

Patron Behavior

The library is intended to be a place where its users can study, do research, browse books, use computers and generally go about their business in a non-threatening environment. Patrons are expected to respect the rights of others who require a quiet environment in which to study, compute, research and write.

Disruptive Behavior

Users who, by their behavior, persist in harassing or annoying others and thereby disrupt their ability to concentrate on their work will be given one warning regarding the specific behavior. If the behavior continues, disruptive patrons will be asked to leave the library for a length of time to be determined by library staff. If library staff determines that the situation requires it, the police may be called.

Behavior that is considered disruptive to the normal use of the library may be similar to the following:

- Loud outbursts of speech, laughter, talking either to oneself or others or other types of disruptive noises
- Belligerent or threatening behavior towards staff or other library users
- Following another person around the library with the intent to annoy, harass or intimidate
- Playing of audio equipment without headphones, including the library's computers (Other patrons should not be able to hear these devices)
- Carrying firearms or illegal weapons of any type (except by law enforcement officers)
- Being under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs, or selling, using, or possessing alcohol/illegal drugs
- Bringing in articles that are too large to fit beneath one library chair is not permissible. Articles that do not fit beneath one library chair will have to be kept outside of the library.
- Users whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to other persons shall be required to leave the building for the remainder of the day.
- Library users must be fully clothed, including shoes and shirts.

Other Activities

- Smoking, including electronic cigarettes or any other type of smoking device, is not permitted in the library. Smoking is also not permitted on library property within 20 feet of any library entryway or air intake apparatus.
- Sleeping is not permitted in the library.
- Bathing is not permitted in the restrooms.
- Wheeled devices (bicycles, shopping carts, handcarts, etc.), with the exception of strollers and those required by the disabled, shall be left outside and may not obstruct traffic entering or exiting the building. Skateboards and roller blades/skates can be carried into the library, but cannot be ridden or worn in the building.
- Cell phone and pager use is allowed in the library. As a courtesy to others, we ask that cell phones and pagers be turned to silent (vibrate), and that telephone conversations be held at volumes which do not disturb others.
- Behavior which is deemed hazardous or damaging to library property, patrons or personnel is prohibited on library grounds.
- All patrons must vacate library premises by posted closing hours.

Other activities that are not appropriate in the library include:

- Bringing in animals (except service animals)
- Running
- Playing in the elevator
- Playing or sitting on the stairs

Food and Drink

Certain food and drink items are allowed in the library if consumed responsibly.

- Patrons whose food creates a mess or is distracting to others because of the aroma will be asked to eat outside of the library
- Drinks are limited to those in closed containers such as covered travel cups, or capped water or soda bottles
- No food or drink is allowed in and around the computer, bookshelves, or other equipment areas
- No food or drink is allowed in any public areas on the third floor
- Patrons are expected to clean up after themselves, discard trash in appropriate containers, and notify staff immediately of any spills

Failure to follow the above policy regarding behavior and food may result in temporary expulsion from the library. Continued disregard for the policy may result in expulsion of up to one year. Library staff has the final authority in determining what constitutes disruptive behavior.

Generally, a patron may receive a verbal warning regarding a violation of the guidelines. Behavior resulting in a second warning will warrant expulsion from the library (includes library building, park, plaza and parking lots) and/or computers for the remainder of the day. Continued violation of this policy will result in expulsion from the library/computers for a week. Additional warnings can result in expulsion from the library/computers for a period of time ranging from one month to one year. However, library staff members may ask a patron to leave the premises without prior warning, depending on the seriousness of the violation.

When possible, any patron who has been banned from the library/computers for more than a day will be provided with written notification indicating the reason for the ban, the time period of the ban and the appeals process. Any person who enters the library while banned from the premises will be considered in violation of library policy and the police may be contacted.

Library & Computer Use: Right of Appeal

A library patron who has been asked to leave the library for a length of time, or whose computer access has been terminated or prohibited, may submit a Patron Appeal Form to the Library Director. If that individual is unsatisfied with the result of that appeal, he/she may submit the appeal to the Great Falls Public Library Board. The appeal will be reviewed at the next scheduled board meeting, providing the concerned party has requested its placement on the agenda. The Board will make a final ruling on the appeal and a written response will be sent to the patron.