

## **PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR POLICY**

The policy of the Hamburg Public Library is to provide a safe, comfortable environment in which to use library materials and services. The library is intended for all members of the public. Patrons are expected to respect the rights of other patrons and staff members, and to use the library for its intended purposes. Prohibited behavior will not be allowed in the library.

### ***Definition***

Prohibited behavior is that which:

- interferes with the rights of individuals to use library materials and services
- interferes with the ability of library staff to conduct library business, or
- threatens the safety or comfort of the library and its patrons

***Prohibited behavior may include, but is not limited to, the following:***

- willfully annoying, harassing, or threatening another person (this includes any action taken or situation created intentionally to produce psychological or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or ridicule; also includes any type of sexual harassment, or behavior which is verbally or physically abusive)
- shouting or loud speaking which is disturbing to others
- consuming food or beverages outside of designated areas
- removal of library materials without checking them out
- failure to wear appropriate attire (i.e., shoes, shirts)
- smoking or chewing tobacco
- skates, skateboards, or other wheeled devices within the facility-baby strollers, equipment required by persons with disabilities, and library equipment are permitted
- depositing litter anywhere but in trash receptacles
- bringing in animals of any kind, other than those which assist people with disabilities, or those brought in by the library
- spitting on patrons or facility
- soliciting or selling not approved by library staff
- soliciting signatures in person for a petition; however, the library will accept citizen petitions and post them
- allowing any child under age 9 to be alone in the library
- violation of local, state, or federal laws on library property
- vandalism
- abusive or obscene language

- impeding access to the facility or any areas of the building
- entering locked or restricted areas without a staff member
- listening to radios, portable CD players, etc., without headphones
- picture-taking or video-taping unless authorized by individuals involved or presence of parents/guardians
- maliciously accessing, altering, deleting, damaging or destroying any computers, peripherals, computer system, network, computer programs, or data
- bringing any type of weapon into the library
- running, wrestling, throwing objects, or "rough-housing" of any kind
- theft of materials belonging to the library\*, staff, or other patrons

*\* According to Section 714.5 of the Code of Iowa, it is a criminal offense to intentionally fail to return library materials. It states that if a "person fails to return library materials for two months or more after the date the person agreed to return the materials, (it) is evidence of intent to deprive" the library of materials. In the event that the materials have been lost, Iowa law provides that arrangements may be made to pay for them.*

## Consequences

When prohibited behavior occurs, the staff member will determine if the child's parent, guardian or other caregiver is in the building. Once supervision has been determined, the following procedures will be taken:

- A. For children older than age 9 who come to the library without a parent, guardian or other caregiver and are disruptive:
  - 1. Staff will politely, but firmly tell them they must stop the disruptive behavior (running, loudness, destruction, etc.) or they will be asked to leave.
  - 2. If disruptive behavior does not stop, the staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian, and will require the child to leave the building.
  - 3. If behavior is repeated, they may be asked to not return to the library for a specified amount of time.
  
- B. For children who come to the library with a parent, guardian or other caregiver but are not effectively supervised:
  - 1. Staff will politely, but firmly tell the parent, guardian or other caregiver that the prohibited behavior must stop or they will not be permitted to use the library.
  - 2. If disruptive behavior continues, staff may require the parent, guardian or other caregiver to remove the child(ren) from the library.
  
- C. In the case of any prohibited behavior that is judged by staff to be extreme, the offender will be ordered to leave the facility or police may be called. Patrons who engage in prohibited behavior on more than one instance will be **warned** by the Librarian that they shall be banned from the library for **one month**. Following one month, any additional misconduct will result in banishment from the library for **one year**. Patron must then appear before the Library Board of Trustees before privileges are reinstated.

This policy is available upon request. The policy is designed to insure the right of every individual to use the library unless his or her behavior, or those in their care, impinges on the rights of other patrons to use the library.

*Approved by the Hamburg Public Library Board of Trustees March 1, 2004*