

MARIN COUNTY FREE LIBRARY – PATRON CONDUCT POLICY - DRAFT

PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to:

- Protect the rights and safety of Marin County Free Library patrons, volunteers and staff;
- Protect the library's materials, equipment, facilities and grounds;
- Guarantee that the Marin County Free Library is able to carry out its mission; and
- Ensure that access to Library facilities, programs, or services is not negatively impacted by behaviors that create an environment that is unsafe, disruptive, or not conducive to the Library's mission.

POLICY:

Marin County Free Library ("MCFL") facilities are open to people of all ages and backgrounds. Patrons are encouraged to use the library to explore, imagine and innovate by:

- Reading newspapers, magazines, books and other materials
- Checking out library materials
- Attending meetings and programs
- Using computers and "making" using library-provided tools.
- Conducting research
- Completing homework
- Seeking information

PATRON CONDUCT:

Safe Environment. The following actions or behaviors are not allowed on Library property:

1. Any act that constitutes a criminal offense under federal, state, or local law, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Engaging in prohibited activities that relate to material involving the sexual exploitation of minors;
 - b. Using the Internet for activity that violates California law, including engaging in activities that are harmful to minors when children are present;
 - c. Theft;
 - d. Vandalizing library property or causing damage to any other person's property;
 - e. Indecent exposure, public sexual indecency, lewd acts, or any other sexual offense;

- f. Gambling, other than the types exempted by California law;
 - g. Disorderly conduct, including, but not limited to: fighting; engaging in violent or seriously disruptive behavior; or threatening or intimidating library staff or any library patron;
 - h. Harassing or stalking library staff or any library patron. This conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - Filming or photographing any person after being asked to desist;
 - Engaging in conduct (such as persistent staring or gestures) that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her personal safety or feel distressed, alarmed, or harassed; or
 - Using profane, offensive or abusive language that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her personal safety or feel distressed, alarmed, or harassed.
 - i. Trespassing, including knowingly entering Library premises when access and use of library facilities has been suspended.
 - j. Camping on Library grounds.
2. Bringing guns, weapons, knives (other than pocket knives), or items designed or intended to injure or harm people, unless explicitly permitted by law.
 3. Possession, consumption, or selling of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances.
 4. Smoking, rolling, or using any tobacco product, marijuana, synthetic tobacco, synthetic marijuana or electronic or other e-cigarettes (smokeless or the equivalent).
 5. Using wheeled devices inside the Library or on Library grounds, except in designated areas, including use of skateboards, roller-skates, bicycles, motorized or non-motorized scooters, and shopping carts that are larger than allowed by the restriction on allowable articles. These restrictions do not apply to ADA assistive devices or baby strollers.
 6. Entering a library building with animals, except for bona fide service animals as defined by federal and state law.
 7. Creating tripping hazards, or blocking aisles, exits or entrances.
 8. Bringing into the library, or attempting to place or store in the library, any item that:
 - a. Interferes with library operations;
 - b. Creates a safety hazard;
 - c. Denies space to other patrons;
 - d. Blocks aisles;
 - e. Blocks access to or exit from the building;
 - f. Is unsanitary or foul-smelling; or

9. Not wearing shoes or shirts, except for infants or toddlers.
10. Disturbing or harassing other library patrons or library staff. This includes, but is not limited to, creating noise (including loud cell phone use or conversation). Verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated.
11. Loitering on Library premises.

Use and preservation of library materials and property. The following actions or behaviors are not allowed on Library property:

1. Manipulating or bypassing Library systems and procedures, such as those that regulate computer use.
2. Unplugging library equipment to utilize an electrical outlet.
3. Using furniture for anything other than its intended purpose (e.g. a table is not a foot stool).
4. Deliberately damaging library materials.
5. Engaging in activities not reasonably associated with the use of a public library.

Children and Vulnerable Adults* in the Library.

The Marin County Free Library welcomes all members of the public and hopes that visitors will come to know libraries as warm, inviting, and enriching places. Parents, guardians and caregivers must realize that there can be risks associated with leaving children or vulnerable adults unattended at a library. The Library does not and cannot act as a caregiver, baby-sitter or day care center and will not monitor children or vulnerable adults who are left unattended. Children and vulnerable adults are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not violate the code of conduct or disrupt other patrons. The library is not responsible for any consequences of a parent's or guardian's failing in his or her responsibilities.

To enhance the library experience for, and minimize the risk to, children and vulnerable adults, the following requirements apply:

1. The responsibility for the safety and well-being of every child and vulnerable adult using the library rests with the parent, guardian or caregiver, not with library personnel.
2. Children under the age of eight (8) must be attended at all times by a responsible adult or caregiver who is at least 14 years old.
3. Children age eight (8) and older, and vulnerable adults who can understand and follow the Customer Code of Conduct, are welcome to be in the library unattended if they have contact information for a responsible adult or teen who will be available to provide assistance, if needed.
4. Children are not to remain at the library after closing. If a child under 18 or vulnerable adult is left alone at a library at closing, or if a library closes because of an emergency situation, library staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian or

caregiver. If a parent, guardian or caregiver cannot be contacted, or the child or vulnerable adult is not picked up within 10 minutes after closing, library staff will call law enforcement who will assume responsibility for the individual.

5. Additionally, the following actions or behaviors are not allowed on library property:
 - d. Disciplining a child in a manner that injures the child or disrupts other patrons.
 - e. Leaving young children unsupervised or ignoring their disruptive behaviors.
 - f. Adults loitering in the children's areas for no legitimate purpose.

*Definition: For purposes of this policy, 'vulnerable adult' means an individual who is eighteen years of age or older and who is, because of a mental or physical impairment, unable to:

- Protect himself from abuse or exploitation by others; or
- Comprehend or comply with the Library's Customer Code of Conduct.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE:

Failure to comply with this and Library's other established policies may result in:

1. The immediate removal of the customer from the premises; and/or
2. Suspending the customer's access to Library facilities for a set period of time; and/or
3. Denying access to specific services and/or programs.

SUSPENSION OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES:

The librarian may immediately suspend a customer's Library privileges or access to activities, services or facilities if the situation is a serious offense and constitutes a violation of MCFL policies. Examples of serious offenses include, but are not limited to: verbal abuse; violence; threatening behaviors; sexual harassment; vandalism; drug sale, attempted sale or use; intoxication; theft or attempted theft; physical harassment; sexual misconduct; or any behaviors that threaten the safety and security of patrons or staff. The librarian may also issue suspensions for repeated violations of library policies.

A suspension may be appealed in writing to the Library Director within 10 calendar days of the date the suspension is issued. The appeal must clearly state why the customer believes that the privileges should be restored. The appeal should be sent to:

Marin County Free Library
Attn: Library Director
3501 Civic Center Dr. #414
San Rafael, CA 94093

The Director, or a designee, will review and respond to the appeal in writing within 10 business days of the date the appeal was received. The suspension remains in effect until the Director has reviewed the appeal and issued a decision.

The decision of the Director is final.

Thank you.

** Approved by the Board of Supervisors*

Other policies affecting patron use of the Library and Library materials include: the [Public Use Computer Policy](#) and [FAQ](#) (further explains and clarifies the policy); [Materials Selection Policy](#); and the [Library Bill of Rights](#) (and associated interpretive documents).