



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 an atmosphere conducive to appropriate use of the services and facilities of the Central Library and its branches. Library users are required to comply with these Rules and Regulations.

The following conduct is prohibited:

1. Engaging in disorderly conduct, fighting or challenging to fight, or using offensive words likely to provoke violence or using language that offends others;
2. Disturbing other patrons, staff or volunteers including but not limited to disruptive behavior such as any loud, unreasonable and/or bothersome noises created by persons or devices; interfering with staff or volunteers in the performance of their duties and persistent, unwelcome attention; obscene or threatening gestures such as staring at another person; or following another person on or around the premises;
3. Carrying weapons of any kind;
4. Possessing, distributing or consuming alcohol or illegal drugs or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
5. Engaging in sexual conduct and/or lewd behavior (e.g., exposure, offensive or inappropriate touching, or sexual harassment of other patrons, staff or volunteers);
6. Engaging in discriminatory 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 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 and/or soliciting; petitioning;
10. Distributing or posting materials/literature that have not been approved by the Library;

11. Vaping, smoking cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless electronic cigarettes or using tobacco products inside of the Library, on the Central Library Access Ramp, or within one hundred (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 and the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's declaration of the Central Library Access Ramp as a "Smoke Free" area).
12. Eating or drinking in designated restricted areas;
13. Making unreasonable use of the restrooms including bathing;
14. Sleeping or lying down;
15. Photography or recording on Library premises without Library permission; and,
16. Absence of shirts and/or 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.

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 and, where necessary, civil liability and/or criminal prosecution.

Adopted May 16, 2002.

Amended February 20, 2003, September 28, 2006 and June 14, 2012.

Supersedes Rules of Conduct dated May 15, 1997 and Policy Governing Unattended Children dated April 21, 1988.

Amended May 21, 2015.

Amended October 20, 2016.

Amended December 21, 2017.

Amended October 18, 2018.

Amended May 16, 2019.