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# PORTAGE DISTRICT LIBRARY

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## Disruptive Patron Policy

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The mission of the Portage District Library is “*Helping you access the world of information in a friendly atmosphere.*” In accordance with our mission, we strive to protect the rights of all people who come into the library, and we endorse a code of conduct that requires everyone, visitors and staff alike, to conform to our community’s standards for behavior in a public facility. Visitors to the Portage District Library are expected to comply with all federal laws, state laws, local ordinances, and all library policies, particularly those pertaining to conduct in public places. (See Juvenile Patron Policy).

In an effort to provide a safe, comfortable and enjoyable environment for all who enter our doors, the Portage District Library Board has established this Disruptive Patron Policy and has instructed library personnel to see that the provisions of this Policy are properly enforced. Anyone who violates this Policy may be asked to leave the library and anyone violating the law at the library will be immediately evicted. Anyone who violates this Policy, including anyone who violates the law at the library, may have their library privileges suspended as provided below.

### **A. Rules for persons using the Portage District Library's facilities and services**

1. We respect the privacy of all library visitors and employees. In striving to protect that privacy and reduce disturbances, we prohibit solicitation that is not endorsed by the library.
2. In order to keep our library environment clean and attractive, beverages are permitted, as long as they are in containers with caps or lids. Smoking and tobacco use as stated in our Smoking and Tobacco Products Policy are prohibited.
3. To maintain a friendly atmosphere, we encourage all library visitors to respect the rights of others and refrain from willfully annoying other people in the library.
4. To provide an environment appropriate for families, all library visitors are asked to be considerate and respectful of others, including library staff, and to refrain from using any profane, obscene or injurious language or behavior. Such inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.
5. Safety is a top priority at the library. Any library visitor who engages in an act that endangers the safety of others, or who acts in a manner which causes a public disturbance, will be asked to leave the library immediately.
6. Because the library is a tax-supported lending institution, we must ensure proper use and care of all library resources. Library visitors must not damage or deface library property and resources in any way, including tampering with computers and software. It is illegal to improperly remove library materials and resources from the library building.
7. In an effort to deliver the best possible library service to as many patrons as possible, we ask library visitors to be considerate of time constraints on individual interactions with library public service personnel, as well as Internet public access computers, to maintain equal access for everyone.
8. We encourage use of the library facilities during open public hours. Visitors should plan on leaving the library building on time when the closing announcement is made.
9. Because the library is a public facility, any library visitors without shirt and shoes may be asked to leave the library building.
10. In order to maintain high standards for the Portage District Library, library visitors are expected to comply with all federal laws, state laws, local ordinances and all library policies while in the library building.

**NOTE #1:** The Director of the Portage District Library or his/her designee will have the authority for decisions to be made about individuals who violate provisions of the Disruptive Patron Policy while at the library, subject to any appeals to the Library Board as provided in Section C. Anyone violating the law at the library will be immediately evicted and may have library privileges suspended as provided in Section B. *[See Appeal Procedure on page 3 of this policy.]*

## **B. Penalty Procedure for Violation of Disruptive Patron Policy**

Library staff members are responsible for enforcing provisions of the Disruptive Patron Policy. If a person violates any of the provisions, the following penalty procedure will be followed, [unless the person is a minor (under the age of 18) and then the person's parent or guardian may be notified - see also Juvenile Patron Policy.]

### **1. First Violation**

If a library staff member observes a person in violation of the Portage District Library's Disruptive Patron Policy, then he/she will follow the procedures outlined below:

- a. Will advise the person in violation that the observed activity is prohibited.
- b. Will request the person in violation to stop the prohibited activity.
- c. Will advise the person in violation that further violations may result in loss of library privileges.
- d. May request the person in violation to give his/her name, address and telephone number.
- e. May request the person in violation to leave the library.
- f. May complete a written Incident Report and submit it to the Library Director. This Incident Report will then be retained by the Library Director for a period of six (6) months.
- g. May involve the local authorities if the person is violating the law, is non-compliant in discontinuing activity in violation of the Disruptive Patron Policy, or will not leave the library when asked to do so.

### **2. Second Violation**

If a library staff member observes a person in violation of the Portage District Library's Disruptive Patron Policy, who is known to have been in violation of the policy within the previous six (6) months - as documented by a written Incident Report that was filed for the first violation - then the library staff member will follow the same procedures as described above for a First Violation, and in addition the following action may be taken:

- a. The Library Director or his/her designee may suspend the library privileges of the person in second violation of the library's Disruptive Patron Policy for up to seven (7) calendar days. Any such suspension of library privileges will be issued in writing by the Library Director.
- b. The Library Director shall retain an Incident Report of a person in second violation of the library's Disruptive Patron Policy and a written copy of the suspension of library privileges for one (1) year.

### **3. Third and Subsequent Violations**

If a library staff member observes a person in violation of the Portage District Library's Disruptive Patron Policy, who is known to have had a second violation of the policy within the previous one (1) year - documented by a written Incident Report that was filed for the second violation - then the library staff member will follow the same procedures as described above for a First Violation, and in addition the following action may be taken:

- a. The Library Director or his/her designee may suspend the library privileges of the person in third or subsequent violation of the library's Disruptive Patron Policy for a period up to (6) months. Any such suspension of library privileges will be issued in writing by the Library Director.
- b. The Library Director shall retain an Incident Report of a person in third or subsequent violation of the library's Disruptive Patron Policy and a written copy of the suspension of library privileges for three (3) years.

**NOTE #2:** Notwithstanding Section B. 1-3 above, the Director of the Portage District Library or his/her designee reserves the right to suspend library privileges *for longer periods of time*, depending on the severity of a person's violation of the Disruptive Patron Policy. Notwithstanding Section B. 1-3 above, anyone violating the law at the library will be immediately evicted and may have library privileges suspended *for longer periods of time*, depending on the severity of the violation of the law, to protect patrons and library staff.

**C. Appeal Procedure for a Person in Violation of the Disruptive Patron Policy**

1. A person whose library privileges have been suspended by the Library Director or his/her designee may appeal the decision within three (3) calendar days after the date of the written notice of suspension of library privileges. An appeal must be submitted in writing and must include the person's name, address, date and time of violation, type of violation, and the person's reason for appealing the decision, the person's signature and the date the appeal is signed. All appeals must be submitted to the Library Director for transmittal to the Library Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
2. The Library Board will hear an appeal from the decision of the Library Director or his/her designee to suspend library privileges. The Library Board will give the appellant an opportunity to be heard on the appeal. The decision of the Library Board shall be final.