

Code of Conduct Policy

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- I. Introduction
- II. Charge of the Library Staff
- III. Code of Conduct Guidelines for Library Patrons
- IV. Guidelines for Handling Code of Conduct Violations
- V. Theft of Library Materials

I. Introduction

- A. Under the provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, specifically section 43.52 (1), the Mount Horeb Public Library Board of Trustees may enact regulations that serve to ensure the safety of all Library staff and patrons, protect the usefulness of the materials collection, and maintain order in the Library.
- B. The Board of Trustees and Library staff are committed to providing an atmosphere where people of all ages may read, browse, do research, study, or participate in leisure activities such as book discussion groups, playing computer or board games, and engaging in other Library sponsored activities. This policy does not prohibit quiet conversation between patrons and/or staff members or conversations required to carry on Library programs or business. It is designed to preserve a reasonably quiet and safe atmosphere where Library patrons may use Library services and materials with limited disturbance.
- C. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, any activity that disturbs others, interferes with Library operations, or damages the building or its furnishings.
- D. This policy has been established for all patrons. If a patron is not responsive to the needs of other Library users or disregards the policies protecting patrons, staff, or Library property, the patron will be asked to leave the Library.
- E. For the purposes of this policy:

Ban means that the individual “banned” may not enter the Mount Horeb Public Library while the “ban” is in effect, except for the sole purpose of voting if the library is the banned party’s polling place. If the banned individual enters the Mount Horeb Public Library, staff will be advised to call the police and the individual may be arrested for trespassing.

Suspension means that an individual may lose privileges to some or all aspects of Library service (Internet, checkout of materials, etc.) for a certain period of time.

II. Charge of the Library Staff

The staff is obligated to enforce the Code of Conduct guidelines. In the event of a violation of the code of conduct, the patron will be asked to discontinue any violations or leave the Library for the rest of the day. This decision is left to the discretion of the Library Director and their designee.

III. Code of Conduct Guidelines for Library Patrons

To guarantee full access to Library services, Library patrons will be responsible for following the guidelines below: The behavior rules listed in this document shall apply to all patrons on Library property as well as attending outreach events provided by the Library.

- A. Behavior that is disruptive to Library patrons or staff will not be permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive noise, harassment, drunkenness, running, or horseplay.
- B. Patrons may not engage in disruptive conversations or use personal electronic equipment at a volume that is disturbing to other library users.
- C. Patrons may not engage in any sexual contact, language, activities or conduct.
- D. The Mount Horeb Public Library prohibits, on Library premises, all firearms, explosives, and any item deemed a dangerous weapon in Wisconsin Statute sec 939.22(10).
- E. Be considerate of other Library patrons and Library staff:
 - Keep noise to a minimum.
 - Patrons shall not utter profane, obscene, or offensive language
 - Patrons are not welcome behind service counters, in staff work areas, or the staff break-room unless authorized and supervised by the Library staff.
- F. Smoking and/or the use of e-cigarettes are prohibited in the Library and within 20 feet of the building. (The foyer is considered the inside of the building.)
- G. Food may be eaten in the library as long as it is kept away from library materials and equipment.
- H. Patrons may bring a beverage into the Library in a securely covered beverage container; however, they may not take any beverages near the computers.
- I. For your health and safety patrons are expected to be fully clothed, including footwear.
- J. The perception of scents and fragrances is very subjective. Library staff members are not responsible for monitoring scents and fragrances, particularly with the public.
- K. Service animals are welcome; however, all other pets are prohibited from the Library unless part of a Library sponsored program. Emotional support or companion animals are not allowed inside the library.
- L. Unattended pets on library property is strictly prohibited. This includes and is not limited to:
 - a. Pets left in vehicles;
 - b. Pets tied to the building, flag pole, benches, or any piece of library property;
 - c. Any pet left alone for any reason on library property;When staff become aware of unattended pets, the patron will be asked to return and remain with their pet while on library property (e.g. use the library drive up window). Any violation of this policy may result in a permanent ban issued by the Library Director.
- M. Patrons may not take photographs or videos of Library users without their permission.
- N. Hiding, theft of, or mutilating, defacing, underlining, highlighting, removing pages or portions, or otherwise damaging Library materials is prohibited.
- O. Vandalizing or defacing the Library building, furniture, or equipment is prohibited.
- P. Bikes are not allowed anywhere in the building.

