

## Patron Responsibility and Conduct

### A. Introduction

In order to effectively carry out its mission, the Library adopts the following policy regarding patron responsibility and conduct for use of library resources, equipment and facilities. The objectives of this policy are: protection of the public's right of access to library facilities, insuring the safety of patrons and staff, and protection of the library's resources, equipment and facilities.

### B. Public Property

#### 1. Library Materials

- Library users may not intentionally damage, mutilate, deface or otherwise destroy library materials or property. Intentionally or knowingly damaging or destroying library property is an act of Criminal Mischief, which is a violation under the Texas Penal Code, Section 28.03.
- Patrons are solely responsible for compliance with all current laws applying to library materials (i.e., copyright laws - Title 17, U.S. Code).
- Registered borrowers agree to abide by all policies and rules pertaining to the external use of library materials. These include, but are not limited to, the following provisions:
  - 1.) Proper care of materials.
  - 2.) Return of all items borrowed by the date due.
  - 3.) Payment of fines for overdue materials including applicable fees.
  - 4.) Payment for lost or damaged materials including applicable fees.
  - 5.) Payment of all collection costs, including court fees, necessary to recover borrowed materials or unpaid fines, fees and charges.
  - 6.) Notification to the library if card is lost or stolen. If the library does not receive notification, the patron is responsible for any material borrowed on the card.

Library staff has authority to revoke borrowing privileges or otherwise deny library privileges of a patron with overdue materials or outstanding fines, fees or charges. Failure to return borrowed materials is considered "theft of service" by Texas Penal Code Section 31.04.

#### 2. Library Facilities

Library users may not intentionally damage, mutilate, or otherwise destroy library buildings, equipment, furnishings, grounds, or other property. Intentionally or knowingly damaging or destroying library property is an act of Criminal Mischief, which is a violation under the Texas Penal Code, Section 28.03.

## B. Rights of Others

To ensure a comfortable and efficient library environment and to protect the safety of patrons and staff the Library adopts the following general regulations and guidelines regarding disruptive behavior.

### 1) General Regulations - Prohibitions

While on Library property, patrons will be subject to certain prohibitions and may not engage in or do the following:

- a. Smoking or using tobacco inside the building.
- b. Use of the library facilities for sleeping
- c. Soliciting, panhandling, or distributing handbills
- d. Bathing, shaving, washing clothes, or otherwise misusing restrooms
- e. Drinking or eating, except in designated areas
- f. Spitting
- g. Using radios, stereos, cell phones, videogames, or other devices in a manner disruptive to others
- h. Using opposite gender restrooms
- i. Engaging in voyeurism or peeping
- j. Carrying into the library bedrolls, bed blankets, large bags, large boxes, sleeping bags, or sports equipment
- k. Being intoxicated resulting from alcohol or other drugs
- l. Bringing animals inside the buildings, except for service animals or for library programs.
- m. Sitting or standing on display and work surfaces, such as tables, end tables, counters, desks, etc.
- n. Exhibiting poor personal hygiene
- o. Carrying a weapon into the library unless the individual is a licensed peace officer in the State of Texas, a federal law enforcement agent authorized to carry a firearm as part of their duties, or a person possessing a license to Carry Concealed Handgun issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

### 2) Disruptive Behavior

- a. Patrons will not physically, verbally, or with gestures threaten, abuse, intimidate or assault another person on library property. Any person committing such an offense will be evicted from the premises and may be subject to prosecution where applicable.
- b. Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of its duties. This includes engaging in inappropriate conversation or behavior, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.
- c. Patrons will not be disorderly.
- d. Patrons will be aware of others and keep the volume of their conversation as low as is practical.
- e. Any act that is in violation of the laws of the State of Texas or City of Gatesville Code of Ordinances is expressly forbidden in the Library.
- f. Library staff has authority to exclude from use, revoke borrowing privileges or otherwise deny library privileges of any disruptive patron and may summon police when necessary.

### 3) Unattended Children

The Gatesville Public Library is pleased to provide numerous services for children and their parents. The library though, is not a day-care facility and will not serve as such. Unattended children will be dealt with in accordance with procedures developed by the Library.

## C. Violations

Library staff may exclude from use, revoke borrowing privileges or otherwise deny library privileges of patrons violating this policy. Any person who is asked to leave a library and/or library property and refuses to do so shall be considered a trespasser and may be subject to citation or arrest by a police officer.

## E. Appeal

A patron whose privileges have been denied by Library staff may appeal to the Library Director within seven days from the date that the patron's privileges were denied and show cause why their library privileges should not be denied. The Director shall hear and decide such an appeal within seven days. A patron may appeal the decision of the Library Director to uphold denial of library privileges to the City Manager within thirty days of the decision of the Library Director.

## F. Responsibility and Authority

The Library Director is given the authority to establish guidelines and procedures as may be necessary to carry out this policy and to ensure the safety of patrons and staff and protection of the library's resources, equipment and facilities.