

CHESTER COUNTY LIBRARY LIBRARY BEHAVIOR POLICY

Policy Statement

The Chester County Library and Henrietta Hankin Branch welcome and encourage the use of its facilities and resources by the public. Library users are expected to abide by our Library Behavior Policy to maintain a safe environment with equal access for all.

Major Violations

The following activities and behaviors are considered major violations of the Library Behavior Policy, seriously interfere with the provision of Library service, are prohibited in or on Library property, and are grounds for immediate expulsion from the Library.

Staff is instructed to call 9-9-1-1 immediately in response to any of the following behaviors, and will document the event in an Incident Report. These violations will result in extended expulsions, up to permanent expulsion from the Library, following the guidelines for suspension of library privileges outlined below.

- Engaging in any activity which violates Federal, State, local or other applicable law.
- Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, volunteers, or staff, including, but not limited to bullying, fighting, stalking, staring, lurking, offensive touching, or physical abuse, and obscene acts such as sex acts and indecent exposure.
- Being in possession of, distributing, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing any property belonging to the Library, a user, or employee.

Suspension of Library Privileges/Expulsion (Major)

One Month (30 Day) Suspension/Expulsion

- Patron has committed a major violation. An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response.

Three Month (90 Days) Suspension/Expulsion

- Patron has committed a second major violation.
- An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response resulting in 2 incident reports on file documenting the patron's continued violation of the Library's Policy.

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Permanent Expulsion

- Patron has committed a third major violation.
- An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response resulting in 3 incident reports on file documenting the patron's continued violation of the Library's Policy.

Minor Violations

The following activities are considered minor violations of the Library Behavior Policy, are disruptive to staff, volunteers and other users, and Library users engaged in these activities will be given one warning to stop the behavior by the Person in Charge.

Continued violations will result in the user being asked to leave the Library for the day, and will be documented by the Person in Charge in an Incident Report. Staff will call the police if a person or group of persons is asked to leave the Library and refuses to leave and/or becomes difficult with the staff member.

Repeat violations will result in longer expulsions, up to permanent expulsion from the Library, following the guidelines for suspension of library privileges outlined below.

- Noisy, rowdy, boisterous, aggressive, or other disruptive behavior that interferes with the use of the Library by other users, or interferes with Library employees' performance of their duties.
- Violation of the Library's Unattended Children Policy: Unaccompanied children under the age of eleven (11) who are not accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver (at least 14 years of age) at all times. *(Please refer to the Unattended Children Policy for further guidelines.)*
- Removing Library materials from the premises without authorization through established lending procedures. This does not pertain to free handouts. *(Please refer to the PA Library Theft Act for further guidelines.)*
- Trespassing in nonpublic areas, or being in the Library without permission of an authorized Library employee before or after Library operating hours.
- Violation of the CCLS Internet Acceptable Use Policy. A user accepts these rules before accessing the Internet through a Library computer or wireless.
- Using communication devices in a manner that interferes with the use of the Library by others. Audible ringers must be on vibrate. Audible cell phone use is not permitted in quiet areas.

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- Using audible devices without headphones or with headphones set at a volume that interferes with the use of the Library by others.
- Using restrooms for bathing, shampooing, or doing laundry.
- Littering or spitting.
- Smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products, as well as the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping.
- Being barefooted, without a shirt, or possessing a strong odor or scent that interferes with the use of the Library by others.
- Sleeping in the Library if the sleeping individual is snoring, reclining, or using seating intended for more than one person.
- Taking Library materials into the Library restrooms.
- Eating food which causes a mess or odor and interferes with the use of furniture by other patrons is prohibited. Covered beverages and snack foods are permitted if handled neatly. No food or drink is allowed in the public computer areas.
- Bringing animals, other than service animals, into the library.
- Using electronic devices that are disruptive to others, or that have electrical cords which create obstacles or pose tripping hazards.
- Blocking of aisles with personal items.
- Luggage, carry-on bags, oversize backpacks or bags, or shopping carts are not allowed in the Library. The Library reserves the sole discretion to decide what constitutes an oversized backpack or bag relevant to its function (medical device, diaper bag, or returning large numbers of books, etc.).

Suspension of Library Privileges/Expulsion (Minor)

One Day Suspension/Expulsion

- Minor violation of the Library's Behavior Policy. Patron has not complied to library staff's directions after being asked to stop the behavior once. An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response.

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One Month (30 Days) Suspension/Expulsion

- Minor violation of the Library's Behavior Policy. Patron has not complied to library staff's directions after being asked to stop the behavior, and has received a previous one-day expulsion for a minor violation.
- An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response resulting in 2 incident reports on file documenting the patron's continued violation of the Library's Policy.

Three Month (90 Days) Suspension

- Minor violation of the Library's Behavior Policy. Patron has not complied to library staff's directions after being asked to stop the behavior, and has received two previous one-day expulsions for minor violations.
- An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response resulting in 3 incident reports on file documenting the patron's continued violation of the Library's Policy.

Permanent Expulsion

- Minor violation of the Library's Behavior Policy. Patron has not complied to library staff's directions after being asked to stop the behavior, and has received three previous one-day expulsions for minor violations.
- An Incident Report will be created documenting patron's behavior and library's response resulting in 4 incident reports on file documenting the patron's continued violation of the Library's Policy.

Unattended Belongings

Personal belongings must not be left unattended. The Chester County and Henrietta Hankin Branch Libraries assume no responsibility for the personal belongings of users while using the Library. Packages, backpacks, laptops, or any other personal items left unattended or otherwise unclaimed after a period of twenty four hours may be discarded at the sole discretion of Library staff.

EXPULSION

Notice of expulsion in excess of one day will be given in writing and delivered either in person or by certified mail. In the case of a minor child, a copy of such notice shall be delivered, either in person or by certified mail, to the child's parent or guardian. If the expulsion includes the suspension of Library Privileges it will be so noted on the written notice.

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Such notice shall inform the person of the specific conduct or activity which is the basis for the expulsion, the date of its occurrence and the right of the individual to appeal the sanction.

Any person who enters the Library or grounds, after receiving notice of an expulsion prohibiting such entry shall be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespass.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Any individual who is expelled may request to have the decision reviewed by the Board of Trustees of the Chester County Library. The request must be made in writing and submitted to the Library Director and the President of the Board of Trustees. Requests must be received 10 days prior to the Chester County Library Board meeting or they may be deferred to the next regularly scheduled meeting. No further appeals shall be considered.

*Adopted July, 1996
Revised and updated February 17, 2004
Revision adopted May 20, 2008
Revised and updated September 20, 2011
Revision adopted June 18, 2013
Revision adopted December 16, 2014
Revision adopted April 21, 2015
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