

**Evangeline Parish Library
Patron Behavior Policy
Approved, Library Board of Control, September 19, 2012, Meeting**

Introduction

The Evangeline Parish Library is a public agency supported by the taxes of the citizens of the Parish. **They have the right to expect an atmosphere conducive to study, reading, and other legitimate use of library materials and services.**

The Board of Control makes the rules and regulations for the operation of the Library system under the auspices of Louisiana State Law (R.S. 25:211-223). One of the Board's many duties is to establish written policy concerning matters of importance to the Library system.

The following rules of behavior have been drawn up to establish a secure, comfortable, and safe atmosphere for library patrons; to protect the rights of library staff; to conduct library business without interference, and to preserve library materials and facilities. The Library Board of Control and the Library reserve the right to enforce or amend the rules as deemed necessary.

Rules and Policies

Any behavior that disrupts the orderly use of the Library, impedes other patrons' ability to study, read, and conduct research within the library, or that affects the staff's ability to provide service is strictly prohibited. Those who disrupt the appropriate use and operation of the library will be asked to leave. All Staff have the right to determine when ANY behavior or condition has become disruptive, and they have the authority to ask patrons to leave. Police may be called if patrons do not comply.

The following is required to enter the Library:

1. For children under 12, an accompanying adult who will maintain active supervision of the child in the library.
2. Proper dress: Shirts and shoes are required. No inappropriate clothing, including bathing suits or excessive showing of bare skin or underwear.
3. Appropriate Hygiene: Offensive personal odor due to lack of personal cleanliness is not allowed.

In order to provide safety for patrons and staff and to protect the Library, the following items are not to be brought into any Library facilities:

1. Weapons of any kind. [Any comment that indicates a patron has a weapon, even if made in jest, will result in immediate calling of the police.]
2. Snakes, birds, or others animals (except canine assistants for the handicapped or police dogs), unless the animals are part of an approved special program.
3. Alcoholic beverages or drugs.
4. Wheeled devices (except wheelchairs or strollers).

The following items are restricted:

1. Food and nonalcoholic beverages may be consumed outside the building, but are not allowed in the building. Food and beverages are only allowed inside when they are part of an approved special event (refreshments at a children's program, for example).
2. NO tobacco products may be used within the building.
3. Private radios and tape recorders may only be used with headphones.
4. Cell phone use is to be kept quiet.
5. Bicycles or skateboards cannot block steps, doorways, or ramps.
6. For patrons' own safety, all laptops, purses, cell phones, and other personal items must be kept with them at all times. Library and Staff will not be responsible for any personal items.

The following behaviors are not allowed within the Main Library or any of its branches:

1. Disruptive behavior (i.e., disturbing the peace, boisterous behavior, fighting, whether real or pretend, throwing objects, etc.)
2. Using obscene or abusive language.
3. Solicitation of any kind (i.e., conducting a business within the library, buying and/or selling).
4. Eating, drinking, or using any tobacco products.
5. Improper use of library property (i.e., putting feet up on the furniture, moving furniture, banging on computer keyboards, etc.)
6. Running, playing, climbing, lying on the floor.
7. Remaining at computer stations after being told that time is expired.
- 8. Intruding into the space of other computer stations and preventing their use by other patrons (taking up space and chairs designated for users of the other station, having more than two persons at a station)**
- 9. Disrupting or loud behavior at the computer stations.**
- 10. Failing to supervise or control children while at the computer stations or in any other area of the library.**
11. Shifting from one computer station to another without express permission of the staff.

12. Remaining in the building after closing time.
13. Harassment (i.e., staring, following people around, making gestures, etc.)
14. Defacing or damaging any library property. (Vandalism, defacement, mutilation or abuse of library equipment, furnishings, materials)
15. Sleeping.
16. Washing, bathing, shaving, etc. in the restrooms.
17. Verbal outbursts (cursing, insults, threats, etc.)
18. Acting in any way that indicates intoxication from any substance.
19. Physical assault or threats.
20. Gambling.
21. Loitering (aimless wandering or rambling around without any legitimate reason), or excessive socializing.
- 22. Use of the computers or any other Library property for any illegal or harassing activity, or for any activity that becomes disruptive (see page 1 of policy and also items 5 through 7 above).**
23. Entering the staff work areas or other non-public areas unless accompanied by a library employee or through appropriate prior arrangements.

Staff will be polite but firm in requiring patrons to stop any of the behaviors above. If staff believes the situation warrants it, staff will fill out an Incident Report, including the patron's name and other known information, and forward the report to the Director.

Staff may terminate computer sessions at any time, with or without prior warning, in response to disruptive patron behavior.

If a patron refuses to leave the building (or any non-public area of the building) after being told by staff to leave, staff will call the police.

