

# Bitterroot Public Library

## User Behavior Policy

### User Behavior

The Bitterroot Public Library is dedicated to providing an atmosphere that is both safe and conducive to using library materials and services without library users or staff being disturbed, impeded or endangered. Appropriate library conduct includes activities such as reading, studying, properly using library materials and computers and other similar conduct normally associated with a public library.

### User Responsibilities

- Parents, legal guardians and caretakers are responsible for their children's selection of reading, viewing or listening materials.
- Animals are not allowed in the library except for service animals and on special occasions as permitted by the library director.
- The Bitterroot Public Library is not responsible for loss or damage to property of individuals or groups using the library.

### Disruptive Behavior

A library user who engages in any activity which disrupts other patrons or the library environment or disrupts the ability of staff to perform his/her duties is not allowed. Parents, legal guardians and caretakers are responsible for their children's or dependent person's behavior. Disruptive behavior should be monitored by staff and include but not limited to:

- Inappropriate use of furniture or equipment
- Running or rough play, including pushing, hitting or throwing objects
- Badgering or harassment
- Verbal arguments or confrontations
- Obscene language or behavior
- Willful damage of library materials or facilities

If a patron notifies staff about a problem, staff must address the situation.

### Procedures

When dealing with disruptions, speak directly but discreetly to the person or persons involved. Relate concerns, explaining why the behavior is unacceptable. State clearly that continued disruptions will require the person to leave the library.

Depending on the nature of the incident, patrons may have library privileges restricted (See Montana Code: MCA 22-1-311) The nature of the restrictions will depend on the type and severity of the unacceptable behavior, but will generally be applied using the following guidelines:

- After receiving a verbal warning: May not enter the library for remainder of the day. City of Hamilton Police Department should be notified in the event that a person refuses to leave when instructed to do so.
- Second expulsion for similar behavior: May not enter the library for one week.
- Third expulsion: may not enter the library for one month.

Complete an Incident Report for any situation involving expulsion from the library.

If a minor is involved, parents should be asked to monitor behavior. However, staff should act to halt inappropriate behavior if parents do not. If parents are not present, and minor is asked to leave, call parents if possible.

A memo will be sent to all staff members whenever a patron receives any expulsion from the library. On the second and third expulsion, a letter will be sent to the mailing address on file for the patron indicating the reason for the ban, the time period of the ban and the appeals process. These notices will be kept on file for 6 months after the expulsion has ended.

Any person who enters the library while banned from the premises will be considered trespassing and the City of Hamilton Police Department will be contacted.

Persons caught intentionally damaging library materials or facilities must be confronted immediately. Complete incident report form, and identify the value of the materials damaged. The person or persons involved will be held liable for cost of repairs or replacement. Depending upon the extent of damages, legal action may also be taken.

### **Illegal or Threatening Behavior**

The public library is expected to be a safe, secure facility for all members of the community. Library staff is responsible for ensuring the safety of library patrons. When illegal, threatening or potentially threatening behavior takes place, staff members will respond according to the nature and severity of the situation.

Illegal and threatening behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, display or use of a weapon
- Indecent sexual advances or exposure
- Smoking or using a tobacco product or vapor product within the building or within 30 feet of the building
- Willful damage of library property or facilities

- Theft of another person's property
- Acting in a threatening manner, either verbally or physically, towards other patrons, staff or self.
- Threatening written notes, phone calls, or electronic messages directed at library staff or the library in general.

## **Procedures**

Do not put yourself at risk in an effort to stop illegal or threatening behavior. However, do monitor the situation until the City of Hamilton Police Department arrives.

Depending on the severity of the situation, library staff may need to direct patrons out of the building.

Complete and file an incident report after the situation is resolved.

In addition to legal action taken against them, patrons involved in illegal or threatening behavior may be barred from entering the library. (See Montana Code: MCA 22-1-311) The nature of the restrictions will depend on the type and severity of the unacceptable behavior, but will generally be applied using the following guidelines:

- First incident: Barred from the library for one week.
- Second incident: Barred from the library for one month.
- Third Incident: Barred from the library for one year.

A memo will be sent to all staff members whenever a patron receives any expulsion from the library. On the second and third expulsion, a letter will be sent to the mailing address on file for the patron indicating the reason for the ban, the time period of the ban and the appeals process. These notices will be kept on file for 6 months after the expulsion has ended.

Any person who enters the library while banned from the premises will be considered trespassing and the law enforcement will be contacted.