

Jay County Public Library

Public Behavior Policy

Reviewed October 20, 2023

Adopted November 13, 2023

General Statements

The library board, and by extension the library staff, is responsible for maintaining the library property to facilitate its intended use by both the public and employees. The fact the facility is publicly owned does not license inappropriate behavior by a member of the public.

Types of Public Behavior, Activities and Items Not Permitted in or on Library Premises

1. Unattended children age 7 or younger. "Unattended" is defined as out of reach of the responsible party.
2. Loitering, sleeping, exhibitionism, gambling, voyeurism, harassment, or public intoxication
3. Eating or drinking unlidded drinks in the public areas, except in the Community Room
4. Alcoholic beverages, illegal controlled substances or illegally possessed controlled substances
5. Possession of weapons or firearms not permitted by Indiana Code.
6. Use of tobacco products in the building or within 8 feet of the public entrance
7. Running, throwing, or fighting
8. Loud, obscene, or abusive language and behavior
9. Hygiene that is considered a health hazard or receives complaints from others
10. Bicycles, rollerblades, scooters, or skates in the building
11. Soliciting and canvassing in the library or within 25 feet of the entrance to the building, except in support of the library or the Friends group as approved by the director. Soliciting is defined as the sale or distribution of informational materials, merchandise, tickets, political campaign material, or anything not connected with the work of the library. Canvassing is defined as petitioning or distributing written materials or soliciting for political, charitable, religious or political purposes.
12. Animals, except service and support animals assisting patrons with disabilities.
13. Insufficient clothing. Pants, shirts, and shoes must be worn.
14. Theft of library property, including removal of books or other materials which have not been checked out
15. Vandalism to or misuse of library property, and other property not the vandal's. No feet on furniture, no tipping back of chairs, climbing on furniture, etc.
16. Other activities which interfere with the rights people would reasonably expect in a library.

17. Entering areas designated for staff.

Firearms

All individuals possessing firearms on library premises must comply with state and federal law and must comply with the following provisions:

1. No person may possess a handgun on library property unless they hold a valid permit to carry a handgun in the State of Indiana, or are not otherwise prohibited from carrying or possessing a handgun under state or federal law (Indiana Code 35-47-2-1)
2. All firearms carried on library property must be secured in a manner which prevents potential injury or serious bodily harm to any other person or property. (IC 35-42-2-2)
3. No person may point, brandish or display a firearm in a manner that is intended to threaten or intimidate any library patron or library staff member. (IC 35-42-2-2 and IC 35-47-4-3)
4. A person may not intentionally display a firearm at a public meeting. (Indiana Code 35-47-11.1-4)

Children

1. Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior while they are in the library.
2. If the parent/guardian/caregiver fails or refuses to control the child, he/she and the child or children will be required to leave the library.
3. Because the library is a large, well-trafficked public area that can be a frightening and dangerous place for an unattended child, children age 7 or younger must be accompanied by a responsible parent, guardian or caregiver at least 13 years of age while in the library. "Accompanied by" is defined as within reach.
4. Parents/guardians/caregivers attending meetings in the library may not leave young children unattended in other parts of the library. The library staff is:
 - a. authorized to advise the caregiver who is in the building to resume control of the child.
 - b. authorized to contact an appropriate caregiver, if none is in the building, by phone to immediately pick up the child.
 - c. authorized to contact the police if a caregiver cannot be located in a reasonable length of time.
 - d. not authorized to take the child from the building, including transporting the child to another location.

5. When children age 12 or younger remain at the library at closing time, two library staff members will remain with the child for 15 minutes. If a responsible adult cannot be located to pick up the child in that time, the police shall be notified.

Library's Response to Unacceptable Behavior

In order to maintain safety and reasonable behavior within the building or on its grounds, the library staff is authorized to:

1. ask a person who is endangering himself or others, disrupting the function of the facility, or engaging in behaviors listed above, to leave the building. Giving a warning before the request and the length of the ejection depend on the offense. The minimal length of the ejection is for the balance of the day.
2. notify the parent/guardian in writing of the ejection, in the case of a minor.
3. call the police if the person becomes confrontational, refuses to leave, or leaves and returns without good cause. Violators who are asked to leave the premises and refuse to do so may be subject to prosecution for Criminal Trespass.