

Bethel Library Association Patron Conduct Policy

The Bethel Library's mission is as follows:

Our mission is to offer a welcoming environment for lifelong learning and literacy for all.

Our vision is to be an essential part of our dynamic, informed, and cohesive community. Our Core Values are:

Equality

We provide full access to free information, programming, and services to all community members and visitors.

Intellectual Freedom

We uphold individual privacy and the right to explore diverse points of view.

Education and Lifelong Learning

We promote literacy for all age groups through print, digital, and emerging technologies.

Social Responsibility

We strive to collaborate with community partners to provide a wide range of timely and innovative programs.

Integrity

We are committed to courteous, respectful service and responsible stewardship of all financial and physical resources.

The library and its staff are committed to providing a safe and congenial atmosphere in which to carry out its mission.

The foregoing commitment can only be fully achieved if users of the library respect the rights of all other users as well as the staff and volunteers. This general statement underlies the more specific provisions of the library's code of conduct set forth below and basically requires that library users act in a manner which will not interfere with the functioning of the library or disturb others.

This patron conduct policy will be posted in multiple locations around the library and on the library website.

Patron Code of Conduct:

1. Library property may not be misused, mutilated, damaged, or defaced nor may any material be removed from the library premises without being checked out appropriately. Library staff may ask for compensation from patrons who mutilate, damage or deface library materials in the amount which covers the damages.
2. All materials borrowed from the library must be returned or renewed in a timely manner.
3. Use of the library's search, copy, print, and other information machines is subject to a one hour time limit if others are waiting. If no one is waiting, the time limit does not apply.
4. Behaving in a manner which reasonably can be expected to disturb others, such as shouting or loud talking, including loud telephone conversations, and the use of electronic devices without headphones, is not permitted in the library. Conversation and game playing are permitted in the children's area and the upstairs reading room. Voice volume and behavior is expected to be appropriate to the library setting.
5. Upon entering the library building cell phones should be set to vibrate or turned off. Incoming cell phone calls may be answered in low conversational tones but full conversations should be continued outside the library. There is an exception for library staff including the director for business calls made during library hours.
6. We provide a restroom for the convenience of people who use the library. It is not meant to be used for bathing or sleeping.
7. Interference with or harassment or intimidation of other users, the library staff, or library volunteers is unacceptable behavior. This includes all unwanted or abusive attention by word, act, look, or gesture.
8. The library staff and this policy recognize that the children's area of the library may be louder and have more commotion than the adult areas of the library. However, if a child is behaving in a manner which can reasonably be expected to disturb others and cannot be quieted or calmed, the parent or caregiver should remove the child from the library.
9. Alcohol, marijuana, illegal substances, tobacco use and smoking in all forms, including the use of electronic cigarettes and smoke-free tobacco products is not permitted inside the library or on library grounds.
10. Consumption of food and beverages must be in compliance with the library's food and beverage policy.
11. Weapons are not permitted on library property except as specifically authorized by law.

The Bethel Library Staff has been authorized to administer the patron conduct policy and, if necessary, to modify and/or adapt the code of conduct to special circumstances. If any of the above criteria or special circumstances result in an incident (ie staff member asking a patron to leave the library) the staff member will fill out an incident report (provided in employee handbook) to report the incident to the Library Director.

Users who do not comply with the code of conduct or any reasonable request of the staff may be asked to leave the library premises. Continued non-compliance may result in action ranging from suspension or termination of library privileges to prohibiting access to the library premises. Egregious behavior may be reported to the police.

The decision of a staff member pursuant to this policy may be subject to review by the library director. The decision of the library director is final. However, a decision of the library director to revoke library privileges may be appealed to the board of trustees.