

## Conduct Policy

This policy on public behavior has been created and adopted in an effort to ensure a safe, orderly and comfortable environment in which all library patrons can use the library's resources most effectively. The following rules are posted for the comfort and protection of all library users and staff. Violations of the rules may result in loss of library privileges and/or referral to law enforcement. This list provides examples only and is not exhaustive or exclusive.

**To ensure a welcoming environment, the responsible use and care of all library materials and property is essential.**

1. Drinking of non-alcoholic beverages is permitted in the library. Consumption of food is prohibited in all public areas of the library, with the exception of meetings held in the meeting rooms and receptions approved by the library.
2. Use of tobacco products is prohibited throughout the library building and on library property, within 25 feet of entrances and exits. NYS Public Health Law 1399.
3. Those who steal, damage or deface library materials or property may be prosecuted. Parents are liable for damage done by a child under the age of eighteen.
4. Customers are required to comply with the library's policies and procedures on computer use and the Internet.
5. Improper use of library restrooms, including, but not limited to, bathing, shaving, hair trimming and laundering is prohibited.

**The safety of customers and staff is essential.**

6. Blocking the entryways, vestibules or a staircase is prohibited. Disruptive groups congregating inside or outside the library will be required to disperse.
7. Threatening, harassing or intimidating language or behavior will result in immediate expulsion from the library and possible legal action.
8. Parents and caregivers are responsible for the behavior, safety and supervision of their children at all times. Children under the age of eight must be supervised by a responsible caregiver at all times.
9. Animals, other than service animals, are not permitted in the library, unless as a part of a program authorized by the Library Director.
10. Customers sleeping in the library may be awakened by library staff if there is concern for the customer's health or well-being, or if the customer's sleep is disturbing others.

**The rights of an individual to use the library without being unreasonably disturbed by another is essential.**

11. Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, whistling, singing, using profanity, running or engaging in other disruptive conduct is prohibited. This includes stalking, prolonged staring at or following another.
12. Shirts and shoes must be worn in the library. Offensive body odor due to poor personal hygiene or overpowering perfume or cologne that causes a nuisance or reasonably interferes with library use by other customers or staff is prohibited.
13. Cell phones should be set to no-ring (vibrate) or turned off when entering the library. Customers may quietly answer phones inside the library, but must take all conversations to the lobby or outside.
14. Taking surveys, circulating petitions, and similar activities are permitted in the library only when authorized by the Library Director.
15. Permission must be obtained from the Director or his/her designee prior to taking photographs, videotaping, or doing similar types of filming in the Library.

Everyone has the right to use library resources provided his or her behavior does not unreasonably interfere with the rights of others to do the same.

Behavior which violates library policy, interferes with the use of the library by others or interferes with staff in the conduct of their duties is not permitted. Customers engaging in such behavior may be asked to stop the behavior and/or they may be asked to leave the building. The police may be called and/or the customer's library privileges may be revoked. Unlawful activities will promptly be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Staff is authorized to require a person to leave the library for the day if in the judgment of the staff member the customer's behavior is disorderly or disruptive. If the behavior is repeated or severe, staff will follow the below policy:

Depending on the severity of the offense, the Library will institute discipline ranging from verbal warning, through denial of specific privileges (such as use of computers), and finally to denial of the right to use the Library (banning) for a specified time period, often a year. In the most severe cases (threatening, harassing, intimidating, using violence), banning will be indefinite. In the event of inappropriate behavior by a minor, the child's parent or guardian will be notified by the Library, usually after the second offense. Staff members shall fill out an Incident Report of the behavior problem and forward it to the Director. When a patron is banned from the Library for a time longer than one week, a letter of explanation is sent to him or her. In the case of a minor child under 16 years of age, a copy of the letter is also sent to his or her parent or guardian. When deemed appropriate by the Library Director, copies of the Incident Reports and/or copies of letters shall be forwarded to the Orangetown Police Department or other relevant law enforcement agency. In the event that the patron seems to use more than one library in the Ramapo Catskill Library System, copies of the Incident Reports and/or copies of letters may also be shared with one or more of the RCLS libraries.

### **Appeal Procedure:**

The Director's written determination may be appealed to the Library Board, if the individual aggrieved files a written notice of appeal within 10 days after he/she receives the determination. Such notice shall be filed with: both the Library Director and the Library Board President, c/o Orangeburg Library, 20 S. Greenbush Rd., Orangeburg, NY, 10962. The Board shall hold a hearing within 30 days after the notice has been filed. The appellant shall be notified at least 10 days before the hearing. At the hearing, the appellant may present evidence, and may call and examine witnesses and cross-examine witnesses of the other party. Within 30 days of the completion of the hearing, the Board shall issue, via certified mail to the appellant, a written decision stating its reasons. These decisions are final.

### **Non-compliance with Ban - Trespassing:**

If a banned individual enters the Orangeburg Library before the return date listed in the ban letter, police will be called and the individual may be arrested for trespassing under Orangetown Ordinance 11-2.