

## Rules of Conduct

*This policy is for application to those libraries within the City of Buffalo (Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries).*

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL) serves as a center for information, education and entertainment. Under Article 5, Section 262 of New York State Education Law, the Board of Trustees of the B&ECPL has adopted the following rules to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons.

The following conduct is prohibited:

1. Engaging in disorderly conduct, fighting, challenging another person to fight or provoking others to violence;
2. Disturbing other patrons, staff or volunteers; interfering with staff or volunteers in the performance of their duties; blocking or impairing another's passage; persistent, unwelcome attention, such as staring at or following another person; or making any obscene or threatening gesture;
3. Carrying weapons of any kind;
4. Possessing, distributing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
5. Engaging in sexual conduct, lewd behavior (e.g., exposure or inappropriate touching) or sexual harassment of another patron, staff member or volunteer;
6. Engaging in conduct in violation of the [B&ECPL Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy](#);
7. Damaging, destroying or stealing any Library property or the property of another patron, staff member or volunteer;
8. Bringing animals or pets into the library except those required to assist persons with disabilities or those involved in library programs;
9. Selling, soliciting, canvassing or petitioning without approval by the Library;
10. Distributing or posting materials or literature that have not been approved by the Library;
11. Vaping, smoking or otherwise using tobacco or marijuana products inside of the library, on the Central Library Access Ramp or within 100 feet of any entrances, exits or outdoor areas of the Central Library or its branches (in accordance with New York State Public Health Law Section 1399-O).
12. Eating or drinking in designated restricted areas;
13. Making unreasonable use of the restrooms, including bathing;
14. Sleeping or lying down in the library;
15. Photography or recording of library patrons without their permission; and,
16. Entering the library without appropriate clothing, including a shirt and shoes.

No children under six years of age may be left unattended in any library at any time. Library staff will not be responsible for children who have been left without adult supervision. Adult patrons who are not engaged in library activities that require materials from the children's area shall be asked to relocate to other areas of the library. The staff reserves the right to seek the intervention of appropriate law enforcement or social services agencies, as required by individual circumstances.

The Central Library Access Ramp (Ramp) provides the only direct access to the main entrance at Washington Street between Clinton Street and Broadway of the Central Library. The primary purpose of the Ramp is to provide unimpaired, accessible passage to and from the main entrance doorways. The Ramp is also used for outdoor library programs and presentations consistent with unimpaired access. Skateboarding, rollerblading, roller-skating, bike riding, sitting on outer walls, or other potentially dangerous or destructive activities are not permitted.

People who violate these rules will be advised of their infraction(s). Failure to comply with the Library's established policies, rules and regulations or violations of local, state or federal law may result in immediate suspension of library privileges, including removal from library property, and/or, where necessary, civil liability and/or criminal prosecution.

Adopted May 16, 2002 (Supersedes Rules of Conduct dated May 15, 1997 and Policy Governing Unattended Children dated April 21, 1988).

Amended February 20, 2003.

Amended September 28, 2006.

Amended June 14, 2012.

Amended May 21, 2015.

Amended October 20, 2016.

Amended December 21, 2017.

Amended October 18, 2018.

Amended May 16, 2019.

Reviewed by Policy Committee June 29, 2020 – no changes.

Reviewed by Policy Committee November 18, 2021 – no changes.

Amended April 21, 2022.

Amended September 15, 2022 (Incorporates superseded Central Library Access Ramp Rules dated November 18, 2021).