

PAULINE HAASS PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY: Code of Conduct

Revised by Library Board: March 19, 2014

The use of the Pauline Haass Public Library is a privilege, not a right, given by the Library upon a customer's compliance with this Code of Conduct.

The Library's mission is *to promote literacy and connect people to information, ideas and one another in a vibrant, welcoming environment*. Connecting people to information and ideas is sometimes a quiet endeavor (individual research) and sometimes a loud one (art reception with a jazz band). Connecting people to one another is almost certain to entail conversation. To meet the Library's mission, fill the needs of users for a variety of sound levels, and promote library use by families with young children, all in a relatively small space, requires that all users act in a considerate manner.

The Library provides these zones for various sound and activity levels:

- study rooms for quiet work, telephone use, and for containing group noise
- seating along the south wall of the adult area for quiet talk including telephone use, study, and browsing
- seating near the teen collection and Internet terminals for quiet to moderate – sound talk and greater activity
- a children's area for higher activity and sound levels from preschoolers and young school-age children

Each person is requested to act in a considerate manner and to cooperate with the following rules when visiting the library.

- 1) Sensitivity to noise varies from one individual to another. Customers are requested to report disruptive noise levels or activities to staff, rather than correcting others themselves.
- 2) Cell phone ringers must be turned off in the building.
Cell phones may be used only in these designated areas:
 - Enclosed entryway, which has benches for seating
 - Enclosed study rooms (if already using the room)
 - At study tables located at the south end of the building, along windows overlooking Main Street. When talking at the tables, voices must be kept very low as sound carries in this building. Staff may ask customers to move to the entryway if their cell phone conversation is loud enough that it could bother others.

- 3) Soliciting goods or services on the library premises is prohibited. Solicitation of support for a cause, including petition signatures, is prohibited except within one of the library's lobby-adjacent meeting rooms, in the course of a qualifying use of the room by an organization. Use of public library space for providing a commercial service, other than what is permitted under the meeting room policy, is also prohibited.
- 4) Disruptive behavior such as, but not limited to, throwing objects, running, fighting, horse play, foul language or gestures, verbal abuse of staff or other customers, use of laser devices (except for authorized programming), the audible use of music devices, or any other act that endangers others or disrupts the enjoyment and use of the library by other users is prohibited.
- 5) If bodily odor is offensive enough to constitute a nuisance to other people, the customer shall be required to leave the building.
- 6) Excessive displays of affection, including any sexual conduct or physical contact deemed by supervisory staff to be inappropriate for a public place, are not permitted.
- 7) All children age 5 and under must be accompanied and adequately supervised by a responsible adult at all times and in all areas of the building. See also Unattended Children Policy for older children. Parents whose children scream for extended periods may be asked to briefly remove the child from the Library until he or she can regain composure.
- 8) Because of the potential for damage to furnishings and materials, no food, candy, or tobacco may be brought into or consumed in the library. Securely-lidded beverages are allowed.
- 9) Pets, except service animals, are not allowed in the library and may not be left unattended on library property.
- 10) Shirts and shoes must be worn in the library.
- 11) Restrooms may be used only for their intended purpose; bathing, hair washing, and shaving are prohibited.
- 12) Smoking, rolling cigarettes, using vapor-emitting devices (vaping), or chewing tobacco is prohibited in all areas including the meeting rooms, restrooms, and lobby. Smoking is prohibited anywhere on library property.
- 13) Weapons are prohibited.
- 14) Bedrolls and blankets other than baby blankets are prohibited.
- 15) Skateboarding, roller skating, rollerblading, and use of similar toy/sport articles in the library or on property surrounding the library is prohibited.
- 16) All interior areas of the library, as well as exterior doorways, must be kept free of wagons, scooters, skateboards, bicycles and other similar toy/sport articles. Most of these can and

should be secured to the rack outside the library. Wagons must be left outside and away from the doors. Strollers and wheeled assistive devices may be brought into the library. If these items are brought into the library, they must be safely stored where they do not obstruct walkways or access to library services or materials.

- 17) Furniture must be used in an appropriate manner. Putting feet, with or without shoes, on the tables, chairs, and other furnishings can cause damage and is prohibited. Chairs may be occupied by only one person each, with the exception of two young children, or an adult and child sharing a chair.
- 18) Customers are expected to adhere to the laws of the Village of Sussex. The police will be notified when disruptive behavior may also be illegal. This includes, but is not limited to, cases such as
 - i) Loitering- lingering aimlessly or standing/sitting idly around alone or in a group, after having been asked by library staff to move on, especially when this impedes access or results in intimidation of others wishing to enter or use the building.
 - ii) Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs in the library or on the property surrounding the library.
 - iii) Assault or battery
 - iv) Criminal damage to property, including library materials in any format
 - v) Theft or vandalism of library materials or property
 - vi) Disorderly conduct
 - vii) Harassment, which may include unwanted conversations with other individuals or employees, impeding access to the building or an area of the building, constantly staring at or following another person, sexual activity of any kind including indecent exposure, voyeurism or peeping, and other harassment which is illegal under federal, state or local law including but not limited to sexual, racial and/or age harassment.
 - viii) Use of the Internet that violates the library's Public Internet Access Policy.
- 19) Library staff members will bring to an individual's attention any behavior that affects the library's ability to provide an atmosphere conducive to reading, study, quiet conversation, and the legitimate use of library materials and services. The Library staff shall enforce the Code of Conduct in a fair and reasonable manner, following the steps outlined below.
- 20) Persons violating the above rules will receive one warning. Library staff will identify the inappropriate conduct for the individual and state the behavior that is expected if the person wishes to remain in the building. If the individual responds in a verbally or physically abusive manner to the warning, the person will be told to leave immediately. At the second violation, the person will be told to leave the library for the remainder of the day. This is considered a one day suspension and the first restriction of use of the library building and property. If a person who is told to leave the library refuses to do so, the staff member will summon law enforcement personnel.
- 21) The second time a person's privileges to use the library building and property are restricted, it will be for a period of one month. If the disruptive behavior recurs, the third restriction will be for six months, and finally for one year. A library supervisory staff member will

notify the parents or guardians of persons under age 18 of each restriction beyond a one-day restriction.

- 22) In cases of repeated violations of the library's Code of Conduct the Library Board may determine a period of time that such a person should be excluded from using the building, property or services. Such a determination would be made upon a finding that exclusion is necessary to protect the mission and services of the library, library property or the health and safety of staff and customers.
- 23) In cases of severe, egregious, or illegal conduct that endangers the health and safety of staff or customers, or that endangers the mission, services, or property of the library, the Library Director or his or her designee may make an immediate decision to exclude a person from use of the library building, property, or services for any length of time. This will generally be done in consultation with law enforcement officials.
- 24) A person excluded from the use of the library building, property, and/or services may request that the Library Board reconsider such a decision and present evidence to the board that he or she no longer poses a threat as described above.

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