

**St. Joseph Public Library
Behavior Policy**

The St. Joseph Public Library strives to protect the health, safety, and security of its patrons, volunteers, and employees and to ensure equal and equitable access for everyone to all resources, services, and branches.

For the comfort and safety of patrons, volunteers, and employees and the protection of library property, all persons are asked to follow the St. Joseph Public Library Behavior Policy while on library property:

1. Observe all Federal, State and local laws while on library property.
2. Behave with kindness and consideration toward all when on library property. Library resources, services, and facilities are here for everyone. Library employees are expected to behave courteously and expect to be treated courteously.
3. Library resources, services and facilities are paid for with local tax dollars. Please help us keep all library property clean and well maintained for the benefit of everyone.
4. Parents and caregivers, please supervise children. Children eight years old and younger must be accompanied by a parent or a caregiver.
5. All persons should refrain from any activity on library property that interferes with the ability of others to use the library, disrupts the normal functioning of the library, or could result in physical, emotional, or mental injury to oneself or others.

In accordance with Missouri State Statutes, any or all persons may be banned from access to the library and its services for willfully violating the Behavior Policy. Any patron banned from the library is banned from all St. Joseph Public Library locations.

Examples of Inappropriate Behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Any behavior that is unsafe or disruptive to library use
- Hitting and fighting
- Eating and drinking where restricted
- Tobacco and e-cigarette usage (except in designated areas)
- Not wearing shoes or a shirt
- Obscene, abusive, threatening or intimidating language
- Talking excessively loudly-or being unruly
- Loitering, panhandling or soliciting
- Staring at or following others unrelated to library business
- Sexual advances to library patrons, volunteers, or employees
- Substance abuse or public drunkenness
- Possession or use of drug paraphernalia
- Sleeping
- Bringing bedrolls, luggage or large amounts of personal belongings into the library

- Engaging employees in extended non-library related conversations
- Displaying a weapon in a threatening manner
- Personal hygiene that disrupts library business
- Using electronic devices that disturb others or outside of designated areas
- Damaging library property

Procedures for Decision-making and Reporting

In the case of an emergency, or in view of dangerous or threatening behavior, employees are authorized to call the police immediately, before contacting a supervisor.

The following steps will be taken when staff observes inappropriate behavior on library property:

1. Any employee who observes inappropriate behavior on library property should report the behavior immediately to the branch manager, department manager, or the designated supervisor. In the absence of all of the above, the employee is authorized to make a decision about what to do next. This could include calling the director.
2. Appropriate actions on the part of the staff, except in an emergency, should begin with informing the person or persons of the inappropriate behavior and asking them to stop the inappropriate behavior explaining that the behavior is disturbing others, interfering with others' use of the library, or impeding library business.
3. If the person (or persons) refuses to follow this request, the employee is authorized to ask them to leave for the day and inform them when they can return. Any violation of library policy (including Behavior Policy) where an individual is asked to leave is a minimum of a one-day ban.
4. If after employee intervention the person (or persons) refuses to leave or returns to the library before the end of the ban period, behaves in a threatening manner, indicates a lack of willingness or ability to respond appropriately, or in any case of emergency, staff is authorized to call the police immediately. A supervisor should be informed after all 911 calls. Employees may be requested to file a police report.
5. If individuals are asked to leave the library or if the police are called, an incident report should be submitted to the library staff and director.

Restriction or Loss of Privileges

The library reserves the right to require anyone who engages in inappropriate behavior to leave the premises and to restrict the privilege of an individual for a specified period of time or to ban an individual from the library for a specified period of time.

Children and Youth

Children exhibiting inappropriate behavior in the library require special consideration and staff discretion. The age of the child and the severity of the behavior are factors to consider when dealing with the inappropriate behavior. Inappropriate behaviors and consequences will be discussed with a parent or guardian when possible.

Specific Behaviors and Banning Lengths

The following are examples of inappropriate behavior and the suggested library response. The list is meant as a guideline and is not all-inclusive or definitive.

One Day Ban

After an employee warning about any of the following behaviors or situations:

- Unreasonable noise, talking loudly, singing, unruly activity, or using electronic devices in a manner that disturbs others.
- Using obscene or vulgar language or gestures.
- Using antagonistic language.
- Being under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs.

One Week up to Six Month Ban

- A recurrence of any of the above behaviors after receiving a ban for the behavior.
- Threats, challenging to fight, or fighting between patrons.
- Selling, using, or possessing illegal drugs on library property.
- Using slurs or hate speech on library property.
- Behavior that is threatening or harassing. This includes stalking, lurking, unwanted touching, and obscene or offensive gesturing.
- Repeatedly returning to the library before the ban period is up.

One Year Ban

- Engaging in any activity in violation of Federal, State, local, or other applicable law. The police will be notified if illegal behaviors are observed.
- Displaying weapons (except as permitted by law) or threats issued with a weapon.
- Obscene acts such as sex acts and indecent exposure.
- Threats of violence against staff.
- Stealing, damaging, vandalizing, altering, or inappropriate use of library property in library facilities or on library grounds.
- Repeated violations of the Behavior Policy within a span of time.
- Repeatedly returning to the library before the ban period is up

Longer Than One Year

- Physical violence against staff.
- Any repeated and escalating behavior that prior bans did not correct.
- Anyone convicted in court whose sentence includes banning from SJPL.
- Repeatedly returning to the library before the ban period is up.

Anyone who has been banned has the right to appeal the decision. Patrons may contact Library Administration to discuss library banning issues.