- Q. Patrons are responsible for their personal items while in the Library. The Library is not responsible for lost/stolen items.
- R. Sleeping in the Library for an extended period of time (more than 15 minutes) is not encouraged. Patrons sleeping in the Library may be awakened by Library staff if there is concern for the patron's health or well-being, or if the patron's sleep is disturbing others.
- S. Only persons on Library business will be allowed to solicit for the sale of goods and services in the Library. Salespersons may meet with authorized Library personnel only. Exceptions may be made for Library sponsored activities and organizations affiliated with the Library.
- T. Surveying of groups or individuals may only be done in conjunction with output measures or other similar surveys designed to quantify Library use or satisfaction with Library services.
- U. Respect the guidelines for computer usage. Please refer to our [Computer, Electronic Device, and Internet Use Policy](#) for more information.
- V. Parents (guardians or designated caregivers) should remain within sight and sound of children ages 7 and under. For more information, please review the Library's [Children in the Library Policy](#) for more information.

IV. Guidelines for Handling Code of Conduct Violations

- A. In the event of a violation of the Code of Conduct, the patron will be asked to discontinue any violations or leave the Library for the rest of the day. This decision is left to the discretion of Library Director and his/her designees.
- B. Patrons whose behavior is illegal face immediate removal from the Library. Library staff will use their discretion in dealing with the patron, which includes the possibility of notifying the Mount Horeb Police.
- C. In the event of continued violations of the Code of Conduct, the offending patron will be banned from the Library for up to 3 months or more.
 - Bans will be determined by the Library Director.
 - In severe cases, the Library Director may issue a permanent ban of a patron.
- D. **In the event that a patron is banned for up to three months or more**, the patron shall be advised in writing of the ban and the reason(s) for such action. The offending person shall also be informed that the ban may be appealed at the next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.
- E. **In the event that a patron is permanently banned**, the patron shall be advised in writing of the ban and the reason(s) for such action. The offending person shall also be informed that after 1 year, the patron may petition and appeal to the Library Board to reinstate their privileges.
- F. If a banned patron enters the Mount Horeb Public Library before the return date listed in the letter, staff will be advised to call the police and the individual may be arrested for trespassing.
- G. The Library Director or member of the Leadership Team, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, may suspend the Library privileges of any individual who willfully violates Library regulations when the severity or continued reoccurrence warrants such action. [Wisconsin State Statutes 43.52 (2).] The Library Director or member of the Leadership Team will inform the Library Board of any such action taken.
- H. Parents, legal guardian, or caregivers of children under the age of 18 will receive a letter notifying them of
the conduct violation and length of suspension of service or removal from the Library property if suspension of Library service exceeds 24 hours.



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I. A brief written report of any incident involving theft, vandalism, illegal activity, or major disruptive behavior will be filed with the Director as soon as possible after its occurrence.

V. Theft of Library Materials

A. According to section 943.61 (3) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, the concealment of Library material beyond the circulation desk is evidence of intent to deprive the Library of possession of the material. (Materials may not be taken into the foyer unless they are checked out.) The discovery of Library material which has not been checked out in accordance with established Library procedures and which is concealed upon the person or among the belongings of the person or concealed by a person upon the person or belongings of another is theft.

B. According to section 943.61 (4) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, an employee of the Library who has probable cause for believing that a person has committed a theft in his or her presence may detain the person in a reasonable manner for a reasonable length of time in order to turn the person over to the police, or to the person's parent or guardian in the case of a minor.

C. The detained person shall be promptly informed of the purpose for the detention, but shall not be interrogated or searched against his or her will before the arrival of the police, who may conduct a lawful interrogation of the accused person.