

Burke County Public Library

Behavior and Conduct Policy

It is the policy of the Burke County Public Library (BCPL) to offer the full range of library services to all customers, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, racial or ethnic origin, religion, or economic status. It is the intent of the library to provide its programs, collections, and services with a minimum of regulations, adopting only those which are essential to the successful operation of the Burke County Public Library.

BCPL recognizes that library customers are in fact the owners of the library. As user-owners, the public has certain expectations of its public library. These include a collection of relevant and current materials, pleasant and attractive surroundings, engaging and informative programs, and courteous and effective staff members.

Customers have a right to assume that visits to the library will be free from harassment, free from physical discomfort and danger, and free from psychological and emotional stress.

The rights of both the public and the staff are sometimes violated by the attitudes and behavior of a very small number of persons.

It is expected that patrons shall engage in activities typically associated with use of a public library such as reading, studying, researching, participating in a library program or activity, or using library materials. Patrons not engaged in such activities may be required to leave the premises.

It shall be the policy of the Burke County Public Library to maintain in the library an environment conducive to study as well as casual use. To assure the successful implementation of this policy statement, the library considers the following descriptions to be representative, albeit not exhaustive, of behavior patterns unacceptable for the BCPL (BCPL includes the buildings and grounds of the Morganton, Valdese, and C.B. Hildebrand Public Libraries):

- Sleeping.
- Obscene or abusive language.
- Use of tobacco products on library property.
- Playing of audio or video such that sound is audible to others.
- Blocking or in any way interfering with the free movement of any person or persons on library property.
- Bringing animals other than service animals as covered by the ADA into BCPL buildings.
- Use or consumption of illicit drugs or alcoholic beverages in BCPL buildings or on BCPL grounds.
- Being in an intoxicated state in BCPL buildings or on BCPL grounds.
- Removal of any BCPL property from the building or grounds without authorization through established lending procedures.
- Soliciting or selling of any kind.
- Panhandling.
- Loitering.

- Distribution of leaflets or posting notices without authorization through established BCPL policies and procedures.
- Use of library telephones unless approved by BCPL personnel.
- Consumption of food or beverages in non-designated areas in BCPL buildings.
- Following staff or customers around BCPL buildings and/or BCPL grounds, or other harassing behavior such as staring or other intimidating acts.
- Rearranging of any furniture in BCPL buildings or rearranging equipment in BCPL buildings without prior authorization by BCPL staff.
- Engaging in disorderly conduct, committing a nuisance, or unreasonably disturbing and offending BCPL customers.
- Carrying weapons of any sort.
- Entering facilities of BCPL without footwear and/or shirt.
- Purposely circumventing computer security or timing software or otherwise tampering with library computers or the library network.
- Having body odor or personal hygiene that interferes with other patrons' and/or staffs' ability to use library facilities.
- Making unreasonable use of restrooms including laundering items and bathing.
- Sexual activity of any kind.
- Unauthorized use of outside power outlets located on the library building or library premises.

North Carolina General Statutes Concerning Behavior

G.S. 14-33 Misdemeanor assaults, batteries, and affrays.

G.S. 14-76 Larceny, mutilation, or destruction of public records and papers.

G.S. 14-127 Willful and wanton injury to real property.

G.S. 14-132 Disorderly conduct in and injuries to public buildings and facilities.

G.S. 14-134 Trespass on land after being forbidden.

G.S. 14-159-13 Second degree trespass.

G.S. 14-190.9 Indecent exposure.

G.S. 14-204.1 Loitering for the purpose of engaging in prostitution offense.

G.S. 14-277.1 Communicating threats.

G.S. 14-398 Theft or destruction of property of public libraries, museums, etc.

G.S. 153A-266 Powers and duties of trustees.

Library staff shall address disruptive behavior/s as below. Preference will be given to management and supervisory staff to address patrons. In any case, especially where they may not feel safe, staff may contact law enforcement regarding disruptive behaviors by patrons and request their assistance.

General Procedures

1. Oral or Written Warning
2. Immediate Dismissal for the remainder of the day.
3. Banning from the Library for a period of time defined by the library director.

LAW ENFORCEMENT WILL BE CONTACTED AS NEEDED TO ENSURE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS POLICY.

Immediate Banning from BCPL Buildings or BCPL Grounds

1. Threatening staff and/or other BCPL customers
2. Carrying a weapon on BCPL grounds or in BCPL buildings.
3. Destruction or theft of BCPL property.
4. Using abusive language toward staff and/or other BCPL customers (including but not limited to profanity)
5. Fighting (all parties).
6. Dispensing chemicals or noxious substances including but not limited to pepper spray, stink bombs, and tear gas.
7. When it has been determined that the customer is a chronic behavior problem.

Appealing an Action Based on the Library Behavior and Conduct Policy

If a patron or their parent, guardian, or caregiver wishes to appeal an action taken by the library regarding a violation of the Library Behavior and Conduct Policy, they must contact the library director to arrange for an appeal.

Approved 01/23/2018 by the Burke County Public Library Board of Trustees.