

Saugus Public Library

Library User Behavior Policy

The Saugus Public Library encourages users of all ages to use its facilities and resources for research, reference, study, reading, recreation and browsing. Good public service requires that the library environment be open to all, but conducive to study, reading, and research. This necessitates the willingness of all library users to be considerate of the rights of others to work safely and undisturbed. To ensure that such an environment exists, the library has established guidelines for behavior within the library.

Dangerous, destructive or illegal conduct will not be tolerated. For behaviors which jeopardize the safety of staff or library users, or which break Massachusetts General Laws, the staff reserves the right to contact and involve the police.

The Library is a limited public forum, one designated for access to information and other resources. There is no Constitutional guarantee of the right to freedom from observation in such a public place. However, users have a right to be free from invasion of intellectual privacy and harassment by other users.

General:

- Users who trigger library theft detection systems may be asked to open any bags or pocketbooks for inspection; failure to do so may result in suspension of library privileges.
- Unattended items (such as bags, backpacks or laptops) may be regarded as suspicious and removed.
- The library does not accept responsibility for any lost or stolen items.
- All users are required to wear shoes and shirts.
- All users must leave promptly at closing time.

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- Unaccompanied adults – adults who are not accompanying a child – are not allowed in the Children’s Room or at Children’s programs unsupervised. Unaccompanied adults who require access to our Children’s collection must check in with a librarian who will assist them.

Food & Drink:

Users may consume individual, wrapped snack items or lidded/covered drinks in the Library (except when using electronic equipment such as, but not limited to, public computers, copying machines, or the microfilm reader/printer) provided they leave the area clean, dry and free of spill, stains, crumbs and trash. Consumption of meals, takeout food, outside food deliveries, overly-scented consumables or uncovered beverages is prohibited. The Library staff reserves the right to ask users who abuse this privilege to remove the consumable items from the Library. Users consuming beverages or food in the library may be financially responsible for any damage resulting from spills or stains. (see also Meeting Room Use Policy.)

Prohibitions: The following activities are not allowed in the library:

- Failing to promptly comply with staff directives (whether documented policy or not).
- Smoking (Mass. General Laws Ch. 270, Sec 22).
- Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, or engaging in other disruptive conduct (MGL, Ch. 272, Sec 41).
- Interfering with another user’s right to use the library or privacy while using the library.
- Interfering with the library staff’s ability to perform their duties.

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- Threatening behavior including, but not limited to: violence, threats of violence, and possession of weapons (MGL, CH. 272, Sec. 10).
- Bringing animals into the library except those needed to assist users with disabilities (MGL, CH. 272, Sec. 98A).
- Video recording, photographing, recording other users' digital device screens, work, or materials in their use in such a way as to violate their privacy. Such conduct involuntarily discloses their intellectual activity, which can have a suppressive effect on their First Amendment Rights.
- Using audio equipment so that others may hear it.
- Possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Entering offices, areas, and spaces designated as "Staff Only."
- Putting feet on furniture or laying down on furniture/the floor.
- Excessive public displays of affection (i.e. prolonged/frequent kissing, lap-sitting, clinging, etc.)
- Misusing the restrooms
- Soliciting or canvassing of any kind.
- Leaving a child under the age of 8 unattended (without the care of someone 12 yrs. or older) in the library. Parents are ultimately responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children. (see also Unattended Minors Policy.)
- Running.
- Sleeping.
- Using or storing wheeled devices in the library (or on library property except in designated areas) including bicycles, self-propelled tricycles or scooters, skateboards, roller skates, rollerblades and four wheeled shopping carts. All of these devices must be left outside of the building. (Wheeled luggage that would fit airline guidelines for overhead storage, collapsible wheeled carts used for shopping, wheelchairs, walkers and strollers are allowed).

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- Those who damage or deface library materials or property will be prosecuted (MGL,CH. 266, Sec. 100). Parents can be held liable for damage done by a child under 18 (MGL,CH.231, Sec. 85G).
- Theft of library materials, use of false identification to obtain a library card, or use of another user's library card without permission is against state law. (MGL CH. 266, Sec. 99).

Library management will enforce these rules with the aim of bringing the user into compliance with the code of conduct, and to exhibit consideration for the rights of fellow users, without undue escalation of disciplinary action. Any Users, whether adults or minors, displaying these behaviors will most often be handled in the following manner:

FIRST VIOLATION: Initial warning, given copy of Library User Behavior Policy.

SECOND VIOLATION: Library privileges suspended for one week.

THIRD VIOLATION: Library privileges suspended for one month.

SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS: Will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For minors, this will entail contacting and involving their parents or guardians.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ONE OR MORE OF THE LIBRARY'S ESTABLISHED POLICIES MAY RESULT IN SUSPENSION OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES.

Ignoring staff directives to cease and desist in behaviors which violate the rights of others to use Library services in peace and privacy may warrant a call for police attention.

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Approved

Board of Library Trustees

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