

Code of Conduct Policy

In order to provide a safe and welcoming environment within the Library that allows all Patrons to use Library facilities to the fullest extent during regularly scheduled hours, and allows the Library to fulfill its Mission, the Portage County Public Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following rules and regulations.

The Library Code of Conduct Policy is enforced inside the Library (including restrooms and meeting rooms), on outdoor Library property, and in virtual spaces like online chats or meetings hosted by the Library, and phone calls. Patrons shall not engage in any illegal activity while on library property. Persons whose actions violate state or local law may be prosecuted.

Respect People's Property

Property that belongs to the Library or other customers is not your own. Do not steal or damage anything. Adults are responsible for any damage their custodial children cause. Unauthorized persons shall not enter non-public areas of the Library without permission.

The Library Is Safe

If it is against the law, it is not allowed.

- Children under the age of 8 must be directly supervised and within visual contact of a responsible caregiver at all times. If a minor is left alone in the Library who is too young, deemed not responsible enough by Library staff, or not picked up after closing, law enforcement will be contacted. (See the PCPL Child Safety Guide.)
- Adults unaccompanied by a child, and not actively engaged in Youth Services Library business, may be asked to relocate to other floors of the Library.
- This is a substance-free place. You cannot possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Possessing or displaying dangerous weapons, concealed or not, are not allowed on Library property.
- Do not block aisles, walkways, corridors, doorways, workspaces, or reading areas with your things or yourself.
- To promote a safe environment, patrons may bring two bags into the library, but unfurled bedrolls, blankets, sleeping bags, or bags measuring more than three feet in length are prohibited.
- Carts and other wheeled devices meant for carrying baggage are not allowed in the Library, unless being used in association with a program or a display in the Library. Wheelchairs, walkers and other devices designed for walking stability or medical usage are allowed, as are strollers and wagons when used to transport children and devices designed to carry books and other Library materials.
- Stay awake. Sleeping (or looking like you are asleep) makes it hard for other people to tell whether or not you are okay. While the Library can be a place of peace and rest, it is not a place for sleeping.
- Items deemed unsanitary will not be permitted in the library buildings.

The Library Is Welcoming

Show respect to each other and help to keep the Library environment calm and courteous.

- Do not threaten, harass, stalk, swear, make obscene gestures, or disrespect others or the Library.
- Do not interfere with Library employees in the performance of their duties. This includes harassment, stalking, and the use of abusive, inappropriate, or obscene language or actions toward employees.
- Do not engage in public displays of affection or indecent exposure.
- No selling, panhandling or solicitation. Taking surveys or asking for signatures to a petition is not allowed on Library property.
- Do not leave your property unattended. It will be considered abandoned and may be removed after 15 minutes of being unattended.
- Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, any attribute, or protected class is not tolerated. This includes both words and behavior towards others.
- No disruptive noise or actions. This includes being loud enough for others to hear from a reasonable distance, loudly talking on a phone, playing music and videos, rough play, running, moving furniture, and climbing.
- Do not use athletic equipment such as skateboards, roller skates, etc. You can bring these things inside with you, just do not use them. Keep bikes and scooters locked in the racks outside.
- Do not cause strong smells. These may include perfume, body odor, and food odor.
- Follow the Library's Internet Use policy.

The Library Is Clean and Healthy

Clean and tidy up after yourself so the Library remains fresh for every person entering the building.

- Using tobacco or vaping products must be done off of Library property. This includes rolling cigarettes. You can have these products, but keep them stored away and out of sight.
- Snacks and drinks are allowed if they are small, pre-packaged and do not have an odor. Messy foods or drinks must be taken outside.
- Meals are only allowed in the meeting rooms, not study rooms.
- Wear appropriate clothing and keep your shoes on at all times.
- Do not lie down in the Library. Keep your feet off the furniture. One person per seat.
- Animals are only allowed inside the building if they are service animals or are part of a Library program. Therapy animals are not allowed. (See the PCPL Animal Policy)
- Avoid making a mess. This includes messes in the restrooms.
- Don't visit the Library if you are sick. If you appear to have symptoms of illness or contagious medical conditions, create any kind of health hazard, or admit to being ill, you may be told to leave the Library.

What If Someone Doesn't Follow the Rules?

Everyone has the right to use the Library as long as they do not interfere with anyone else's right to do the same. Any patron not abiding by these, or other Library regulations, may be required to leave the premises and may forfeit his or her Library privileges. The Library Board of Trustees authorizes Library staff, security personnel and law enforcement with enforcing the Library's Code of Conduct Policy.

- Follow instructions from Library and security staff. This includes providing your name if asked.
- Breaking the rules may lead to being banned from the Library. Anyone who is banned for one year or more can appeal in writing to the Director after six (6) months. The Director's decision is final.
- If you are banned, you will not be able to check out physical materials, in-person or using curbside pick-up, or attend events.
- It is trespassing if you are on Library property when you have an active ban.
- Library and security staff will contact law enforcement if needed or if you refuse to leave the building after being told to do so.