If a patron exhibits hostile or erratic behavior, whether directed toward staff, other patrons, or anyone else, staff will call the police.

If a patron attempts to harass or accost (i.e., approach in an overly aggressive or otherwise inappropriate way) another patron or staff member, staff will call the police.

Staff will call the police if any behavior seems to be illegal or appears to put patrons or staff in danger.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN: The separate Unattended Children Policy is hereby appended to this policy as a portion of the policy (see attached separate sheet).

Children under 12 are not allowed on library property (including the parking lots) without an accompanying adult (at least 18 years of age) who maintains active supervision of the child.

Staff will not give children rides home from the Library due to liability issues. Patrons will also not be allowed to use the Library phones except in emergencies.

The Library system will not assume responsibility for unsupervised children.

Actions by the Library:

Depending upon the severity of the behavior and its frequency (reflected in multiple Incident Reports), the Library may react with different levels of action against individuals who engage in negative behavior or inappropriate use of the facilities. The Library may respond with any or all of the following:

1. Warnings, counseling
2. Removal of access to library services
3. Demand for financial restitution
4. Expulsion for a specific time period
5. Permanent or temporary barring from any or all library outlets
6. Formal charges for arrest

Evangeline Parish Library
Unattended Children Policy—Herein Appended as part of Patron Behavior Policy

Introduction

The Evangeline Parish Library Board of Control makes the rules and regulations for the operation of the Library system under the auspices of Louisiana State Law (R.S. 25:211-223). One of the Board's many duties is to establish written policy concerning matters of importance to the Library system.

The following Unattended Children Policy has been part of the Library's Patron Behavior Policy for years (most recently affirmed 8/29/2011.) It is set forth here separately to emphasize its importance and hereby amended for clarity and to incorporate the entire library premises as well as the library facilities.

FOR THEIR SAFETY, CHILDREN UNDER 12 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT.

To enter the library or to enter anywhere on the library premises, including the parking lot, children under 12 **MUST** have an accompanying adult who will and does maintain active supervision of the child in the library and on the library premises. **ADULT IS DEFINED AS SOMEONE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE.**

Staff may call the police if children 11 years of age or younger are left unattended at any time and a parent or guardian cannot be located. At closing time staff may, **at their discretion, chose** to wait 15 minutes before calling the police to pick up the child and locate the parent or guardian.

Parents or guardians who leave their young children unattended in the library or on the premises at any time may lose their own library privileges.

ALL CHILDREN UNDER 12 MUST REMAIN UNDER VOICE AND VISUAL SUPERVISION OF THE ADULT WHO IS ACCOMPANYING THEM AT ALL TIMES WITHIN THE LIBRARY OR ON THE LIBRARY PREMISES.

ALL CHILDREN UNDER 7 CANNOT BE IN THE COMPUTER AREA OR AT A COMPUTER STATION WITHOUT AN ADULT STAYING AT THE SAME COMPUTER WITH THEM AND DIRECTLY SUPERVISING THEM ON THE COMPUTER. For older children 7 through 11, the adult must stay close enough to visually observe the child and be able to come assist the child if help is needed, or to correct the child's behavior if necessary. All aspects of the Patron Behavior Policy apply to children as well as adults.

PARENTS OR GUARDIANS WHO LEAVE CHILDREN UNDER AGE 12 UNATTENDED IN THE LIBRARY AT ANY TIME ARE SUBJECT TO LOSING ALL LIBRARY PRIVILEGES. POLICE MAY BE CALLED FOR UNATTENDED CHILDREN.

State Laws:

Specific laws governing the types of negative behavior listed above may be found in state and local codes. The following are typical (but not exclusive) of the legal coverage for negative behavior:

Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 14

- Section 15 "Intoxication"
- Section 22 "Defense of Others"
- Section 35 "Simple battery"
- Section 38 "Simple assault"
- Section 43 "Simple rape"
- Section 43.1 "Sexual battery"
- Section 52 "Simple arson"
- Section 56 "Simple criminal damages to property"
- Section 59 "Criminal mischief"
- Section 62 "Simple burglary"
- Section 63.3 "Entry on or remaining in places. . . after being forbidden"
- Section 65 "Simple robbery"
- Section 65.1 "Purse snatching"
- Section 67 "Theft"
- Section 69 "Illegal possession of stolen things"
- Section 71 "Issuing worthless checks"
- Section 73.3 "Offenses against computer equipment or supplies"
- Section 81 "Indecent behavior with juveniles"
- Section 89 "Crime against nature"
- Section 94 "Illegal use of weapons or dangerous instrumentalities"
- Section 103 "Disturbing the peace"
- Section 106 "Obscenity"
- Section 107 "Vagrancy"