

Code of Conduct Policy

The Peter White Public Library (the “Library”) is open for specific and designated civic, educational, and cultural uses, including reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, and using Library materials. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the Library facilities in an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and excellent service, the Library Board has adopted this Code of Conduct Policy. The purpose of the Code of Conduct Policy (“Policy”) is to assist the Library in fulfilling its mission to enrich the community through access to library services and cultural opportunities.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all buildings – interior and exterior – and all grounds controlled and operated by the Library (“Library Property”) and to all persons entering in or on the premises, unless otherwise specified.

Rules for a Safe Environment.

- A. Violations of Law. Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation (including but not limited to assault, indecent exposure, larceny, removing Library material from Library Property without authorization through the approved lending procedures, vandalism, or copyright infringement) is prohibited.
- B. Alcohol; Drugs. Consumption, possession, selling, or distributing any alcoholic or intoxicating beverages, marijuana, illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited on Library property. Persons noticeably under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances are not allowed on Library property. Alcohol may be permitted at certain Library-sponsored events in compliance with state and local ordinances.
- C. Animals. Animals are not permitted in the Library other than service animals (as defined by law) for those individuals with disabilities, those used in law enforcement, or for Library programming. Service animals must be under control of their handler at all times and must be house broken. Service animals may not be left unattended or be off leash on Library Property.
- D. Blocking of Doors, Aisles or Entrances. All doors, aisles and entrances must remain obstacle-free. This includes a prohibition of running power cords across aisles or other areas that are used for walking.
- E. Incendiary devices. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches, and lighters, is prohibited inside the Library.
- F. Recreational Equipment and Personal Transport Devices. Use of skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, or other wheeled forms of recreational equipment is not allowed in the Library. Library patrons must park bicycles or other recreational vehicles only in authorized areas. Wheelchairs, scooters, and other power-driven mobility devices are permitted for those with mobility limitations and/or disabilities.
- G. School Groups. School groups using the Library must have approval of the Youth Services Department Head and must have a teacher and other appropriate staff present to ensure that the students use the Library in conformance with these rules.
- H. Staff Only Areas. Patrons shall not be permitted in any areas designated as “staff only” unless otherwise permitted by the Library Director.
- I. Weapons. Carrying guns, pistols, or other weapons, except as specifically permitted and

exempt from local regulation by law, on Library Property is prohibited.

Rules for Personal Behavior.

Patrons visiting the Peter White Public Library are expected to adhere to all Library policies. A complete listing of current Library policies is available on the Library's website.

- A. Attire. All patrons are expected to be fully and appropriately dressed on Library property. Wearing shoes while on Library property is strongly recommended.
- B. Campaigning, Petitioning, Interviewing and Similar Activities. The use of Library property for petitions, interviews, campaigns, or discussions does not imply endorsement or opposition by the Library towards the candidate or issue being addressed. As a limited public forum, the Library reserves the right to regulate the time, place, and manner for campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing, and soliciting on Library grounds as follows:
 - 1. These activities are prohibited inside the Library building.
 - 2. These activities are permitted on Library property subject to the following requirements:
 - a) Individuals or groups seeking to carry out these activities on library premises must make prior arrangements with the Library Director or their designated representative at least one day in advance.
 - b) The library has designated specific areas on its property where these activities are allowed. Individuals or groups conducting these activities must remain within the designated areas, and ensure that they are at least 25 feet away from all entrances.
 - c) No person shall block ingress or egress from the Library building or property.
 - d) Permitted times will be limited to the operating hours of the Library.
 - e) Campaign material, literature or petitions may not be brought into the Library, posted at the Library, or left on Library property.
 - f) Posting signage on Library property is prohibited. However, individuals conducting these activities are allowed to wear signs on their person if they wish to do so.
- C. Considerate Use. The following behavior is prohibited in the Library or on Library Property:
 - 1. Spitting, running, pushing, shoving, fighting, throwing items, provoking a fight or other unsafe physical behavior;
 - 2. Climbing on furniture;
 - 3. Using obscene or threatening language or gestures;
 - 4. Engaging in sexual behavior (1) that is a violation of the law, (2) which can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while such staff or patrons are in the Library or on Library property; or (3) that interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job.
- D. Distributions; Postings. Any distribution or posting of printed materials on Library property that does not comply with the Library's Public Bulletin Board Posting policy is

strictly prohibited.

