

Cumberland County Library System

Customer Behavior Policy

(Creation & revision: 4/18/2005; 9/15/2014; 6/20/2016; 2/26/2018; 4/16/2018; 2/12/2024)

The purpose of the Cumberland County Library System's Customer Behavior Policy is to protect the rights and safety of library customers and staff, and to preserve and protect the Library System's materials, facilities and property. The Library System strives to provide a quiet, safe and supportive environment for all customers and staff engaged in library activities. The Library System is a limited public forum where the public is invited to read, study, and use materials, programs and services.

This policy shall apply to all buildings, interior and exterior, and all grounds and to all persons entering in or on the premises. Any customer not abiding by this policy may be required to leave the library premises and/or have their library privileges denied, for a duration determined by the library. Library employees may contact local police if deemed advisable. Any customer whose privileges have been denied may appeal in writing to the denying library's governing board where the privileges were denied within 30 days of service denial.

CUSTOMERS SHALL:

1. Engage in activities appropriate with the use of a public library and respect the rights of other customers and staff.

CUSTOMERS SHALL NOT:

1. Engage in illegal activity while on the library premises.
2. Engage in sexual activity including solicitation, harassment and indecent exposure.
3. Be visibly impaired, possess or use unauthorized illegal substances or consume alcoholic beverages that are not approved by the library board.
4. Use weapons or devices which may cause harm to an individual, animal and/or property. (For more information, please see the library's Weapons Policy for prohibitions against bringing weapons on to library property.)
5. Use library computers or Internet access for illegal activities, or to access material that is obscene, contains or makes reference to explicit sexual materials as defined by Pennsylvania law (18 PA. C.S. 5903), contains child pornography, or is harmful to minors. In addition, customers shall not access sites that are inappropriate for viewing within a public setting.
6. Steal, deface, mar, damage or break library materials, equipment or property.
7. Leave individuals needing care or supervision (including children age 11 or under), unattended or unsupervised by a responsible caregiver.
8. Enter the building without being fully clothed, including a shirt and shoes.
9. Have poor personal hygiene that is considered a nuisance to others.
10. Interfere with the use of the library by others, or interfere with library employees' duties.

11. Abuse, intimidate, harass or assault customers or staff, including threatening or offensive language or behavior.
12. Obstruct aisles, walkways, or doors; or monopolize library space, seating, tables or equipment to the exclusion of other customers or staff.
13. Leave personal property unattended.
14. Use public areas inappropriately, including bathing, shaving, hair or clothes washing.
15. Canvass, sell, solicit or distribute materials except during library-scheduled events when written permission to do so has been obtained from the library director.
16. Bring pets or animals into the library unless it is a service animal or service animal in training (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act regulations).
17. Smoke, vape or use tobacco products in the library or in non-designated smoking areas outside the library building
18. Refuse to follow library policies or reasonable directions of a library staff member

Guidelines for Enforcing Customer Behavior Policy

All staff of the Cumberland County Library System Headquarters and its member libraries [hereinafter known as “library staff members”] are authorized to enforce the Customer Behavior Policy.

Library staff members will approach library users with respect and discretion, delivering warnings as quietly, privately, and politely as possible, contingent upon circumstances.

All occurrences of suspicious or inappropriate behavior are documented using incident report forms and may be noted on library registration records.

Physical force should not be used by any library staff member to remove someone. If a person refuses to leave, law enforcement will be called.

Generally, Customer Behavior Policy violators will be reminded of the policy, given a warning (along with a copy of the policy), and then asked to leave if a behavior does not stop.

Serious or repeat behavior problems may result in immediate banning without warning. Those who are asked to leave will be banned within the framework of the Cumberland County Library System Progressive Discipline Guidelines.

Call 911

Library staff members will call 911 without hesitation in any circumstance that poses an immediate danger to health or safety or that may involve a willful violation of federal or state laws or local ordinances. Library staff members will use discretion in calling law enforcement, reserving the use of 911 for emergencies and using non-emergency numbers when appropriate.

Banning Customers from Library Use

Library users who violate the regulations are subject to banning. Any library staff member may ban someone from the library for the remainder of a day. Banning library users for a greater length of time is handled by the Person-in-Charge. Repeat violations will be handled in consultation with the Person-in-Charge or the Library Director.

Notice of banning beyond the remainder of the day will be sent by the Library Director by certified mail to the person's last known address. It shall include a copy of the Customer Behavior Policy, identify which sections were violated, and list the amount of time the individual is banned and if any specific services are banned from use at all system-affiliated libraries.

Banning Minors

For minors (age 17 or younger) parents or legal guardians will be notified of the minor's banning from the library or when the minor causes law enforcement to be contacted. The library may stipulate that a minor child can use the library when accompanied by a parent or guardian during the child's banned period.

Appeals by Customers

Appeal of progressive disciplinary actions may be made, in writing, to the library within 30 days. The library shall make every effort to respond in a reasonable time, not lasting more than 30 days.

Policy Notice

This policy is subject to change at any time without notice. Updates to the policy may be obtained from the Library System