

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 weapons of any type (except by law enforcement officers and those carrying a concealed firearm with a valid concealed carry permit)
- 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.
- Lying down, sleeping or dozing is not permitted in the library, except this rule shall not apply to children.
- 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
- Moving furniture without consent of library staff/putting feet on furniture

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.

Patron Appeal:

An Internet user whose session has been terminated or whose Internet access has been prohibited due to violations of the Library Internet, a library patron who has been asked to leave the library for a length of time due to violations of the patron behavior or a library patron who feels that a Library policy or Library staff action has impacted his/her ability to access Library services may submit a Patron Appeal Form to the Library Director.

PROCESS:

1. The Library Director will review the Patron Appeal Form and provide a written response within 14 days.
2. If the patron is unsatisfied with the Library Director's response, he/she may submit a written request to appeal to the Great Falls Public Library Board.
3. The patron appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next scheduled board meeting. After hearing statements from the patron, Library staff and any public wishing to speak, the Board will make final ruling on the appeal. A written response will be sent to the patron within 14 days