

Patron Behavior

Patrick Heath Public Library resources, facilities and services are available to persons of all ages. While everyone has an equal right to access library resources, services and facilities, no person has the right to interfere with the ability of others to use and enjoy the library. The Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board (PHPLAB) has adopted the following Disruptive Behavior Policy to reinforce the belief that library users and staff have a right to assume that visits to the library will be free from harassment, physical discomfort, danger, and/or psychological stress.

Unacceptable Patron Behavior

The policy of the Patrick Heath Public Library is to maintain the library as a pleasant environment that is conducive to serious study as well as casual use. The Library Director and staff are responsible for monitoring patron conduct on Library Premises (interior space and surrounding facilities and grounds). Anyone interfering with another's use and enjoyment of the library will be asked to stop that behavior or activity. Warnings for children will be directed to the responsible person (parent, guardian or caregiver who is at least 16 years of age), if they can be located. If after one verbal warning no improvement is made, the staff member will ask the individual to leave the Library Premises. If the individual refuses to leave, the Boerne Police Department will be called for assistance.

The library considers the following acts to be examples of "Unacceptable Patron Behavior:"

- Exhibiting disruptive, uncontrolled behavior or exceeding acceptable noise levels;
- Loitering, unaccompanied by a child or teen, in areas designated for children, teens and families;
- Loitering on Library Premises without a specific library purpose (library purpose includes reading, studying, computer use, program attendance and quiet socialization and discussions);
- Camping
- Harassing patrons or staff, or attempting to engage patrons or staff in unwanted discussion;
- Bringing animals into the library (except for service animals, animals that are in training for this purpose, or animals involved in special programs);
- Running in the library;
- Entering the library without shoes or shirt;
- Using a skateboard, scooter, or skates on Library Premises (with the exception of scheduled library programs);
- Having personal hygiene that distracts patrons or staff to the point that it interferes with patrons' use of library resources or with staff work;
- Making unauthorized or inappropriate use of library equipment, e.g. elevators, computers, fire alarms, emergency exit doors, etc.;
- Entering without permission any area of the library closed to the public;
- Littering;
- Placing briefcases, backpacks, book bags, or any other possessions where they block aisles or disrupt patrons or staff;

- Leaving possessions, including briefcases, backpacks, or book bags, unattended in any space;
- Soliciting, petitioning, or panhandling on Library Premises;
- Smoking on Library Premises except in designated area;
- Leaving children aged ten years old, or younger, unattended; and/or
- Drinking or eating other than in designated spaces.
- Any behavior in conflict with policy enacted due to emergency declaration or status.

This list of Unacceptable Patron Behavior is not exhaustive and may be amended from time to time as the PHPLAB sees fit.

Zero-Tolerance Patron Behavior

A zero-tolerance policy will be enforced on Library Premises for behavior that is deemed to be threatening, illegal, dangerous, and/or harmful to patrons or staff. Anyone exhibiting any of the Zero-Tolerance Behaviors listed below will be asked to immediately leave the Library Premises. The Boerne Police Department will be contacted immediately and without warning and the offender could be subject to arrest and/or be issued a criminal trespass warning. Consequences of Zero-Tolerance Behavior may result in permanent expulsion from the library after which the offender may be reinstated only after a successful appeal. Please see the *Permanent Revocation of Library Privileges Appeals Process* below.

- Stealing, destroying, or defacing any library property including, but not limited to, library materials, equipment, and furniture;
- Carrying or brandishing illegal weapons;,¹
- Carrying a handgun (person must be authorized to carry a handgun, and the handgun must be carried in a holster);
- Exhibiting inappropriate or indecent behavior, or using profane language, particularly in the presence of minors;
- Exhibiting any behavior that threatens the physical safety of other patrons and staff or creates a threatening and intimidating environment. (e.g., cursing at patrons or staff; approaching patrons or staff and engaging in unwanted or inappropriate interaction; threats to personal safety of patrons or staff; the transmission of threatening, harassing, malicious, or abusive language and/or images, etc.);

¹ An illegal weapon under the Texas Penal Code includes:

- (1) an explosive weapon (any explosive or incendiary bomb, grenade, rocket, or mine, that is designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury, death, or substantial property damage, or for the principal purpose of causing such a loud report as to cause undue public alarm or terror, and includes a device designed, made, or adapted for delivery or shooting an explosive weapon.;
- (2) a machine gun;
- (3) a short-barrel firearm;
- (4) a firearm silencer;
- (5) armor-piercing ammunition;
- (6) a chemical dispensing device;
- (7) a zip gun;
- (8) a tire deflation device;
- (9) an improvised explosive device

- Publicly displaying obscene materials, especially in the presence of minors. (e.g., displaying sexually explicit sites from the Internet, etc.); and/or
- Possessing alcohol or any illegal drugs and/or narcotics or being intoxicated to the point of impairment of mental or physical abilities.
- Providing false information to library staff.

This list of Zero-Tolerance Behaviors is not exhaustive and may be amended from time to time as the PHPLAB sees fit.

Revocation of Library Privileges Appeals Process

When a library patron (or responsible person in the case of a child) wishes to dispute permanent revocation of library privileges, he or she has sixty (60) days, from the date of revocation, to complete and return to the Library Director the “Request for Appeal of Permanent Revocation of Library Privileges” form. This form is available at any of the service desks in the library. The library patron (or a responsible person in the case of a child) should provide as much written information on the nature of and justification for the reversal of the revocation.

Attachments to Policy:

- a. Request for Appeal of Permanent Revocation of Library Privileges” form

Last review or revision: June 9, 2022

Initially adopted: September 8, 2003 (as Unattended Children and Disruptive Behavior) and February 8, 2001 (as Customer Conduct)

Request for Appeal of Permanent Revocation of Library Privileges

Name: _____

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian (if person appealing the decision is a minor): _____

Address: _____

Phone numbers: _____

1. Explain why you object to the revocation of Library privileges. What do you feel might be the result if Library privileges are re-instituted?
2. Do you understand the reasoning behind the revocation? If so, please explain why your privileges were revoked.
3. Please provide any information to the Library Advisory Board that may assist them with reviewing your request for re-instatement of Library privileges. Such information may include letters of reference, proof of work in and around the community, and/or any other character information.

Entire form must be completed to be considered.

Signature: _____

Date: _____