Code of Conduct for Public Library Behavior

The Dwight Foster Public Library is committed to maintaining an atmosphere conducive to reading, study, research, connection, and the pursuit of life-long learning opportunities. To ensure this environment, the Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following Code of Conduct.

1. Library patrons are expected to use the Library, including its facilities, grounds, resources, and materials, in a respectful, responsible, appropriate, and courteous manner. Examples of respectful library use expectations include but are not limited to the following:

    - Patrons are expected to treat library materials, furniture, equipment, and spaces with care and to use them as intended.
    - Non-alcoholic beverages in covered containers are allowed in the Library. Light refreshments are permitted in the Library's entryway, the teen room, meeting rooms, and staff areas. Library patrons are expected to maintain library cleanliness while consuming beverages and food in permitted areas.
    - Patrons may not produce excessive noise. Differing levels of noise are appropriate and expected in different spaces in the Library. For example, library staff welcome the noise that accompanies developmentally-appropriate indoor play in the children's area of the Library. Library staff expect limited noise and low volume in the designated quiet area on the second floor of the Library. Conversational volume is appropriate in other areas of the library.
    - Patrons are expected to maintain behavior that does not excessively disrupt other patrons, library staff, or library services.
    - Sleeping or laying down is not allowed in the Library or on library grounds.
    - Parents and guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children. The Library's "Unattended Children Policy" has clear rules regarding the ages that children are allowed to be in the Library unattended.
    - Adults unaccompanied by children or teens are allowed to use the juvenile or teen collections but are not allowed to remain in those specially designated areas without staff permission.
    - Bringing any animal into the Library is not allowed, with the exception of service animals, law enforcement animals, or animals affiliated with authorized programs.

- Patrons are expected to keep their personal belongings with them. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended. Personal items left by patrons are subject to relocation or disposal.
- Patrons may not relocate library furniture without the permission of library staff.
- Individuals must wear appropriate and adequate clothing including shoes and a shirt at all times in the Library.
- Sexual contact or conduct is prohibited, including indecent exposure, inappropriate physical contact, solicitation for sex, or display of pornography.
- Patrons are expected to stay within public areas. Entering a staff-only space is only permitted with the permission of library staff.

2. Library patrons are expected to act in a manner that maintains a safe, secure, and healthy environment. Examples of safe library use expectations include but are not limited to the following:

    - Behavior that may jeopardize the safety of patrons, staff, or facilities at the Library is prohibited, including running or fighting.
    - Disorderly, dangerous, threatening, abusive, indecent, profane, obscene, racist, or harassing language or behavior is prohibited.
    - Stealing, attempting to steal, damaging, vandalizing, or altering any Library property or the property of staff or patrons is prohibited.
    - Engaging in unwanted or inappropriate interactions with patrons or staff is prohibited, including prolonged staring, following others, and unwanted conversations.
    - Strong fragrances, strong odors, or unacceptable personal hygiene that unreasonably interferes with others' library use are not allowed.
    - Openly carrying a firearm is not allowed except for on-duty law enforcement officials. Concealed carry of a firearm is permissible provided the proper permit has been attained. No one may exhibit any weapon, tool, or other item in a threatening manner.
    - Using or handling tobacco or vaping products inside the Library or within a 15-foot perimeter of the library's entrance is prohibited.
    - Possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances while in the Library or on library grounds is prohibited.
    - Patrons may not remain in the Library after closing, when requested to leave during emergency situations, or when excluded from the Library due to conduct. Staff may grant permission for patrons to remain in the FCCU Community Room after hours following the Library's Meeting Room Policy.

3. Library patrons will use the Library in a manner that does not interrupt, inhibit, or interfere with others' access to and use of the Library and library materials. Examples of library use expectations include but are not limited to the following:

    - Patrons may not obstruct access to library spaces, including the entryway, vestibule, book return, staircase, exits, walkways, or aisles. Any bicycle or other item blocking the Library's entryway, walkways, or aisles is subject to relocation or disposal by library staff. Disruptive groups congregating in the Library or on library grounds may be asked to disperse.
    - Canvassing, gathering signatures, soliciting donations, fundraising, sales, or distributing materials at the Library without prior approval is not allowed.

Any behavior or actions not listed above will be left to the discretion of the Library Director or the staff member in charge.

Enforcement of the Code of Conduct

The code of conduct rules are in place for the comfort and protection of all. They will be courteously and firmly enforced by library staff.

When possible, staff will first educate individuals about the applicable policies before taking other measures to enforce those policies. If necessary, the police may be called for assistance. Patrons should notify library staff with concerns regarding violations of the code of conduct. Persons who fail to follow the Library's code of conduct may be excluded from the Library and/or face legal action. Any person who is asked to leave the Library as a result of the violation of these guidelines and refuses to do so shall be considered to be trespassing. Severe or repeated violations could result in temporary or permanent exclusion from the Library.

Any patron whose library privileges have been suspended by the Library Director or another library staff member may appeal the decision to the Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees within thirty (30) days of the decision.

Approved by the Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees
Passed: 10/4/1999
Revised: 2/4/2002
Revised: 1/9/2012
Revised: 6/9/2014
Revised: 11/10/2014
Revised: 8/10/2026