- E. Engaging in Proper Library Activities. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building or on Library Property. These activities must not disrupt other Library patrons or hinder the Library staff's ability to perform their duties.
- F. Food and Beverages. Food and beverages are permitted inside of the Library, but only in areas approved by the Library Director. Patrons are expected to clean up after themselves when eating and drinking on Library property.
- G. Harassment. Staring, photographing, video recording, audio recording, following, stalking, harassing, arguing with, threatening, talking or behaving in a manner (1) which can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while such staff or patrons are in the Library or on Library property; (2) that interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job is prohibited; (3) would create or may result in a hostile work environment for Library staff; and/or (4) that violates Michigan or federal law is prohibited.
- H. Identification. Patrons must provide identification to Library staff when requested.
- I. Interference with Staff. Library patrons are prohibited from interfering with library staff while they are performing their duties, whether it be on library premises or property. Such interference includes engaging in conversations or behaviors that monopolize staff attention for an inappropriate duration, making inappropriate personal comments, engaging in sexual advances, or exhibiting any form of physical or verbal harassment.
- J. Loud Noise. The production or allowance of loud, unreasonable, or disturbing noises that interfere with other patrons' use of the Library, or that disturb others, including yelling, cheering, talking (with others or in monologues), or noises from electronic, entertainment, and communication devices such as cell phones, tablets, headphones, and radios, is strictly prohibited. Patrons may use headphones or earbuds, but at a volume that does not bother other Library patrons or staff.
In the Youth Area, adults are permitted to read aloud to children, but they must do so in a voice that would not reasonably disturb others.
- K. Odor. Offensive odor, including but not limited to body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume or cologne, or odors from items brought into the Library, that causes a nuisance is prohibited. (For example, if the patron's odor interferes with staff or other patrons' use of the Library, the patron violates this Policy).
- L. Panhandling or Soliciting for Money, Products, and Services. Panhandling or soliciting Library staff or patrons for money, products, or services inside the Library or on Library property is prohibited. Sales of products or services that are incidental to Library programming may be permitted if approved in advance by the Library Director.
- M. Personal Property. Personal property brought into the Library or onto Library Property is subject to the following:
 - 1. The Library staff may limit the number of parcels. Staff may also limit the size of items, for example, the Library prohibits large items such as large plastic garbage bags.
 - 2. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended. Library staff are not permitted to guard or watch personal belongings.
 - 3. The Library does not provide storage for personal property.
 - 4. Personal possessions must not be left unattended or take up seating or space if needed by others.

- N. Phones. Phone calls are subject to all Code of Conduct rules including Loud Noise.
- O. Restrooms. Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, sleeping, shaving, excessive personal grooming, hair cutting or trimming, bathing, and sexual activity is prohibited. Unless a parent or guardian is assisting a child or a patron is assisting a person with a disability or mobility issue, there shall only be one person to a stall. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.
- P. Sales. Selling merchandise on Library Property without prior permission from the Library Director is prohibited.
- Q. Sleeping. Sleeping on Library furniture, the floor, or on Library property is not permitted.
- R. Smoking; Tobacco or Marijuana Use. Use of smoking pipes, cigars, cigarettes, other lighted smoking equipment, e-cigarettes, vaping, other electronic nicotine delivery systems, or chewing tobacco is prohibited on Library Property. Rolling cigarettes, filling smoking equipment, or overtly displaying possession of marijuana on Library property is also prohibited.
- S. Tables or Structures on Library Property. No person may use or set up a table, stand, sign, tent, or similar structure on Library Property without approval from the Library Director or their designee. This does not apply to Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events.
- T. Unauthorized Use. Patrons are required to leave Library Property promptly at closing time and are not permitted to be on Library premises when it is closed to the public. Overnight parking in the Library's parking lot is strictly prohibited. Additionally, any patron whose physical access privileges to the Library have been denied is not allowed to enter the Library or be on Library Property. Patrons whose privileges have been limited must comply with the restrictions set by the Library Director, their designee, or the Library Board when accessing the Library.

Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property.

