

Franklin County Library System Patron Code of Conduct Policy

It is the mission of Franklin County Library System to create a safe and welcoming library setting that creates learning opportunities that lead to personal discovery, growth and enjoyment. In addition, Franklin County Library System upholds the principles of intellectual freedom and inquiry as set forth in the American Library Association document known as the Library Bill of Rights (adopted June 18, 1948 and reaffirmed January 23, 1996).

As the library system is in existence to serve the public, the patrons have a responsibility to behave in a manner that does not violate the rights of others, their use of the library, or interfere with library services and operations. In the case that a patron is disruptive, the library is committed to protect the safety of the patrons and staff who use the library. For that reason, “disruptive acts” by patrons will not be tolerated.

Disruptive acts are those which create inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm on the part of other customers or staff members. The rules below are for all ages using the library and the staff is to enforce them as far as practical.

1. Excessive loitering or sleeping on library property is not allowed. Absolutely no loitering is allowed in the bathrooms or stairways.
2. Soliciting, campaigning and gambling are not permitted on library property with the exception of fundraising activities for the library or with permission from the Executive Director.
3. Fighting, running, jumping, climbing, or anything that presents a safety hazard is not allowed.
4. Loud, obscene, or abusive language to either library staff or other customers is prohibited. Persons exhibiting such behavior will be asked to leave. Police will be called if necessary.
5. Using audio equipment (radios, CD players, MP3 players, cell phones, etc.) at a level that disturbs others is not allowed. Headphones should be used with audio equipment.
6. Roller blades, scooters, skateboards, bicycles and other outdoor recreational devices are not allowed in the library. They should not block sidewalks or entrances. Bicycles are permitted only on the sidewalk up to the bike rack, if available. Customers are responsible for the security of their bike(s). Bikes are not permitted to be locked at the rack when the library is closed.
7. Any purposeful damage done to library materials, equipment, furniture and facilities, including theft is against the law and will be reported to the police.
8. The acceptable use policy for Internet access is to be respected while using library computers. Use of library computers to harass or bully will not be tolerated and is grounds for loss of computer privileges. You may request a copy of our computer and internet policy from a staff member or find it on our website at fclspa.org/computer-internet-use-policy/.

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9. Appropriate attire, including shirts and shoes, is required at all times.
10. No smoking, vaping or use of any e-cigarette or tobacco products is allowed in the building and within 15 feet of the building.
11. Animals are not allowed in the library unless they are service animals. Exceptions may be granted for programming purposes.
12. Weapons are prohibited from library premises to the fullest extent permitted by law. A weapon is any item being used in a threatening manner with the intent to cause bodily harm.
13. Public drunkenness/belligerence, use of alcohol/illegal drugs, or use of any chemical substance with the intent of intoxication will not be tolerated in the building or anywhere on library property.
14. Absolutely no sexual acts or sexually harassing conduct is allowed on library property.
15. Library staff is not responsible for patrons' personal belongings. Do not leave personal items unattended. The library reserves the right to inspect all bags, purses, briefcases, backpacks, etc.
16. Snacks and covered beverages are permitted in most library areas. No open food or drink containers are allowed near library technology. Properly dispose of all food, trash and recycling.

Anyone violating these rules and regulations may be asked to leave the library by a staff member. Access to library facilities may be limited for a period of time if rules of conduct are disregarded. If the individual is a minor, he/she will be given an opportunity to call his/her parent or guardian to inform them of the circumstance. Library staff may ask for assistance from the police if necessary. Repeat offenders may get banned.

Children in the Library

Parents, guardians or adult caregivers are legally responsible for the behavior and welfare of their children. The Library is not responsible for children who are unattended or demonstrating inappropriate behavior. FCLS defines an unattended minor as any young person under the age of eighteen who is unaccompanied by a responsible adult age eighteen or older. The following guidelines exist out of concern for the care and safety of young library users. Staff members will use their judgment and discretion in determining whether or not an unattended minor needs a parent or caregiver to provide supervision.

Children under the age of 8 must have a parent or caregiver in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. The assigned caregiver must be a responsible person and must carry emergency contact information. An exception would be children attending a library program without a parent or

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caregiver in the room. However, the parent or caregiver is expected to remain in the library building and immediately join the child at the end of the program.

If a child in this age group is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver in the library to attend to the child. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, or if the child is found unattended again, the police will be called for assistance.

Children age 8 through 11 require adult supervision to ensure their safety and to maintain appropriate behavior and responsible library use. Although they may be by themselves in the library, a parent or caregiver must be on the premises at all times.

FCLS recognizes that many **young adults ages 12 to 17** are responsible enough to be in the library without adult supervision. However, if library staff identifies behavioral issues or recognizes that a young adult cannot use the library responsibly on their own, staff may ask young adults to leave the premises. Parental/guardian contact information must be provided when a library card is obtained in a case a call is required. It is highly encouraged that every youth over 11 get a library card if spending time in the library without adult supervision. If continuous behavioral issues occur, a young adult may be required to have a parent or caregiver present while using the library or, in some cases, have library privileges suspended or not be allowed to return to the library.

If a child remains at the library after closing and the staff is unable to locate a parent or guardian, the police may be called for assistance at the discretion of the library staff.

In order to use the public library alone during school hours, those who are ages 12 to 17 and are home schooled will be required to have a letter with them from the parent/guardian stating the child is home schooled. The letter must include emergency contact information. The parent/guardian will be called by staff to confirm the home school status. The school district may also be contacted.

The library will do its best to uphold PA State laws on truancy.

The Franklin County Library System strictly enforces the Library Theft Act of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

To request an exception or modification of this policy, please contact the executive director of Franklin County Library System. The System is defined, for the purposes of this policy, as Franklin County Library System Headquarters, Coyle Free Library, Grove Family Library, Lilian Besore Memorial Library, St. Thomas Library, Fort Loudon Community Library, Blue Ridge Summit Free Library and Franklin County Bookmobile.