

BEHAVIOR POLICY

GENERAL POLICY

The purpose of this and other public behavior policies at Beloit Public Library is to ensure a safe, orderly, and comfortable atmosphere in which all library patrons can use the library's materials and services most effectively. This policy addresses standards of public behavior in general. Specific definitions of inappropriate behavior and procedures for handling such misconduct are collected in the library's Special Situations Manual; and interpreted and enforced by the Library Director and his or her designated staff members. The prohibition of dangerous weapons in the Beloit Public Library is addressed in the Dangerous Weapons Policy.

GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT

General rules of behavior are designed to protect the rights of library patrons, to outline for staff members acceptable and appropriate behavior on the part of patrons, and to preserve library materials and facilities.

Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 43.52 (2) states: "Every public library shall be for the use of the inhabitants of the municipality by which it is established and maintained, subject to such reasonable regulations as the library board prescribes in order to render its use most beneficial to the greatest number. The library board may exclude from use of the public library all persons who willfully violate such regulations."

Rule 1. No patron shall act in such a manner as to unreasonably alarm or disturb any other patron or patrons or employee within the library building or upon the library grounds.

Rule 2. No person shall destroy, damage, vandalize or otherwise harm any library material or property, including, without limitation, library books, magazines, materials, furnishings, landscaping, wall hangings, or any other property owned by or in possession of the library; vandalism shall be deemed to have occurred when anyone knowingly tears, marks on, or maliciously renders imperfect or otherwise damages or destroys any library materials or property.

Rule 3. No person shall otherwise violate any statute of the United States, State of Wisconsin, or ordinance of the City of Beloit within the building or upon the grounds of the Beloit Public Library.

STAFF RESPONSE TO INFRACTIONS

When a patron violates any of the provisions of Rules 1 – 3, inclusive, any security guard, police or peace officer, management level employee or designated person-in-charge may immediately suspend the violator for one (1) to thirty (30) days for an offense, and may recommend further action to the Library Director.

The person enforcing this Library Behavior Policy should always ask the violator to show a Beloit Public Library card and a form of photo identification to properly document the incident. Failure to produce a library card or refusal of identification shall in itself be grounds for suspension.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

1. Any individual suspended from the library for a violation or disturbance, as defined in Rules 1 through 3 inclusive, may be excluded for a period of time exceeding 30 days if determined to be appropriate by the Library Director in consultation with the security guard, police or peace officer, management employee or designated person-in-charge of the library department who were on duty when the incident or incidents giving rise to the suspension occurred. Individuals suspended from the library for more than 30 days may be readmitted after the period of suspension only upon the approval of the Library Director.

Exceptional circumstances involving extreme behaviors, including but not limited to violence or threat of violence, or injury or harm to any person, in violation of this Library Behavior Policy may lead to a permanent exclusion on the first offense, with readmission to the library only upon approval of the Director and the Library Board.

2. In all cases of suspension greater than one month in duration where positive identification of the violator has been made, the Library Director, or his or her designee, shall reasonably attempt to give notice in person or by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the patron detailing the duration of the exclusion from use of the library and requirements, if any, conditioning the resumption of library privileges.

In the case of individuals under the age of eighteen (18) and living with a parent or guardian, an attempt will be made to deliver any such certified notice to the parent or guardian, with an additional uncertified copy sent to the minor. Any such attempted certified mail notice shall be substantially as follows:

Dear Patron: Due to violations of rules of the Library Behavior Policy adopted by the Library Board of Trustees of the Beloit Public Library, Rock County, Wisconsin, _____(name)_____ is hereby suspended from use of the Beloit Public Library, excluded from access to the premises of the Beloit Public Library, and excluded from benefiting from any library privileges for a period of time through and including _____(date)_____.

The specific violations are as follows: _____

Readmission to the library in the future will be granted only following a personal interview with and approval of the Library Director after the period of suspension.

If you wish to appeal the exclusion from the use of the library, an appeal must be made in written form, and the Library Director will grant an interview within five working days following receipt of the request. In the event you are not satisfied with the results of the interview with the Library Director, you may request further review at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Library Board of Trustees.

An excluded patron who enters the premises of the library during the period of exclusion without specific permission of the Library Director is subject to arrest for trespassing.

Sincerely,
(signature)
Library Director

APPEAL PROCEDURE

All incidents giving rise to suspension from use of the library for more than one (1) month shall be reported by the Library Director to the Board at the first regular Board meeting following the suspension. The excluded patron may request, in writing, a hearing before the Board, and the Board shall schedule it at its next regularly scheduled meeting following the date of the suspended patron's request.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH SUSPENSION - TRESPASSING

If a suspended individual enters the Beloit Public Library before the return date listed in the suspension letter, police will be called and the individual may be arrested for trespassing.

AUTHORITY OF LIBRARY STAFF TO ENFORCE

The Board further specifies that it is the policy of the library to authorize employees to call upon local law enforcement personnel as necessary to ensure compliance with the terms of this policy, and to sign any complaint or other documentation required for enforcement.

History: Adopted November 14, 2007; Revised November 16, 2011