



# CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY:

Purpose: The J.V. Fletcher Library (the "Library") serves the community most effectively when all users conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not interfere with the nature of the Library's programs and services. The Library provides reading areas and meeting rooms in the Library building for the public to study, consult, select and examine Library materials and/or to participate in related library programs. Any activity not connected with these purposes is inappropriate and is expressly prohibited. Anyone who is not using the Library for these purposes or who is in violation of this Policy or any applicable law is subject to removal from the building and/or restriction of library privileges in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Policy.

## 1. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR:

As a general rule, engaging in activities not associated with the normal and customary use of a public library is not permitted. Activities normally associated with a public library include but are not limited to reading, studying, researching, properly using library equipment and materials, attending Library sponsored events, and attending or presenting events in approved meeting rooms. In addition, library users may not engage in disruptive/destructive behavior that interferes with the use of the library by other persons or that interferes with a library employee's performance of his or her duties. All of the requirements in this document apply to children and parents shall be held responsible for any violations committed by their children.

Unacceptable behavior may include any form of harassment which could result in physical, emotional, or mental injury to oneself, the staff, the general public, or when it could result in damage to the facilities, equipment, or materials. This policy is designed to protect the rights of individuals who are in the library to use library materials and/or services, to protect the rights of staff members to conduct library business without interference, and to preserve and protect library materials and facilities.

Without limiting the generality of the forgoing, the following activities are prohibited in the library:

- Smoking and/or use or consumption of tobacco products, including use of electronic devices and/or vaping (Massachusetts General Laws ["G.L."] c. 270, Sec. 21-22)
- Cannabis usage in any form
- Possession or use of any unlawful controlled substance
- Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly or engaging in other disruptive conduct (G.L. c. 272, Sec. 41)
- Interfering with another person's right to use the Library or with the Library staff's performance of their duties (including enforcement of approved policies), or a Library volunteer's performance of volunteer duties
- Threatening behavior, including, but not limited to, hate speech, violence, threats of violence and possession of weapons



- Bringing animals into the Library except those needed to assist individuals with disabilities and that qualify as service animals or emotional support animals. Pets are not permitted within the Library.
- Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it
- Misusing the rest rooms (e.g. using them as a laundry or washing facility)
- Soliciting, canvassing, proselytizing and panhandling of any kind
- Trespassing in non-public areas, such as "Staff Only" or being in the Library without permission of an authorized Library employee before or after the Library's operating hours
- Leaving a child under the age of 10 unattended in the Library (G.L. c.119, Sec. 39)
- Fighting or challenging to fight, running in a reckless manner, pushing, shoving, or throwing things
- Sleeping
- Stealing, damaging, altering, or inappropriate use of Library property, including books, computer hardware and software, printers, copiers, phones, and other equipment
- Engaging in any act or conduct which is prohibited by Federal Law, the Massachusetts General Laws or the Charter, the bylaws and policies of the Town of Westford or other applicable law or Library policy.
- Parents are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their minor children at all times.
- A person who is properly licensed to carry a concealed firearm may legally enter the Library with such firearm as long as the weapon stays under their direct control, or the weapon is placed in a lockbox or approved container prior to entering the Library.

## 2. VIOLATIONS:

Library staff and/or, at the request of a staff member, Westford Police Officers, are authorized to enforce these rules and regulations and may direct any person, who has engaged in or is engaging in prohibited conduct or activity, to leave the Library and its grounds. Any person refusing to leave, after having been directed to do so by a staff member or police officer, may be subject to arrest and/or prosecution for trespass (G.L. c. 266, Sec. 120).

Library staff will provide the offender with at least one verbal warning to cease and desist from the prohibited conduct before ordering that the patron leave the Library. Notwithstanding the foregoing, library staff may order that a person immediately leave the library if staff reasonably believes that the facts of the particular circumstance justify immediate action.

If a minor child is required to leave the Library, a parent or guardian will be responsible for picking them up. Under no circumstance will a child be transported by Library staff.



### 3. SANCTIONS:

At the request of Library staff or on their own accord, the Director may impose sanctions against any person who has engaged in prohibited conduct or activity within the Library, or upon its grounds. Sanctions may include restrictions or suspensions of the individual's Library privileges and/or prohibiting the individual from entering or being present at the Library, or on its grounds. Notice of such sanction, or proposed sanction, shall be given in writing and delivered either in person or by certified mail. In the case of a minor child, a copy of such notice shall be delivered, either in person or by certified mail, to the child's parent or guardian, if the identity of such person is known to or can be ascertained by the Director, in the absence of such information the notice may be delivered to the minor in hand. Such notice shall inform the person of the specific conduct or activity which is the basis for the sanction, the date of its occurrence and the right of the individual to request a hearing on the sanction. Any person who enters the Library or grounds, after receiving notice of a sanction prohibiting such entry shall be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespass (G.L. c. 266, Sec. 120).

In addition to loss of library privileges, the following sanctions may be invoked:

Whoever willfully, maliciously or wantonly writes upon, injures, defaces, tears, cuts, mutilates or destroys any library material or property, shall make restitution in full replacement value of the library materials or property, and, in addition, shall be punished by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than two years or by a fine of not less than one hundred nor more than one thousand dollars, or both (G.L. c. 266, Sec. 100)

Parents are liable for damage done by a child under 18 (MGL, Ch. 231, Sec. 85G).

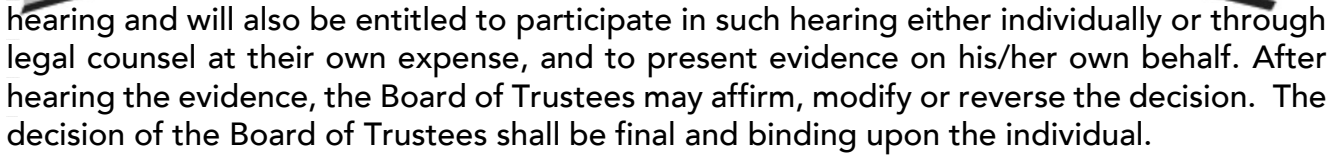
Theft of library materials, use of false identification to obtain a library card, or use of another person's library card without his/her permission are against state law and will be prosecuted (G.L. 266, Sec. 99).

The Town of Westford, its Board of Library Trustees and Police Department reserve the right to enforce any law violated while on the premises of the Library through any lawful means, and the election of one remedy shall not preclude the pursuit of other remedies available at law or in equity.

### 4. APPEALS; RIGHT TO A HEARING:

Any person who is aggrieved by the action of the Director in imposing a sanction prior to a hearing, may appeal such decision to the Board of Trustees. The appeal shall be in writing and presented to the Board of Trustees within ten (10) days of the date upon which notice of the sanction was served upon the person. In addition, the Director has the right to request a hearing prior to imposing any sanctions under this policy.

All hearings under this policy will be conducted pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§18-25 and the regulations of the Attorney General issued pursuant thereto. A person will be entitled to a minimum of five (5) days' advance notice of the scheduling of such

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