safe environment conducive to library use. Behavior becomes unacceptable when it impinges on the rights of others.

- Patrons shall be engaged in normal activities associated with the use of the public library while in the building.
- Patrons shall respect the right of other patrons and library employees and shall not annoy others through noisy or boisterous activities, by cell phone use, by monopolizing resources, or by other behavior which may reasonably result in the disturbance of other person in the library.
- Physical, verbal, and sexual harassment, i.e. exposure or offensive touching, are prohibited in the library. Any materials removed from the library must be checked out on a valid library card or through other standard library procedures such as interlibrary loan.
- Patrons are expected to be aware of and follow the rules set by the Internet Use and Circulation Policies.
- Patrons shall not deface or mar books, magazines, newspapers, recordings or other items of the library collection nor shall they deface, mar, or in any way destroy or damage library furnishings, walls, machines, or other library property.
- Patrons shall not be permitted to enter the building without a shirt or other covering on their upper bodies or without shoes or other footwear.
- Personal hygiene shall conform to the standard of the community for public places. Individuals with offensive body odor leading to complaints from other library users and/or staff will be asked to leave and to address the issue before returning.
- Smoking is not permitted in any area of any library facility, or in any area where secondary smoke will enter a library facility.
- The library staff reserves the right to limit or prohibit the consumption of food and beverages within any part of the library facility.
- Skateboarding, in-line skating, and biking are prohibited on the sidewalk in front of the library. Bicycles must be left outside the building. Skateboards and in-line skates must be carried when inside the building.
- Patrons must leave the library promptly upon closing.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on library property, except as part of a library sponsored program authorized by the Library Board.

1.1 LIBRARY BEHAVIOR

- The Stillwater County Library encourages people of all ages to visit the Library. Those using the Library and its resources have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate library services.
- People demonstrating disruptive behavior will be required to leave the Library after one warning from Library staff; children under eighteen will be asked to leave after two warnings from Library staff. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to: noisy, boisterous actions; inappropriate behavior including smoking, running or loud talking; misuse of Library property; uncooperative attitude; or actions that deliberately annoy others or prevent the legitimate use of the Library and its resources. Abusive language and behavior toward staff will not be tolerated.
- Personal appliances, such as computers, cassette players and calculators, may be used if the noise level is low and use does not interfere with others. Cell phone use is permitted yet respect for other people is expected.

1.2 UNATTENDED CHILDREN

The Stillwater County Library welcomes and encourages children to visit the Library, use library resources and services, and attend library programs. Staff members are available to help and support children; however, the Library is not able to provide short-or long-term child care, or be responsible for unattended children.

Unattended children are children of any age who are apparently unaccompanied by a parent, guardian, and/or responsible caregiver. Children who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves may not be left alone in the Library and must have adequate supervision while in the Library. The Library is not responsible if children leave Library property unattended.

Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior and supervision of children at all times in the Library and on library property. Children are expected to respect library property and adhere to the rules outline in the Rules of Conduct policy.

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian and/or caregiver in circumstances such as the following:

- An unattended child is engaging in behavior that is disruptive to other library users, staff, or the normal operations of library business.
- An unattended child is involved in a situation that is potentially harmful to the health or safety of the child and/or others.
- An unattended child is left alone at the Library at closing time.

Such situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If parents, guardians, and/or caregivers cannot be reached, or are unresponsive, the Library will work with other county agencies as needed.

1.3 HARASSMENT AND LEWD BEHAVIOR

Patrons and staff have the right to enjoy an environment free from harassment or lewd conduct. Anyone, including patrons, who harasses staff or another patron will be asked to leave the Library, and a report will be filed with the Director. Repeated acts of harassment or acts that may escalate into violent or illegal actions will be reported to police. Lewd acts or sexual misconduct are not appropriate in the Library. Those who commit minor acts, such as teenager who make out in the Library, will be given one warning and then asked to leave. Serious acts and acts involving minors will be reported to the police. All serious acts will be reported to the Director.

1.4 SOLICITATION POLICY

Solicitation of patrons and/or employees by non-employees, inside library facilities, is prohibited regardless of the nature or content of the solicitation, the method of style or presentation, and presence of financial remuneration.

Active solicitation within the library building and the areas of egress to the library and the library parking lot is not permitted unless it is a library function or an activity related to fund raising for the library and under the general supervision of the library staff. Active solicitation refers to any person-to-person communication for the purposes of (1) obtaining contributions and donations, (2) selling merchandise, coupons, or tickets, (3) collecting signatures, (4) distributing educational or promotional materials, (5) recruiting members or clients and (6) financial solicitations/transactions.

1.5 FORFEITURE OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES

Anyone violating the policies or procedure of the Library may, at the discretion of the Library Director, be asked to leave the premises or be denied borrowing privileges.

2.0 OBTAINING A LIBRARY CARD

Photo identification and verification of a current Montana address are required to obtain a library card. A library card will be issued when a valid Montana Driver's License or a Montana State ID card verifying current address is presented.

If a potential borrower is not in possession of the above, a current photo identification card (that includes name and photo) from a school, government agency, or employer AND address verification, that includes name and a Montana address, must be presented.

We offer family cards to save on per patron costs with the Montana Shared Catalog. Each member of the family can have their own card with the same account number on it.

