



The Bellwood Public Library is dedicated to providing access to knowledge and information through reading, writing, and quiet contemplation, providing patrons the right to use its facilities, collections and services without being disturbed or impeded, and providing library patrons and staff a safe and comfortable environment. The Local Library Act provides the Board of Trustees with the general power to carry out the spirit of the Act in establishing and maintaining the library and providing library services and the specific power “to exclude from the use of the library any person who willfully violates the rules prescribed by the board.” So that all persons may enjoy the benefits of the library, all patrons visiting or using the library must comply with the following policies and rules established by the Board of Trustees.

The following will not be allowed in the Library:

1. Any activity or behavior that materially disrupts or impedes patrons in their use of, or access to, library facilities, collections or services or the ability of staff to perform its duties. This includes, but is not limited to, deliberate disruption or interference with library functions, operations or procedures, violation of library policies and/or activity or behavior that creates or could create excessive noise or disruption.
2. Use of profanity or abusive language.
3. Any action, activity or behavior that endangers the safety or health of others, creates an unsafe environment, safety hazard, security risk or that causes a public health threat. This includes, but is not limited to, abuse, harassment or intimidation of library patrons, staff or others visiting or using the library through words or action, arguing, fighting, or violence or threats of violence.
4. Theft, vandalism or deliberate destruction of library facilities, materials or property, or the deliberate misuse or tampering of library facilities, materials or property.
5. Violation while in the library of any federal, state, or local law.
6. Solicitation, petitioning or asking for signatures, conducting unauthorized surveys, distribution of non-library leaflets or other materials, posting notices or similar activity while in the library, except as authorized by the library.
7. Playing in the library parking lots and/or around the entrances to the building or blocking any entrances or aisles.
8. Running in the library.
9. Except for covered non-alcoholic beverages (which are acceptable but are not allowed in the computer areas), eating and drinking is not permitted in the library, except at library or library-sponsored activities, functions or programs.
10. Smoking in the library or within a distance of 15 feet from library entrances, open windows and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area, including inhaling of, exhaling of, burning of, or carrying any lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, e-cigarette, marijuana or other plant in any manner or in any form; or chewing tobacco and the possession of spittoons; or using lighters, matches, candles or any other open flame(s) or incendiary device(s) in the library, including fireworks.
11. Bringing in weapons of any kind or any other item designed to harm a person, animal or property, including but not limited to, firearms, rifles, handguns, BB guns, switchblades, knives and/or explosives or explosive device(s).
12. Entering the library without shoes or clothing covering both the upper and lower torso or removing shoes or clothing while inside the library.
13. Leaving children under 8 years of age unattended. Children under 8 years must be supervised at all times by a parent, legal guardian or other responsible caregiver.
14. Leaving personal belongings unattended. Library users must keep their personal belongings with them at all times; the library is not responsible for belongings left unattended.
15. Bringing in animals, except for service animals and service animals in training.
16. Use of cellular phone or pager that creates excessive noise or in any way disrupts patrons or staff. Cellular phone or pager must be put on either silent, vibrate or turned off while in the Library. Library users may be asked to use their phones outside the library.
17. Use of audio or other electronic devices that creates excessive noise or in any way disrupts patrons or staff. Earbuds or headphones must be used for all audio devices or other electronic devices while in the library. No sound should be coming from audio or other electronic devices or computers.
18. Use of amplification equipment and/or artificial noisemakers.
19. Refusing to identify yourself to library staff when requested and/or refusing to leave the library at closing time or as directed by library staff.
20. Panhandling and/or loitering.
21. Removing library materials from the building without checking them out or authorization.
22. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; or possession or consumption of alcohol or controlled substance(s) in the Library.
23. Laundering or washing clothes or shaving or bathing in the Library.
24. Bodily hygiene or unsanitary belongings that is offensive, disrupts or impedes the use of the library by staff or patrons or constitutes a nuisance.

Additional Patrons’ Rules and/or Responsibilities:

25. All patrons visiting or using the library are expected to observe the rights of other patrons and library staff, and to use the library for its intended purposes.
26. Library users must clean up their area before leaving and throw trash away.
27. The Library reserves the right to limit the number of people who may sit together at a table in order to promote a quiet environment. Furniture may not be rearranged.
28. The Library’s Teen Space is intended as a safe place for teens between the ages of 13-18 years and their tutors or caregivers. Other library patrons are permitted to use the space when they require the collections or materials that are only available in that space, but they will not be permitted to use the space for general reading, studying or hanging out.

A patron (including any minor) who engages in activity or behavior that violates these policies and rules or any other library policy shall cease such activity or behavior immediately upon request by library personnel.

If, following a request, the patron fails or refuses to comply or responds in an abusive fashion, he or she will be required to leave the library immediately for the balance of that day and identification will be requested. If such patron fails or refuses to leave after being asked to do so, poses a danger to himself or others or deliberately violates the law, the police will be summoned.

Library personnel will record instances in which patrons are required to leave the Library in a ledger maintained by the Library for that purpose. Upon the fourth (4th) instance in which a patron is required to leave the library within a 30-day period, the Library Director shall bar the patron from use of the library for a period of 30 days.

MINORS: In such instances involving minors, the minor will be warned at least two (2) times before being asked to leave the library for the balance of day. Identification will be requested and the incident may be reported to the parent or guardian. The Library will reasonably attempt to notify parents or guardians of minors after the third (3rd) instance in which a minor is required to leave the library and advised of the consequences of any further instances. Upon the fourth (4th) instance in which a minor is required to leave the library within a 30-day period, the Library Director shall bar the minor from use of the library for a period of 30 days, and the Library will reasonably attempt to notify the parent or guardian of the minor.

A patron or parent of a minor who wishes to appeal such exclusion may do so by submitting a written request to the Library Director within 14 days of the date of the exclusion. The written request will be reviewed and a decision will be sent by email or by U.S. postal mail. The decision of the Library Director will be final. The period of exclusion will remain in force during the review period.

In the event a barred patron attempts to enter the library during any such period of exclusion, the police will be summoned and informed of the prior action.

In the event the patron (including any minor) persists in abusive or disruptive behavior following such a period of exclusion, the Library Director shall report to the Board of Trustees such conduct following prior exclusion and the Board will consider a long-term exclusion of that patron.

A patron or parent of a minor who wishes to appeal the decision of Board of Trustee for a long-term exclusion may do so by submitting a written request to the Library Director within 30 days of the date of the exclusion. The written request will be reviewed and a decision will be sent by email or by U.S. postal mail. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final. The period of exclusion will remain in force during the review period.

The Library Director is authorized to exclude from the library any person who engages in behavior that violates these rules.

The Library reserves the right to amend this Rules for Patron Behavior policy at any time.

Adopted 06/13/2023.