

Code of Conduct

Welcome to the Poughkeepsie Public Library District. We are proud to partner with our patrons to provide a safe and positive environment for all. In order to provide an appropriate library environment and to ensure constructive use of Library District facilities, materials, and services as well as the safety and personal comfort of all our library patrons and staff, the following Code of Conduct will be in effect at all times. The Code of Conduct extends to social media, including email. Anyone who violates the Code of Conduct may be removed from the library properties and/or prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The Library District has the right to amend the Code of Conduct at any time.

1. This is your public library

Appropriate behavior is required at all times, and patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library. Reasonable quiet is expected, especially in designated study areas. No patron may disturb others using the library.

Misconduct such as the use of foul, offensive or threatening language and gestures; harassment; public drunkenness; use, sale or exchange of alcohol or drugs; gambling; loud talking and laughing; running, pushing, and fighting; and other similar offensive behavior are not allowed on Library District property as well as on Library District social media and email. The Library District has the right to prohibit groups from congregating in the building or on the grounds. In addition, sleeping, staring, stalking, soliciting, loitering, littering, weapons, and damaging property are prohibited.

Using cellular phones, pagers, or other electronic devices in a manner that disturbs others is prohibited.

The use of benches and other areas outside the Library is intended for short periods of time (such as waiting for a ride or meeting someone) and is limited to less than 30 (thirty) minutes.

Adults may use the children's areas when they accompany children or when using the resources only available in that location.

The Library District uses CCTV (closed-circuit TV) to monitor indoor and outdoor areas.

2. Children and the Library District

The Library District cannot assume responsibility for the care and supervision of children. Parents and caregivers of children 9 years old and younger are to remain in the library at all times, including when a child is in a library program. Parents and caregivers are expected to supervise the behavior of their children. In accordance with school attendance laws, and in support of education, children under the age of 16 are not permitted on Library District property during school hours, unless accompanied by a parent, teacher, or legal guardian.

3. Teen Area Access

The Library District reserves the right to enact access protocols to all teen spaces. Such protocols shall be consistently applied throughout the Library District and reviewed regularly for appropriateness and necessity.

4. Animals in the Library

Pets are not permitted in the library except for properly identified service animals or for programming purposes.

5. Dress, Personal Hygiene, and Public Health Emergencies

Patrons shall be fully clothed, including footwear.

Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive such that it disturbs others shall be required to leave the building.

Patrons shall comply with all rules and regulations established by New York State, Dutchess County, the City and/or Town of Poughkeepsie, and the Library District during periods of public health emergencies or a declared pandemic or epidemic. These rules will be prominently displayed at all library entrances. Patrons unable to medically tolerate wearing a face covering should notify Library District administration.

6. Parking

The parking areas are solely for the use of patrons and staff while they are in the library. Vehicles must park in legal, designated spaces. Violators are subject to having their vehicle booted or towed. Unauthorized overnight parking is not permitted and is also subject to booting.

7. Smoking, Food, and Beverages

In accordance with New York State and local law, the library is a smoke-free establishment and there shall be no smoking, vaping, or juuling on Library District property.

The consumption of food and alcoholic beverages on Library District property is prohibited, unless related to an approved Library District program. Non-alcoholic beverages in covered containers may be consumed. However, all beverages must be clearly visible and identifiable at all times.

8. Pedestrian Safety

For the safety of all patrons and staff, no one may run, skate, or use a skateboard or scooter on Library District property. No one may ride bicycles on the stairs or walkways around the buildings. Bicycles may not be stored inside Library District facilities; racks are provided for storage of bicycles.

9. Library Materials and Equipment

Library materials must be returned on time and in good condition; overdue materials deprive others in need of those materials. Patron accounts over \$25 may be referred to a collection agency.

Use of Library District computers requires a valid Mid-Hudson Library System library card, where the user's name and the name of the library card registration are the same. Access is provided to guests from outside the MHLS service area; inquire at a Service Desk for more information.

A library patron who deliberately alters a library computer database or destroys computer equipment will forfeit all library privileges, will be subject to financial liability for damages, and may be subject to criminal penalties.

A library patron who vandalizes, steals, defaces, or destroys any library material, equipment or building components will forfeit all library privileges, will be subject to financial liability for damages, and may be subject to criminal penalties.

All briefcases, oversized handbags, carryalls, luggage, packages, overcoats, and shopping bags are subject to inspection by library staff or security guards. The storage of personal items in the library or on library grounds is prohibited and personal belongings should not be left unattended.

10. Proper Identification

In the event of violations of this Code, library staff or security guards may request a patron to provide proper identification. Failure to provide such identification may lead to removal from the library.

11. Use of Library Grounds

The public areas of the Library, including both facilities and grounds, are a limited public forum. This policy is for the express purpose of maintaining orderly management and control of all Library grounds to create a safe, respectful, and appropriate environment for all patrons. Engaging in activities that interfere with or restrict patron access to Library facilities or grounds at any time, or are reasonably likely to do so, is not permitted. The following activities are prohibited on Library grounds: 1) distribution of leaflets, flyers, or other written publications; 2) distribution and circulation of petitions to collect signatures; and 3) public demonstration and political speech. Further, public solicitation of funds is prohibited on Library property. All yard signs, other than those approved by the Library, are prohibited on Library property. Signs posted on Library grounds will be removed and disposed of by Library Staff.

Patron concerns about issues raised in this policy should be brought to the attention of the Library District Administration. Thank you for your support as we provide high quality public library experiences for everyone.