2.1 Library Card Rules

- A cardholder agrees to return the borrowed materials on time and accept responsibility for lost or damaged items.
- The cardholder is responsible for the original price of the item plus any processing or recovery fees when items are lost or damaged beyond repair.
- A valid library card, or a current photo ID, must be presented to check out materials.
- Held materials may only be picked up with the library card under which the item is held.
- A library card remains valid as long as it is used at least once every two (2) years. If a card has not been used in two (2) years and is clear of charges, it will be purged from the database.
- It is the cardholder's responsibility to notify Library staff of any address or contact information changes.
- If a library card is lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to notify the library.
- Stillwater County Library materials may be returned to any Partner library regardless of checkout location.

2.2 CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY PATRON RECORDS

The Stillwater County Library supports every patron's right to have his or her library records remain confidential. Library records include patron registration data, circulation records, overdue and reserve records, participation in library sponsored programs, record of library visits, and or any data that contain information that links a specific patron to specific materials or services used. Each patron has individual control over his or her borrower's card and presentation of the card permits access to information about the borrower's current circulation record. Except during the actual period of transaction (circulation, maintenance of record on unpaid fines, reservation of materials), the Library will not maintain a record of transactions. When no longer needed for library administration purposes, records will be expunged. In compliance with Montana Code Annotated 22-1-1103, no information will be released to any person, agency, or organization, except to recover overdue materials through the release of information to parents, legal guardians, and the County Attorney's Office or in response to a valid court order or subpoena and properly presented to the Library Director, or if written permission to release and disclose library records is placed at the Circulation Desk.

2.3 FINE POLICY

When a patron has items that become overdue for more than ten (10) days, the patron will become blocked in the system. This means that they will not be able to renew items, or check anything additional out until all of the overdue items are returned. There will be no fine assessed when the items are returned and the patrons' privileges will be immediately reinstated. Once the items have been overdue for 45 days the user will receive a bill for the replacement value of the items. If the items are not returned and the bill is not paid within 10 days, the Library reserves the right to take legal action.

3.0 LIBRARY PROGRAMS

As part of its service responses as a center for Lifelong Learning Center and General Information, the Stillwater County Library offers programs for citizens of all ages. Programs may be developed and presented by Library staff or may be co-sponsored by the Library and other community organizations. Preschool story time programs will be presented by Library staff on a regular schedule throughout the year. Other programs for children and young adults will be planned, staff time and budget permitting, during school holidays and summer vacations. Programs for adults may be scheduled throughout the year as interest warrants. Speakers from community groups and businesses may be invited to present programs on topics of general interest or of a timely nature. Presenters may not directly solicit business before, during, or following a program, although cards and brochures may be left on the display table for attendees to pick up. No fees may be charged to attend any Library sponsored or co-sponsored program, however cost of supplies may be incurred. Library programs are generally open to anyone wishing to attend. Persons attending Library sponsored or co-sponsored programs are expected to adhere to the Library's policies on patron conduct.

4.0 DISTRIBUTION OF FREE MATERIALS

Display space is available to community organizations to disseminate information. Items that publicize community organizations and local events further the role of the Library as a source for non-profit, civic, cultural, educational, and recreational information.

Items for posting or distribution must be presented to Library staff for approval; items will be dated prior to being placed on the bulletin board or in the information rack. Items placed on the bulletin board may be displayed for a maximum of one month. Library staff will remove items that have expired or that have been posted for one month. Items removed will be discarded; Library staff cannot return posters and flyers that have been displayed. Distribution or posting of items by the Library does not indicate endorsement of the issues, events, or services promoted by those materials. Items left or posted without approval will be removed and discarded.

5.0 GIFT POLICY

The Library staff may accept gifts of books, periodicals, and other materials, with the understanding that they will be added to the Library collection when needed. The decision to include gift materials is based upon the following considerations:

1. Does the material meet the Library's standard of materials selection?
2. Is the physical condition of the material satisfactory?
3. Does the Library need the material or multiple copies in its collection?

Material not added to the collection may be placed in the annual book sale.

The Library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access to the materials. No estimate of value of donated material will be furnished. Materials received will become the property of the Stillwater County Library.

When gift materials are deemed no longer useful, the Library will dispose of them on the same basis it disposes of other materials.

6.0 GRIEVANCE POLICY

Patron complaints will be treated seriously, courteously, and with concern for the patrons' point of view. While each complaint is treated seriously, it remains an allegation until evidence is presented to support or reject the complaint. Grievances will remain confidential.

The following procedures should be followed in making a complaint against the Library, the staff, or another patron:

Step 1. Informal Resolution. Verbally inform a staff member or Director of your grievance.

Step 2. Written Grievance to Director. If a complaint cannot be resolved by the staff, a written complaint should be submitted to the Director. A complaint form is available upon request. A written response will be given in response to the complaint and if the Director's response is found unsatisfactory, the Director will then forward to complaint to the Board of Trustees. The Board's decision will be final.

7.0 INCLEMENT WEATHER

As part of our commitment in providing excellent customer service, the Library will attempt to operate on a normal schedule during times of inclement weather until the conditions are determined to be unsafe for the public and staff. The decision to delay opening, close early, or close all day is based on the ability to meet minimal staffing levels, road conditions, and the physical condition of the facility, including the sidewalks and parking lots.

All closures are approved by a majority of the Board of Trustees.

During periods of inclement weather, we will post notice on our front door as well as social media. Patrons can also call the Library to learn of any changes in hours before they attempt to visit.

By separate action, and reaffirmed herein, the Stillwater County Library has endorsed the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations*.

Adopted April 19, 2018