- A. Authorized Lending. Library materials may only be removed from the premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
- B. Care of Library Property. Patrons must not deface, vandalize, damage, or improperly use or improperly remove Library materials, equipment, furniture, or buildings. Patron shall not load or install any programs or software on Library computers. Patrons shall be responsible to reimburse the Library for costs incurred by the Library for violating this provision. Patrons shall not cause damage by returning books containing bedbugs or bringing bedbugs into the Library.
- C. Equipment. Library staff computers are for staff use only.
- D. Internet Use. Patrons must abide by established time limitations and all other provisions of the *Computer and Internet Access and Use Policy MGT - 5* and the *Internet for Patron-Provided Equipment Policy MGT - 5.1*.

Youth Conduct and Unattended Children.

Children are welcome and encouraged to use the Library during library operating hours. The Library desires to make each visit an important one for the child. A "Child" means a minor under the age of 18.

Rules and Regulations Regarding Children.

1. All patrons, including children, are expected to comply with Library policies. Parents, guardians, or responsible caregivers shall review and be fully aware of all Library policies governing children, particularly the Library's policies on computer and internet use.
2. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children regardless of age while in the Library or on Library property.
3. Library staff will not be expected to supervise or monitor children or their behavior.
4. Children under the age of 8 must be attended by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver. The parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver (who must be at least 11 years old) shall remain actively engaged with the child under 8 at all times. . If a child under the age of 8 is attending a Library-sponsored program on the premises, the parent, a guardian, or responsible caregiver is to remain on the premises for the duration of the program.
5. Children of any age who, because of developmental disability, mental illness, or physical disability, require supervision or personal care shall be attended by a parent, guardian, or responsible caregiver at all times.
6. Staff will not be responsible if unattended children of any age leave the Library premises alone or with other persons. Further, staff will not be responsible for children 8 years or older who may be asked to leave the Library if the child is in violation of Library policy.
7. The Teen Zone space is intended for use by youth grades 7-12. Visitors who do not meet this guideline should limit their time in the Teen Zone to selecting library materials shelved within. Ample seating is available in other parts of the Library for reading, computer use, and other library-related activities.

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, legal guardian, custodian, or caregiver when:

1. The health or safety of an unattended child is in doubt.
2. A child is frightened while alone at the Library.
3. The behavior of an unattended child violates Library policy.
4. The unattended child has not been met by a parent, legal guardian, custodian or responsible caregiver at closing time. A child is considered unattended at closing time if the child is under the age of 8 or the child needs assistance procuring transportation.
5. If a parent, legal guardian, custodian, or caregiver cannot be reached by closing time or fails to arrive within a reasonable time after being contacted, Library staff will contact law enforcement officials to take charge of the situation involving the unattended child. Library employees are not permitted to transport an unattended child or vulnerable adult under any circumstances.
6. If the parent, legal guardian, custodian, or caregiver can be reached by closing time,

the staff member shall explain the Library's policy and provide a copy of this Policy.

Violation Procedures and Reinstatement.

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library Property with immediate dismissal of the patron from the Library Property, by suspending the patron's access to Library Property for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. When necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. Incident Reports. Library staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges. Unless otherwise provided in this Policy, (see Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
 1. *Initial Violation:* Library patrons observed violating this Policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, they will be asked to leave the Library Property for the day. If they refuse, the police may be called.
 2. *Subsequent Violations:* The Library Director or the Library Director's authorized designee may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security. Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct, or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
 1. *Initial Violation:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges in order to give the Library sufficient time to investigate the incident. After the investigation is completed, the Library Director or his/her designee may add additional time to the initial limitation or suspension period.
 2. *Subsequent Violations:* The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Library Director or the Library Director's authorized designee, may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.

- A. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or suspended (and the patron's parent or guardian if the patron is a minor) shall attend a meeting with the Library Director or the Library Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated. The Library Director may impose conditions for the reinstatement.

Right of Appeal.

Patrons may appeal (1) a decision to limit or suspend privileges or (2) the conditions placed on reinstatement by sending a written appeal to the Library Board within ten (10) business days of the date of the decision. The appeal should be sent to the President of the Library Board. The decision of the Library Board is final.

Peter White Public Library Board of Trustees
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