

MEXICO-AUDRAIN COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

POLICY ON PATRON BEHAVIOR

PURPOSE OF THE LIBRARY

The purpose of the Mexico-Audrain County Library District is to provide library service to all people within its service area. Mexico-Audrain County Library District defines its library service as providing access for the general public to sources of ideas, information and inspiration as well as providing the necessary assistance and encouragement in the use of these sources.

NEED TO MAINTAIN AN ACCEPTABLE LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT

In order to fulfill its purpose, the library must maintain an orderly, safe, pleasant, and attractive environment, conducive to reading and studying. Any activity that would disrupt this environment could impede the library's ability to achieve its purpose, and must, therefore be considered unacceptable. Persons engaged in unacceptable conduct shall be required to leave the facility.

UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

Unacceptable conduct includes both disruptive and illegal behavior.

Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following.

- Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it.
- Sleeping, consuming food, drinking any beverages, using illegal drugs, smoking, using tobacco or tobacco products.
- Having bodily hygiene so offensive that it constitutes a nuisance.
- Entering or being in the building without being fully clothed, which includes, but is not limited to, wearing a shirt and shoes.
- Bringing an animal into the building, excepting that a service dog may be brought into the building by a person with a disability who uses such dog for guidance. Animals used in the presentation of a library sponsored program are allowed.
- Soliciting for sale or selling of any item, article, service, food or product of any kind whatsoever; distributing any leaflet or similar item or posting any notice, except in accordance with library policy; or circulating petitions or surveying by non-library groups.
- Using library telephones, without prior authority of library personnel in accordance with library policy.
- Rearranging any library furniture or moving library equipment from one location to another.
- Remaining in the facility after its regular closing hours.

- Blocking or in any way interfering with the free movement of patrons or staff.
- Begging or panhandling, fighting, running, horseplay, throwing objects, or playing in or on the elevator.
- Misuse of the public restrooms.
- Placing feet on tables and chairs.
- Lengthy conversations, speaking or laughing loudly, or using obscene or abusive language.

Illegal behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Harassment or intimidation of patrons or staff.
- Interfering with the use of the library by other patrons or interfering with library staff in the performance of their duties.
- Attempting to remove any library property from the building without authorization through established lending procedures.
- Intentionally destroying, damaging, or defacing library materials, furnishings, equipment, or any part of the facility or fixtures.
- Engaging in disorderly conduct or other conduct in violation of city, state or federal law, including conduct applicable to released sex offenders.
- Carrying or being in possession or control of a weapon.
- Lewd or lascivious behavior.
- Battery

RESPONDING TO DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

In the event disruptive conduct occurs, the Mexico-Audrain County Library District staff may take the following actions, as appropriate to the situation:

- (a) Level I – Warning
Advise the violator that his/her conduct is unacceptable conduct and request that the person comply with library policy. Warn the person that if his/her behavior does not comply with library policy, he/she will be directed to leave the facility.
- (b) Level II – Evicted for the day
If the person fails to comply with library policy after being warned, staff shall order the person to leave the building for the rest of the day. If a person does not obey an order to leave the building, staff shall request assistance from the Public Safety Department to remove the person from the building. A Level II eviction applies to warnings given the same day as the eviction.
- (c) Level III – Suspension of library privileges for one week
Repeated incidents of disruptive behavior will result in a one-week suspension of library privileges. If a person is engaging in disruptive

behavior and has already received a Level II suspension within the past 30 days, they will receive a one week suspension of library privileges.

- (d) Level IV – Suspension of library privileges for six months
If a person who has been readmitted to the library after being suspended for one week repeats disruptive behavior, this will result in a six-month suspension.

RESPONDING TO ILLEGAL CONDUCT

If the unacceptable conduct constitutes a violation of criminal law staff shall immediately request police assistance. Illegal conduct may result in the suspension of library privileges for one year.

SUSPENSION OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES

The staff is authorized to give Level II suspensions to patrons after the appropriate number of warnings is given. For Level III and IV suspensions, the staff must report the facts to the Library Director, who shall examine the facts in the report and, if they warrant a suspension action, he/she shall authorize the action after notifying the patron of the pending action and his/her right to state his/her position in writing within 24 hours of the notice.

If the Library Director will be absent from the library for a week or more, the Assistant Director shall have the authority to impose a Level III suspension of privileges for one week, following the same procedure outlined above.