IPSWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Rules of Conduct

To maintain an environment that promotes enjoyment of the Ipswich Public Library’s resources and services as well as to protect the safety of all its patrons, staff, and materials, please observe the following rules:

1. Shoes and shirts must be worn.
2. Eating, smoking, and loitering are not permitted. Beverages with covers are allowed.
3. Children under eight years old must be accompanied by an adult.
4. No pets except service animals providing assistance to their owner.
5. Staff is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.
6. Solicitation is prohibited.
7. Cell phone use is not allowed.
8. Skateboards and roller blades are not to be used on the premises.
9. Impeding access to library resources, premises, or an area of premises
10. Abusive or profane language is not allowed.
11. Disorderly, loud, or boisterous behavior in a manner not in keeping with the atmosphere of a library is not allowed.
12. Endangering or potentially endangering the safety or health of others is prohibited.
13. Willfully annoying, harassing* or threatening another person is prohibited.
14. Interfering with the ability of staff to conduct library business is not allowed.
15. Interfering with the rights of individuals to use library materials, services and premises is not allowed.
16. Using restroom facilities for activities other than their intended purpose is prohibited.
17. Conduct that otherwise violates municipal, state or federal law or regulations is prohibited.
18. Anyone who vandalizes library property will be punished to the fullest extent permitted by law.
19. The library staff reserves the right to ask patrons to leave if they are disruptive.

*Harassment is defined as any action taken or situation created that would be reasonably deemed to produce psychological or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or humiliation for others. Harassment is characterized by requests for sexual contact, unwelcome physical advances, or conduct (verbal or physical) of a nature that is intimidating, demeaning, hostile, offensive, or potentially dangerous to self or others.
Consequences

1. Enforcement of these rules may take the form of any of the following actions, depending upon the severity of the misconduct, which will be determined by the staff on duty at the time.

2. Patrons who engage in misconduct will be given one warning and asked to behave in an appropriate manner. Patrons who do not modify their behavior after one warning may be asked to leave for the rest of the day.

3. Patrons who engage in misconduct that in the judgment of a staff member is “extreme” may be ordered to leave the building immediately and may be requested not to return for the remainder of the day. “Extreme” misconduct may include activities that are harassing, threatening, dangerous or destructive to persons or property at the Library premises.

4. If necessary, the senior staff member on duty may call the police for assistance.

5. Patrons who engage in misconduct may receive, by certified or registered mail or hand delivery, written notice from the Director of suspension or revocation of Library privileges, including prohibition against entering the Library for a period of one week to one year, depending on the nature of the misconduct, the extent of damage or disruption caused by policy infractions, and other relevant circumstances. Patrons may request a hearing before the Board of Library Trustees to appeal the notice within fourteen (14) days of such notice and the notice shall include language advising the patron of the right to appeal.

   Unless the notice explicitly states the patron cannot return to the Library prior to the hearing, the patron may be permitted to return to the Library prior to the hearing on the suspension or revocation of library privileges. If the notice states the patron cannot return to the Library prior to the hearing, the Library Director may determine expedited resolution is appropriate and schedule a special meeting of the Library Trustees to consider the immediate suspension of the patron's library privileges.

   If the Library Director deems the misconduct to merit expedited resolution, the Library Director, or his/her designee, may post a special meeting of the Board of Library Trustees to occur no less than forty-eight hours from the date of the misconduct, unless the situation constitutes an "emergency" under the Open Meeting Law, to consider the immediate suspension or revocation of the patron's library privileges and the patron will be provided notice of said hearing as soon as possible, by hand delivery or other expedited means at his/her last and usual place of abode.

6. Any unlawful actions committed in the library or on the library premises will immediately be reported to the Ipswich Police Department.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library/22 February 2010
Revised by the Board of Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library/30 April 2012