



Freehold
Public
Library

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Freehold, New Jersey 07728-2202

Library Code of Conduct

The Trustees of Freehold Public Library have adopted this Library Code of Conduct to facilitate a comfortable and safe environment for all library users. This policy is intended to clarify for library staff, library users and the community-at-large the expectations of behavior while using library resources, being present in the library, and while on library grounds/premises.

Unacceptable behavior may be summarized as *any actions in the library or on library premises that: interfere with the use and quiet enjoyment of the library by others; demonstrate an immediate risk of harm to oneself or others; inhibit the work of library staff; may be reasonably construed by staff or other people as harassment or unwanted personal attention; or create an elevated risk of damage or injury to library personnel, visitors, facilities, resources or other property.*

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Any activity that constitutes a violation of federal, state or local criminal statutes or ordinances.
- Damaging, defacing, or theft through deliberate action or negligence of any library facility, property, material item or intellectual property asset.
- Vandalizing or applying graffiti to library property.
- Possessing, distributing or use of alcohol/alcoholic beverages.
- Possessing, distributing or use of controlled substances as articulated in New Jersey statutes.
- Using tobacco or marijuana products, e-cigarette/vape devices or similar products anywhere on library property.
- Sexual or intimate conduct inappropriate for a public setting serving families and children.
- Use of profanity; abusive, aggressive, overtly racist, xenophobic, sexist, or threatening language, messaging or gestures; bullying; “horseplay”; or uninvited physical contact while in the library or on library grounds. Mistreatment of staff or other library visitors will not be tolerated.
- Noise incidents including shouting; unnecessarily loud talking; persistent or disruptive conversation; uncontrolled or repeated ringing/chiming of cell phones or other devices; long/loud cell phone conversations; persistent use of any electronic devices with audible sound. In order to use electronic device sound features, patrons must use headphones or similar equipment.

- Photographing or recording by video, audio or other means any person inside the library without that individual's permission.
- Presenting or distributing solicitations, advertisements, surveys or petitions, or canvassing in the library or on library premises, except as may be authorized by the Library Trustees or Library Director.
- Consuming food in the library.
- Presenting with a strong personal odor that draws attention of other customers and interferes with the use and enjoyment of the library by others, or interferes with the work of library staff. Such odors may include "body odors" about one's person or belongings, heavy application of fragrances such as perfume or cologne; strong alcohol, food, animal husbandry, marijuana or tobacco odors.
- Sleeping or any behavior that appears as sleeping inside the library or on library premises. If, after attempts to rouse a library user, the patron appears unconscious or unresponsive, staff shall contact emergency services for assistance. In such event, staff shall notify Library Director or director's designee immediately.
- Using library restrooms, faucets, sinks, drinking appliances or any other fixture in any manner other than their ordinarily intended purpose in service to the comfort and convenience of library customers. Bathing, shaving, washing of hair or possessions, personal grooming, changing of clothes, or occupation for unreasonable lengths of time are prohibited.
- Leaving unattended children or adults in need of supervision, or being inattentive to children or vulnerable adults in the library who are under another's care. Parents and care-givers must provide supervision in order to minimize risk of harm to the child/adult and avoid disruption of library operation or services.
- Entering or remaining in the library with inappropriate or inadequate clothing and/or footwear as may be an undue distraction or health and safety risk for other users. Beach/pool fashion is inappropriate for the library.
- Entering or gaining access to areas of the facility designated "staff only," "authorized personnel only," "storage," or other areas which are designated as not for public use.
- Removing or attempting to remove non-circulating items stored in library furnishings or fixtures including staff lockers, supply cabinets, desks, file drawers, etc.
- Removing or attempting to remove, or excessive use of supplies as may be provided for visitors' immediate health, safety and comfort, including such items as toilet or facial tissue, paper towels, food or beverage utensils and supplies, sanitary products, hand soap, etc.
- Theft or concealment of, or deliberately inflicting damage to, any personal possession of other library visitors or staff.
- Using or accessing without staff authorization equipment, supplies or fixtures obviously intended for library staff or operational use, including staff desks and workspaces.
- Bringing excessive baggage/possessions into the library; leaving personal possessions unattended. The library is not responsible for personal possessions.
- Causing, or through negligence allowing to be caused, spills including beverages, or messes including paper litter, wrappings, etc.
- Negligent or deliberate introduction of insects or other pests.
- Negligent or deliberate exposure of other library users or staff to known illnesses or dangerous substances.
- Bringing weapons into the library or possessing weapons on library property.

