

## **LIBRARY USE POLICY**

### Falmouth Public Library

The Board of Trustees' objective is to provide a welcoming, pleasant and safe environment, conducive to reading, studying, seeking information, writing and attending library or community sponsored programs and meetings. The established rules of conduct protect the rights and safety of library patrons, volunteers, and staff, and to preserve and protect the library's collections, materials, equipment, facilities, and grounds.

The Children's Department is reserved for use by children, their parents or guardians, and adults interested in children's literature. Seating in the Young Adults' Room is reserved for young adults and those who accompany them.

Adults interested in young adult literature are welcome to browse the shelves.

Library users who violate the Rules of Conduct may be subject to the suspension of their library privileges, exclusion from the library and/or legal action.

Copies of all library policies are available on the Falmouth Public Library website. Hard copies may be found at the Circulation Desk of the Main Library.

Please cooperate with the library staff who must interpret and apply these rules and regulations. Your cooperation will help promote safety, civility, and delivery of library service for everyone.

***For the comfort and safety of patrons, volunteers, and staff, and the protection of library property, disruptive behavior will not be allowed, including but not limited to the following activities:***

#### **1. Bicycles and other wheeled devices**

The Library provides bicycle racks for patrons. Bringing bicycles and other means of transportation inside library buildings, vestibules, or covered doorways, is not permitted.

Using wheeled or similar devices within the library, with the exception of wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, and those carts provided by the library, is not permitted.

#### **2. Cell phones**

Please silence your cell phones while in the library. In order to provide an optimum environment for all our patrons, cell phone conversations may be conducted in the lower lobby area or within the Café area at the Main library, and in areas designated by the branch librarians.

**3. Children**

Children under 10 years of age must be attended by a responsible person. Please see *Unattended Children Policy*

**4. Closings**

Patrons must leave the library promptly at closing.

**5. Clothing**

Patrons must be appropriately attired while in the library, including shoes and shirts.

**6. Disturbances/Noise**

Loud conversation, or noise, that rises above the ambient noise in the library is not allowed. The use of earphones with personal electronic equipment is strongly encouraged.

**7. Food**

The consumption of food is permitted in the Main Library Café area, in the meeting rooms at authorized events only, and in specific areas of the branch libraries as designated by the branch librarian.

**8. Loitering**

Loitering in the library, on library steps, entryway or library property is prohibited. Patrons should be engaged in activities associated with the normal use of a public library.

**9. Personal Possessions**

The Library is unable to guarantee the security of personal possessions. Do not leave them unattended.

The library reserves the right to limit the size and number of items brought into the library. Bags and other articles may be subject to inspection by library personnel.

**10. Pets**

Pets, other than service animals, are not permitted in the Library, except as authorized by library staff.

**11. Restrooms**

The restrooms shall not be used for any illegal activity or as a laundry or washing facility.

**12. Sleeping**

Lying down or sleeping on any floor, couch, table, or seat in the library is discouraged.

**13. Solicitation**

Distributing literature, gathering signatures, soliciting contributions or conducting surveys inside a library or on library grounds, without library authorization is not permitted.

**14. Staff Only Areas**

Patrons are barred from entering non-public areas that are posted "Staff Only" and or for being in the Library without permission of an authorized Library employee before or after the normal operating hours of the Library.

**15. Threatening Behavior**

The following actions are regarded as threatening behavior: verbally or physically harassing other patrons, volunteers, or staff; stalking, staring, or lurking; using obscene or abusive language; or by making unwanted physical contact. Threatening behavior may result in exclusion from the Library.

**16. Alcohol and Drugs**

Consuming alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs and selling, using or possessing alcohol/illegal drugs is prohibited.

**17. Theft and Vandalism**

Theft of library materials is a serious offense and will result in permanent exclusion from the library and/or arrest.

Intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing any library, patron's or employee's property will result in a no trespass order.

**18. Unlawful Behavior** - Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local or other applicable law or Library policy

Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms:

Possessing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs; (see MGL Chapter 270)

Smoking or other use of tobacco within the library or on library grounds; (see MGL Chapter 270)

Carrying firearms and dangerous weapons of any type (except by law enforcement officers); (see MGL Chapter 140)

Any patron violating any of the above rules may be denied access to the library by the Library Director or the Director's designee for one (1) year. A No Trespassing Order will be issued by either the police, the Library Director, the Assistant Library Director, or the Director's designee. At the conclusion of the No Trespassing Order time period, the individual who has been issued the order may petition the Library Director in writing requesting reinstatement of Library use privileges.

Patrons whose privileges have been permanently revoked may apply in writing to have the decision reviewed by the Director.

*Approved by Board of Trustees – Sept 2010, July 2016*

*The Falmouth Public Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to alter, amend, or terminate this policy.*