

ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

POLICY STATEMENT

*Adopted March 25, 1987 by the Rowan Public Library Board of Trustees: revised December 1, 2010;
revised August 26, 2020*

SERVICE OBJECTIVE

The Rowan Public Library aims to provide for everyone who uses the library a pleasant and safe environment, conducive to reading and studying, and free from harassment, physical discomfort, danger, and psychological and emotional stress.

DISRUPTIVE AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

In pursuit of the objective the library board shall consider the following list of behaviors as unacceptable or disruptive. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list, but to serve as a guide for library staff and users. Other behaviors not listed may also be considered unacceptable or disruptive if reasonably interfere with the operation of the library or violate the service objective listed above.

1. loud conversation, or noise, including use of radios, cell phones, MP3 players, boom boxes, etc. which is disturbing to other users;
2. obscene, or abusive language, or gestures;
3. blocking, or in any way interfering with the free movement of any person;
4. following a person around the building, or other harassing behavior, such as staring, or other intimidating acts;
5. engaging in disorderly conduct, committing a nuisance, or reasonably disturbing and offending library users;
6. carrying unauthorized weapons of any sort;
7. smoking, or the use of any tobacco product within the facility or within 50 feet of library entrances
8. consumption of alcoholic beverages;
9. consumption of food, or beverages, except in designated areas;
10. soliciting, or selling of any kind, except for library-related fundraising events;
11. distribution of leaflets, or posting of notices without authorization;
12. destruction of, or damage to any library property;
13. removal of any library property from the building without authorization through established lending procedures;
14. rearranging of any library furniture, or equipment from one location to another, except in meeting rooms;
15. bringing animals, other than lead dogs, into the building;
16. use of library telephones by any person other than library personnel, unless approved;
17. committing a criminal act on library property;
18. providing false information to staff or police in regards to identity when requested;
19. refusal to leave library property when instructed to do so;

20. threatening staff or the public;
21. assaulting any library user or staff member;
22. dispensing chemicals or noxious substances including, but not limited to, pepper spray, stink bombs, and tear gas;
23. display of obscene or pornographic images on library computers;
24. violating the Library Internet Access Policy;
25. bodily health or hygiene that constitutes a nuisance or public health risk.

RESPONSES TO DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior on library property may result in exclusion from the library and/or being subject to arrest.

[END]

ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR PROCEDURES

Effective February 8, 1993; Draft 6/18/07

These procedures will be responsibility of a Librarian, a Branch Associate, Children's staff member, or the Security Officer, (after consulting the Disruptive Behavior Policy). If the severity of the behavior warrants, eviction or banning may be undertaken without a warning.

A. WARNING

1. Approach quietly, identify yourself, be pleasant, courteous and low-key. If possible, approach the person away from others. Ask the person to cease disruptive behavior being specific as to nature of behavior.
2. Tell the person that his behavior is unacceptable and that it must cease immediately. Ask the person to cooperate and thank the person for doing so. You may wish to say that you realize the person may not be aware of rule, which will make most people feel less embarrassed. If asked for a copy of the rules, make one available.
3. If the person chooses not comply with the rules and decides to leave, watch him/her discreetly and make sure that he/she does leave.
4. If the person continues to break rules after receiving the first warning, call a librarian, deputy, or other authorized staff member. Evict the person for the day. (See Section B)

B. EVICTION FOR THE DAY

1. Ask for the person's library card and/or name.
2. Tell the person to leave, stating clearly why he is being told to leave, with the backing and in the presence of the Security Officer (or another staff member), and that if he does not leave, he is subject to arrest.
3. Determine that the individual has left the property.

If not, call the police.

4. When the police arrive, try to meet them away from the subject to explain what has transpired. Let them handle it from that point.

5. In front of the police officer issue a warning to the person not to return for 6 months.
6. Complete and sign the Incident Report (see 6.1.8) with the Security Office.

C. BANNING

Customers are banned from the Library only on approval of the Library Director or member of the Senior Management Team. When approval for banning a customer has been given, the customer will be sent a letter stating the reason for the banning and the period that the customer is banned. The letter is delivered by certified mail or hand delivered by the Security Guard, a member of the Senior Management Team, Branch Manager or the Director. Copies of these letters will be kept on file in the incident report notebook maintained by the Administrative Assistant.

Customers may be banned for different periods of time based on the seriousness of the offense. Usually the first offense is for six months and the second offense is for one year. Very serious offenses can lead to a permanent ban.

1. A person will be banned for six months for:
 - a. Failure to leave the library when asked to do so by library staff.
 - b. Failure to follow the rules governing the use of the library a second time within a month (e.g., using profanity).
2. A person will be banned for one year or permanently for:
 - a. Committing a criminal act on library property.
 - b. Repeat offenses by a person who has been banned from the library previously.
 - c. Serious incidents, such as threatening library staff.

Permanent banning will only be used when a significant threat to staff or property exists.

If a customer returns during the period of banning, the Branch Manager or Security Guard will make sure the customer has received a copy of the letter of banning. If the customer does not leave immediately upon this warning or returns again during the banning period, they can be charged with trespassing.

D. PHOTOGRAPHS OF REPEAT OFFENDERS

The county attorney's office has given permission for photographs to be taken of repeat offenders. These photographs can be distributed to library staff at all locations. Operations Services has a camera for this purpose. Staff may not physically detain a customer for this purpose.

E. PRESSING CHARGES

Employees should press charges when they witness a crime to prevent customers from thinking they are not responsible for their actions and to protect other employees and customers from further harm. If an employee refuses to press charges, the Branch Manager or the Person in Charge will press charges. The employee who witnessed the crime will be named as a witness and subpoenaed by the court to appear to testify against the criminal. To press charges, the employee, Branch Manager, or member of the management team will go to the Magistrate's office and fill out a complaint so a warrant can be issued for the arrest of the individual. If the customer has been previously banned from the library, the security guard can also be called as a witness with background information. The time necessary for the employee to press charges and appear in court is considered work time.

[END]