

Standards of Acceptable Behavior

Welcome to the Free Library of Philadelphia. Our goal is to ensure that everyone has a positive experience when using the Library.

Everyone has the right to enjoy the services of the Free Library of Philadelphia without unreasonable and continued disturbance. Our commitment to patrons and employees is to deliver excellent service in an environment of mutual respect and courtesy, creating a pleasant and safe atmosphere conducive to both life-long learning and the creative use of leisure time.

Our Standards of Acceptable Behavior (Standards) encourage behavior that supports the Free Library’s mission to advance literacy, guide learning, and inspire curiosity.

We ask your cooperation in maintaining a welcoming environment that provides the opportunity for everyone to enjoy and use the Free Library facilities. At the discretion of the Free Library, patrons not abiding by these Standards will be warned to cease and desist and/or asked to leave.

Disruptive Conduct is prohibited, including but not limited to the following activities:

- Displaying disturbing images, including but not restricted to the display of sexually explicit materials on computers, tablets, or cell phones. Free Library staff is authorized to determine whether a patron is disturbing others by the display of disturbing images.
- Intoxication or drunken behavior.
- Smoking or vaping.
- Creating unreasonable noise that disturbs others, including but not limited to the use of cell phones. Cell phones may be used quietly and without disturbing others.
- Soliciting, petitioning, distributing, or posting materials, unless approved in advance by the Free Library.
- Trespassing in nonpublic areas.
- Vandalizing or theft of materials or property.
- Shaving, bathing, or washing clothes or hair in public restrooms.
- Consuming food, except on approved occasions or in designated areas. Beverages in covered containers are permitted. Patrons should be mindful of areas with computers and other electronic equipment to prevent beverages from spilling on them.
- Not wearing shoes or a shirt.
- Bodily hygiene or scent that is a nuisance to others.
- Blocking or impeding access to interior or exterior walkways, entrances, and common areas, physically or with large items.
- Lying down or sleeping in the Library.
- Not respecting others through the monopolization of shared spaces (for example, tables, chairs, meeting rooms).

Dangerous, destructive, or illegal conduct is prohibited, including but not limited to the following:

- Violations of any local, state, or federal law.
- Displaying weapons.
- Physical abuse or assault of other patrons or staff.
- Engaging in physical altercations including assault and fighting.
- Stalking other patrons or staff.
- Harassing other patrons or staff.
- Defiant trespassing.

- Engaging in or soliciting any sexual act, including but not limited to flashing, unwanted physical contact, touching, petting, or sexually-oriented gestures, sounds or comments.
- Using or distributing controlled substances.
- Verbal or written abuse of other patrons or staff (for example, obscene language or discriminatory remarks).

*Patrons displaying these behaviors will be instructed to leave the Free Library location immediately. In addition, Free Library staff may call the police. All Free Library privileges may be suspended based on the severity of the situation in accordance with the Free Library’s Expulsion Policy.

Be Safe

- Parents or caregivers are responsible for their child’s safety and behavior.
- Children under 7 years old must be supervised by a parent or responsible caregiver at all times.
- Please keep your belongings secure. The Free Library is not responsible for your possessions.
- Library cards may only be used by the authorized owner of the card. Cards may not be shared with friends or family members.

Library Use

- Free Library patrons are expected to use the Free Library, including its facilities, grounds, resources, and materials, in a responsible, appropriate, and courteous manner.
- Animals are not permitted in any Free Library location unless it is a service animal assisting a person with a disability as defined by the American Disabilities Act (ADA) or for programming approved by the Free Library.
- All Library materials must be checked out before being taken from the building.
- Bags and other materials which are difficult to inspect because of the nature of the items are not allowed in the building. Oversized bags and articles that could be used to conceal Library property are subject to inspection.

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA

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