

POLICIES REGARDING PATRON ACCESS AND BEHAVIOR

(Approved by the Board of Trustees on May 12, 2008)

The Scituate Town Library operates on the principle that public library services should be provided on the basis of equality of access for all. Library users acknowledge by their presence a responsibility to maintain an atmosphere of civility in order to respect and protect the rights of others in their use of the library and its services. Behavior that is disruptive or unreasonably disrespectful or disturbing to others will not be tolerated. Disruptive patrons may be asked to leave the library.

Policies regarding children:

Parents or guardians are responsible for supervising their children in the use of the library and its materials.

The presence of unattended children in the library is a safety issue; the library cannot assume responsibility for children left unattended.

Younger children should be attended and adequately supervised by a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult. Older children may use the library unattended at the discretion of a responsible adult for a length of time commensurate with the maturity level of the child.

At the discretion of a parent or guardian, older children may use the library without a responsible adult present; however, the child should know how to reach a designated responsible adult in case of an emergency or an unexpected early closing of the library.

Both the child and the responsible adult should be aware of the scheduled closing time of the library; if a child is left alone in the library at closing, the staff will notify the police and request they assume responsibility for the child.

The following activities are not allowed in the library:

- Smoking (Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 270, Sec. 21-22).
- Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, or engaging in other disruptive conduct (MGL, Ch. 272, Sec. 41).
- Interfering with another person's right to use the library or with the staff's performance of their duties.
- Threatening behavior, including but not limited to violence, threats of violence, abusive language, and possession of weapons.
- Eating food, except at approved programs and in designated locations. Beverages in spill-proof containers are permitted, except in the Local History Room.
- Sitting on tables, placing feet on furniture, lying on floors, moving furniture, blocking aisles and entries. Patrons should sit one to a chair. Defacing furniture and/or walls is prohibited.
- Bringing animals into the library except those needed to assist a disabled person or as part of a library-sponsored program.
- Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it.
- Talking on cellular phones. Phone conversations should be conducted in the vestibule or outside. Phones should be silenced during extended visits.
- Misusing the rest rooms by willfully clogging a sink or toilet or by defacing walls or floors. The restrooms should not be used as a laundry or washing facility.
- Soliciting or canvassing unless approved by the Board of Trustees; signature collection for town offices or ballot initiatives may be done in person in the vestibule.
- Entering "Staff Only" areas without permission.
- Running, skating, skateboarding, sleeping, excessive displays of affection.
- Remaining in the library after announced official closing. Staff will issue a "closing time warning" 15 minutes prior to closing; patrons should allow adequate time for checking out materials and shutting down computers.

Those who damage or deface library materials or property will be prosecuted (MGL, Ch. 266, Sec. 100). Parents can be held liable for damage done by a child under age 18 (MGL, Ch. 231, Sec. 85). Theft of library materials, use of false identification to obtain a library card, or use of another person's library card without his/her permission is against state law (MGL, Ch. 266, Sec. 99).

Any patron who violates the library rules and regulations will be asked to cease the behavior and may be asked by the Library Director (or a designated staff member in charge) to leave the premises. Library employees will contact the Scituate Police for assistance when warranted by safety concerns.