

## 314. LIBRARY CONDUCT

Adopted October 1984

Revised January 2002, August 2005, January 2011, December 2013, April 2018

By entering the Winnebago Public Library patrons are making a commitment to act courteously toward all other people present in the Library and on Library grounds, to act responsibly with regard to public property, and to follow all rules of this facility. The use of the library is for reading, studying and learning. Enjoy the library and allow others the same opportunity.

Individuals violating any of these rules may be asked to leave the Library premises by the staff member in charge. If the individuals are children clearly unable or unwilling to leave the Library safely on their own accord, the Library staff will attempt to reach the parent, guardian or caregiver. Police assistance will be utilized if necessary.

Library staff are required to notify the appropriate authorities if they have reason to suspect that there is evidence of abuse or neglect.

### **Procedure for Banned Patrons**

Use of the Winnebago Public Library is a privilege, not a right. The Board of Trustees grants the Library Director the right to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees in matters of patron conduct. The director, at their discretion, may ban patrons for up to 30 (thirty) days for conduct that is disruptive to the rights of others, disruptive and disrespectful to staff, willfully damages Winnebago Public Library property, or breaks any public law. In the event of multiple bans, or serious offences, the Library Director will refer the matter to the Board of Trustees for consideration of a long-term ban.

The Public Library Act provides the Board of Library Trustees with the general power to carry out the spirit and intent of the Act in establishing and maintaining the library and providing library services and the specific power to “exclude from the use of the library any person who willfully violates an ordinance or regulation prescribed.”

Library personnel will record instances in which patrons are required to leave the library, or are banned, in a ledger maintained by the library for that purpose. All instances will be recorded. A patron who is banned from the Winnebago Public Library will not be allowed on the property or within the facilities of the Winnebago Public Library. In addition the patron will lose all library privileges until the time the ban has ended. In the case of monetary damage to Winnebago Public Library property, or damage to patron property while on Winnebago Public Library property, the patron may be banned and lose all privileges until restitution is made.

If a patron has been banned for the day twice within a 30 (thirty) day period, he or she will be banned from the library premises for a 30 (thirty) day period. If a minor, the parents/guardians will be notified by phone immediately, and in writing within 2 (two) business days. Persons wishing to contest such action should submit a written appeal to the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

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If there is police involvement, there will be an immediate ban from the premises for 30 days. If a minor, the parents/guardians will be notified by phone immediately, and in writing within 2 (two) business days. If a patron has been banned for two (2) thirty (thirty) day periods within a year, the matter will be referred to the Library Board of Trustees for a further long-term ban. Persons wishing to contest such action should submit a written appeal to the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

In the event a patron banned from the use of the library attempts entry to the library during any such period, the police will be summoned and informed of the prior action. If the patron is already serving a day long ban, the patron will be immediately banned for a 30 (thirty) day period. If the patron is already serving a 30 (thirty) day ban, the matter will be referred to the Board of Trustees for consideration of long-term ban. If a minor, the parents/guardians will be notified by phone immediately, and in writing within 2 (two) business days. Persons wishing to contest such action should submit a written appeal to the Library Director and the Board of Trustees. The patron/parents will be notified in writing of any additional Board of Trustee action within two business days.

### **Disruptive Behavior**

Disruptive behavior, individually or in groups, is not permitted in the library or on library property: Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to: Inappropriate or abusive language, fighting, running, failure to heed library staff requests, loud talking, littering, loitering, jumping on furniture, playing music so as to disturb other people, and gathering in groups which disturb other patrons or staff.

More serious disruptive behavior may include, but is not limited to: Activating fire or emergency alarms, theft, defacing or abusing library property, any acts of vandalism, threatening staff or other patrons, behaving under the influences of alcohol or controlled substances, breaks public law and acts of public indecency.

A disruptive group, for the purposes of this policy shall be defined as a group of three or more individuals, whether formal or informal, sharing a common name, interest, bond, confederation, alliance, initiation practice, network, conspiracy, or activity characterized by criminal or delinquent conduct, or conduct that violates library policies, whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of such activity.

### **Unattended Children**

The Winnebago Public Library welcomes the use of its facilities and services by children. While the library endeavors to be a safe and friendly environment for all its users, it is a public building where people enter and leave freely without staff monitoring. Library facilities are not licensed or designed to provide basic childcare needs. It is impossible for the Library staff to guarantee a safe environment.

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Children under the age of 10 (ten) must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible caregiver at all times while in the library. The parent/caregiver must keep the child within sight. Caregivers must be 14 (fourteen) or older, be able to effectively supervise young children and be willing and able to provide contact information for a parent/guardian upon request.

From time to time, the Winnebago Public Library schedules or provides programs which are designed and suitable for attendance by children without parental supervision. Such program announcements will so indicate, and if no indication is included, then supervision is required. When so indicated, if the parent or caregiver intends to be absent, they must leave word at the circulation desk as to their whereabouts and, if possible, a phone number where they or a responsible adult can be contacted.

### **Unattended Children after Hours**

Library hours are posted and the building is locked up promptly at closing. The library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended at closing. The appropriate authorities will be contacted for any child left after the library closes. Staff will stay with the child until the police arrive. Library staff will assist a child in contacting a parent, guardian and/or caregiver prior to closing time. Library staff cannot provide for the transportation needs of library users.

### **Disruptive Procedures:**

1. A patron exhibiting disruptive behavior will be given a verbal warning and notified of this policy.
2. If the patron continues to be disruptive, a second verbal warning will be given at which time the library personnel handling the situation will request identification.
3. If the disruptive behavior continues, the patron may be asked to leave the library. The library staff in charge will call the child's residence and speak to their parent/guardian. A minor will reside at the service desk with library personnel until their parent/guardian picks them up.
4. If a patron refuses to give the necessary identification, the library staff shall inform the patron that the police will be contacted. If identification is still refused, the police will be contacted.

Violations of this policy are grounds for suspension of library privileges. If a patron refuses to comply, or responds to the request in an abusive fashion, he or she will be required to leave the library premises immediately, and be banned for the rest of the day. If a minor, the parents/guardians will be notified by phone immediately, and in writing within 2 (two) business days.

In any situation involving the safety of children, and specifically whenever the parent/caregiver or police are contacted, staff will complete an Incident Report.