

Ames Public Library Policy
Section: Library Operations
Subject: Conduct in the Library

Board
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Policy

Ames Public Library provides a safe, comfortable environment conducive to the use of library materials and facilities. The library is intended for the use of all members of the public. Customers are expected to observe the rights of other customers and staff members and to use the library for its intended purposes. Misconduct will not be allowed in the library.

Library staff members are responsible for identifying incidents of misconduct and for policy enforcement. Customers who observe misconduct should avoid confrontation and immediately notify library staff.

Definition

Misconduct is behavior that is illegal or that:

- interferes with the rights of individuals to use library materials, services and premises. The term “premises” includes: inside and outside areas of library property and the bookmobile.
- interferes with the ability of library staff to conduct library business, or
- threatens the safe and comfortable environment of the library or the safety of those using the library.

Misconduct may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Willfully annoying, harassing, or threatening another person.
[Harassment is defined as any action taken or situation created intentionally to produce psychological or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or ridicule. Harassment is characterized by requests for sexual contact, unwelcome physical advances, or conduct (verbal or physical) of a nature that is intimidating, demeaning, hostile, offensive, or potentially dangerous to self or others.]
- Any behavior that endangers or could endanger the safety or health of others.
- Behaving in a disorderly, loud, or boisterous manner.
- Using abusive or profane language.
- Using false identification or using a fictitious name or address.
- Theft, vandalism, or the deliberate destruction of library materials, property, or the personal property of customers or staff members.
- Maliciously accessing, altering, deleting, damaging, or destroying any computers, peripherals, computer system, network, computer program or data.
- Inappropriate touching of self or others.
- Impeding access to library resources, premises, or an area of the premises, or blocking access to library materials for extended periods of time.

- Entering the non-public or locked areas, unless accompanied by a staff member or through prior authorization from a staff member.
- Intentionally leaving personal items on the premises. The library assumes no responsibility for any personal belongings left unattended.
- Using personal electronic audio devices without earphones or with earphones at an unreasonable volume.
- Using cell phones at a volume that is disruptive to others.
- Distributing or posting material without library staff approval.
- Picture taking or video taping of individuals unless authorized by the individuals involved or their parents if minors are present.
- Soliciting of sales or selling to library customers except at library-sponsored events.
- Soliciting signatures in person for a petition; however, the library will accept citizen petitions and make them available in the library.
- Bringing animals into the library, except trained service animals or animals present for library-sponsored events.
- Parking bicycles anywhere other than in the provided bicycle racks.
- Using sports equipment such as skateboards or in-line skates on the premises.
- Using tobacco products on the premises.
- Using alcohol on library premises.
- Using the restroom facilities for bathing.
- Possession, use, or threat of use of dangerous weapons¹, including all firearms.
- Refusing to comply with the directive of a library staff member.
- Violation of any library policy or any municipal, state, or federal law or code.

Consequences

Enforcement of these rules may take the form of any of the following actions, depending upon the severity of the misconduct as determined by the staff on duty.

- Customers who engage in misconduct will be given one warning and asked to behave in an appropriate manner. Customers who do not modify their behavior after one warning will be asked to leave the library for the rest of the day.
- Customers who engage in misconduct that in the judgment of a staff member is extreme will be ordered to leave the building immediately.
- If necessary, the senior staff member on duty will call the police and the senior staff member is authorized to sign a no trespass order provided by the police officer for a time period up to thirty (30) days.
- Customers who engage in misconduct may receive a written notice from the Director and may be barred from the library for a period of one week to one year, depending on the nature of the misconduct, the extent of damage or disruption caused by infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.

References

¹ Dangerous weapons are as defined in Section 702.7 of the Code of Iowa and include, but are not limited to any offensive weapon, pistol, revolver, or other firearm, dagger, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, of knife having a blade exceeding five inches in length, or any portable device or weapon directing an electric current, impulse, wave, or beam that produces a high-voltage pulse designed to immobilize a person.

This policy has been developed in concert with the American Library Association Guidance Document “Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage.”