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## Title: Behavior in the Library Policy

Effective Date: 9/15/14

Authorized By: Library Board of Trustees

Date of Last Revision: 2/19/25

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### **Purpose:**

The Behavior in the Library policy is established to provide guidelines for patron behavior that will ensure the safety of staff and patrons as well as maintaining a welcoming atmosphere in the library and providing equitable access to all individuals.

### **Overview:**

Behavior rules apply to all patrons of Huntington City-Township Public Library when using library facilities, or when participating in library programs.

Inappropriate conduct includes any individual or group activity which is unreasonably disturbing to other individuals lawfully using library facilities, materials and/or premises or is otherwise inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying, properly using library materials, appropriately using library spaces, and other similar conduct normally associated with a public library.

### **Definition of Inappropriate Behaviors:**

Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to the following activities;

- Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a crime.
- Possessing, selling, distributing, displaying or using any dangerous weapon upon library premises or using or threatening the use of any other object in such a manner that it may be considered a weapon.
  - Limited exceptions will be made for legally owned firearms as provided by state law.
    - Firearms will not be allowed to be intentionally displayed at any public meeting of the Library Board of Trustees.
- Engaging in any physically intimidating or assaultive behavior or making threats of violence.
- Possessing, selling, distributing, consuming or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance.
- Engaging in any behavior that a reasonable person would find to be disruptive, harassing, or threatening to library users or staff including stalking, prolonged staring at or following with the intent to annoy or behaving in a manner that could reasonably be expected to annoy or disturb other patrons.
- Engaging in any sexual contact, activities or expression.
- Selling, soliciting, surveying, distributing written materials, panhandling or canvassing for any political, charitable or religious purposes inside a library building, doorway or vestibule without prior authorization of the Library Director.
- Smoking or other use of tobacco products including vapor or e-cigarettes in library facilities or on any library property, including outdoor seating areas.
- Prolonged or repeated instances of sleeping on library premises in a manner that is not considered customary or appropriate use of the library facilities.
- Possessing or consuming food and drinks in a manner that is damaging to library facilities or materials. Closed or covered drinks and small snacks are allowed in all areas of the library except the Keefer Center and at the public computers. Any other food must be consumed in the cafe area. Patrons will be asked to move to the cafe area if they are eating full meals or creating an excessive

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mess. If library materials are damaged by food or drink in the library the patron will be responsible for the replacement cost of the items.

- Engaging in excessive or disruptive conversations, talking loudly, or making ongoing noise that is disturbing to other library users or staff.
- Not wearing shoes or not being fully clothed within the library.
- Entering or remaining upon library premises with a bodily hygiene so offensive that it constitutes a nuisance to others.
- Use of furniture in any manner that may damage the furniture, to include placing feet on the furniture.
- Using library materials, equipment or facilities in any manner inconsistent with their customary use.
- Theft or intentional damage of library materials, furniture, equipment or facilities.
- Bringing any animal into the library except service animals.
- Entering non-public areas of the library without permission.
- Causing damage to library restrooms or facilities or using restrooms in a manner inconsistent with their customary use.
- Engaging in any activities that are inconsistent with the normal uses of public library facilities that include reading, studying, and using library materials.
- Violating library rules for acceptable use of the internet and library public computers.
- Refusing to comply with any public health or safety order in a manner that endangers the health or safety of others.
- Leaving personal property unattended in any public space, community room, or study room.

### **Children's Department Safety:**

Due to the need to protect the safety of children, additional rules will apply to behavior within the children's department.

- Any adult without children may not linger in the children's area or use seating or tables in the area for work or study. Adults may enter the department to select materials, consult with library staff, or use the restroom.
- All children under the age of 10 must be appropriately supervised as outlined in the Unattended Patron Policy.

### **Staff Response to Infractions:**

Violation of one or more of the behaviors listed above shall constitute misconduct that will result in enforcement of the policy which may include expulsion from the library and forfeiture of library privileges.

Minor violations of these rules will first result in library staff attempting to educate or warn individuals about policies and enforcement. Repeat misconduct or severe offenses (even in a single isolated event) may result in individuals being banned from the Library for a minimum of one day to a maximum of one year. Library staff will follow the banning procedure set forth below.

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Huntington City-Township Library has a zero tolerance policy for threats and acts of violence. Any conduct that threatens the life or safety of any person or that is damaging to library property, equipment or facilities will result in immediate expulsion from the library.

Library staff are authorized to contact law enforcement in response to any illegal behavior or in the event an individual refuses to leave the library when expelled. Staff may also contact law enforcement to assist in the management of any situation which may be considered dangerous or unpredictable.

Whenever possible, bans should be issued by a supervisor or the Library Director; however, all staff are fully empowered to issue bans at any time without prior approval.

### **Banning Procedure:**

If a person has engaged in severe or repeat misconduct and staff has determined that the individual involved should be banned:

Staff will issue a written notice to the individual involved stating that the individual is banned from the premises of Huntington City-Township Public Library and the Markle Branch. Any expulsion from one location is to be considered in force at all locations. The notice will indicate the reasons for the ban and the time period of the ban. A copy of the ban notice will be given to the individual at the time the ban is issued. If necessary the ban may be mailed to the individual.

If the patron is a minor, an attempt will be made to contact the parent or legal guardian. If no contact is possible, a copy of the ban notice must be sent to the parent or legal guardian.

A copy of all Ban Notice forms with all documentation will be given to the Library Director within 24 hours of the banning action. The Director has the power to affirm, modify, or revoke any suspension or banning.

If any person who has been issued a Ban Notice enters any Huntington City-Township Public Library location before the return date listed on the Ban Notice, he or she will be asked to leave. Refusal to comply with the Ban Notice may result in contact with law enforcement.

### **Appeal Procedure:**

Any person who is issued a ban notice may appeal the ban. A request for appeal must be made in writing to the Library Director. The Director will review the ban and the appeal and determine the status of the ban. If the Director upholds the ban a second appeal may be made to the Library Board. The request for appeal must be sent in writing to the Library Board President. The appeal will be heard at a regular Library Board meeting. The Library Board will vote on the status of the ban.

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**Sample of Ban Notice:**

## Huntington City-Township Public Library

### Notice of Ban

Huntington Main Library | Markle Branch Library

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Int. \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (if under 18): \_\_\_\_\_

On \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM you were found to be in violation of the Huntington City-Township Public Library's behavior policy.

You are expelled from the library for a period of

1 day      1 week      1 month      3 months      6 months      1 year

The first date that you may return to the library is \_\_\_\_\_. If you enter the library before this date staff may notify law enforcement.

Staff issuing ban: \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Ban:

*Appeal of this ban must be requested in writing to the attention of the Library Director.*