- Obvious consumption or sharing of obscene content in the library.
- Occupying library structures or facilities when the library is closed; at any time blocking or occupying any area of passage, exit or egress which is inside or adjacent to the building.
- Failure to exit the library or any library space when directed by staff as a result of library closure, library program event or operational requirement, or emergency; or in response to any behavior articulated in this Library Code of Conduct.

Exceptions may be authorized by the Library Director as indicated for designated library programs or events; as accommodation for special circumstances as addressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act; or otherwise authorized by Library Director or the Trustees of the Freehold Public Library.

It should furthermore be noted:

- Patrons who appear ill, or present with open wounds, will, for their protection and the protection of others, be asked to leave the library. Staff will assist with securing medical help if patron requests.
- Library staff reserve the right to request any pets/animals be removed from the library and library grounds at any time (with the exception of trained service animals who are present in their service capacity). Though quick visits with a well-behaved pet may be acceptable, the library should not be considered a “pet friendly” destination.
- The library’s business telephones are not available for public use.
- Library staff are not responsible for accepting or delivering messages for patrons, or reporting a patron’s presence or absence in the library to third parties.
- Library staff are in no cases obliged to report to any person the presence or absence of any other person in the library except as may be authorized by the Library Director.
- While the Library intends to be a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all users, staff are not responsible for the supervision and care of children or vulnerable adults. Children attending library programs must be supervised or met by a responsible care-giver before and after programs. Young children must never remain unsupervised in the library.
- Library public space is intended for shared public use. Patrons may not reserve, or hold for their own or their own group’s particular use, any library facility or space without permission of the Library Director. In all cases, library operational and program requirements remain paramount.
- The library endeavors to be an environment that protects the privacy of all patrons. However, all users are cautioned that the library offers no truly private or soundproofed spaces. The library cannot guarantee that conversations, viewing screens, or print material might not be observed by others in the building.
- Patrons with grievances or complaints regarding library matters are encouraged to contact the Library Director. For complaints about the Library Director, the Trustees of the Freehold Public Library may be contacted (President, Trustees of the Freehold Public Library; Borough of Freehold; 30 Mechanic Street; Freehold NJ 07728).

Library's Response to Code of Conduct Violations:

The Library Trustees authorizes the following in response to Code of Conduct violations:

- Any library staff member may immediately demand any person leave the library, and prohibit the person from re-entering the library that same day, if that person's behavior, in the judgment of the staff member, presents a threat to the safety or well-being of another, or causes disruption of the library's operation or enjoyment of the facility by other users.
- Library staff are authorized at any time to contact the Freehold Borough Police Department for advice or assistance in removing visitors who do not abide by this Code of Conduct, or emergency services (9-1-1) for visitors who appear incapacitated or in distress, or who behave in a threatening manner.
- Repeated or serious incidents of Code of Conduct violations will result in documentation/incident reports being maintained for review by the Library Director and/or Library Trustees.
- Repeated or serious incidents of Code of Conduct violations may result in suspension of library privileges. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: prohibition from entering the library or adjacent grounds; suspension of use of library equipment or resources; termination of material borrowing or digital access privileges; filing of complaints with enforcement authorities; or other actions as decided upon by the Library Director and/or Library Trustees for the protection of the library's operation, facility and personnel.
- Banning from the library premises may be enforced with notice to and assistance from the Freehold Borough Police Department.

Appeals

Anyone subject to action under the provisions of this Code of Conduct may receive a written statement about the reason(s) for their own suspension of library privileges by applying to the Library Director. Those wishing to appeal...

- an enforcement action taken by a library staff member may contact the Library Director.
- an enforcement action taken by the Library Director may contact the President of the Library Trustees (President, Trustees of the Freehold Public Library; Borough of Freehold; 30 Mechanic Street; Freehold NJ 07728).

The scope or duration of any suspension action may be adjusted/reduced by the Library Director or Library Trustees under stipulation that the library user agrees to abide by the Library Code of Conduct. Subsequent violations will result in increased penalties.

A copy of this Library Code of Conduct is available for inspection at the Freehold Public Library.

Adopted by the Trustees of the Freehold Public Library March 26, 2024