

## USER BEHAVIOR POLICY

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. See the Service Animals in the Library Policy for additional details.
- 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
- Playing audio from devices such as laptops, phones, and tablets at a volume and/or for a duration that disrupts the library environment.

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. If any person becomes challenging or threatening, do not put yourself at risk in an effort to stop their behavior but withdraw and contact 9-1-1 to have the person removed. Do monitor the situation from a distance until the City of Hamilton Police Department arrives.*

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

*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 a copy of the library's Right to Appeal policy. 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, illegal drugs or products containing THC
- Lighting, smoking, or carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any smokable product, including e-cigarettes or vapor products, within the building or within 30 feet of the building and its occupied structures, including the gazebo.
- Possession of any unpermitted concealed weapon or any unconcealed weapon
- Display or use of any weapon
- Indecent sexual advances or exposure
- 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

*Library staff should contact the City of Hamilton Police Department if necessary once it is safe to do so. 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 month.*
- *Second incident: Barred from the library for six months.*
- *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 a copy of the library's Right to Appeal policy. 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.*

**Incident Reports and/or other documentation related to enforcement of the Library's User Behavior Policy or other Library policies may be considered public records depending on the content. The Library is required by law to provide copies of public records upon request. If a request is received, the Library will provide copies of the public records with any confidential or private information redacted unless a Court orders full disclosure.**

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