

# Tompkins County Public Library

## Library Code of Conduct

The Tompkins County Public Library seeks to provide a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for patrons and staff. For that reason, behaviors that disrupt Library services are not permitted. These rules apply to all public spaces in the Library and on Library property outside the Library.

### General Guidelines

The following behaviors are **NOT** permitted:

1. Engaging in any activity that violates federal, state, local, or other applicable law or Library policies.
2. Disrupting library use, services, or operations.
3. Engaging in lewd behavior or indecent exposure.
4. Displaying or printing images of child pornography, or those which are sexually explicit, obscene, or harmful to minors, are expressly prohibited under New York State Penal Law § 235.00-235.24.<sup>1</sup>
5. Harassing or threatening Library users or staff including staring, following, filming, or photographing.<sup>2</sup>
6. Smoking, chewing, and using tobacco and cannabis products, including vaping and electronic cigarettes.
7. Making unreasonable use of the public restrooms, including laundering clothes and bathing. Bringing Library property into restrooms is not allowed.
8. Using obscene or abusive language or gestures.
9. Using, possessing, selling, or appearing under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
10. Carrying uncovered drinks and consuming food except in designated areas. Drinks in closed containers are allowed unless noted.
11. Using rollerblades, roller skates, skateboards, bicycles, and scooters (except when carried). Bicycles must be stored in bicycle racks provided outside the Library. Other items with wheels such as strollers, wheelchairs, and walker devices will only be allowed when utilized for their intended purpose.
12. Blocking sidewalks or entrances to the Library, or obstructing any passageways within the Library.
13. Entering "staff-only" areas or workspaces.

14. Bringing in oversized items such as large suitcases or sports equipment, four-wheel shopping carts, large bags.
15. Leaving bags and items unattended. Library staff may confiscate unattended items and turn them over to law enforcement. The Library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged in or on the grounds of the Library.
16. Bringing animals into the Library other than as part of scheduled library programming. Service animals are allowed.<sup>3</sup> Animals may not be tied to Library property.
17. Petitioning, selling, canvassing, and/or soliciting for services, money, items, or endorsements.
18. Damaging, destroying, defacing, or misusing any Library materials or property. This includes disabling or unplugging Library equipment, changing hardware or software, or using a Library computer for purposes not designated by the Library.<sup>1</sup>
19. Possessing any weapon (except by law enforcement officers).
20. Exhibiting personal hygiene behaviors and activities that disturb other patrons. Visitors must wear clothing, including shirts and shoes. Causing strong, pervasive odors, including those caused by perfume or body odor is not permitted.
21. Making unreasonable noise. This includes loud talking and using devices such as cell phones (with or without headphones) at a volume that disturbs others. Please silence all cell phones. Individuals needing to use a cell phone for an extended conversation should go to the designated area outside the restrooms or outside the library. Refrain from phone discussions while at one of the service desks.
22. Monopolizing Library space, equipment, or outlets to the exclusion of others.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the complete *Computer and Internet Policy* <https://www.tcpl.org/computers-internet-policy>.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the complete *Media, Photography, and Filming Policy* <https://www.tcpl.org/media-photography-and-filming-policy>.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the complete *Service Animals Policy* <https://www.tcpl.org/service-animals-policy>.

## **Enforcement**

Those failing to follow the rules listed above will be given a copy of the *Library Code of Conduct* and asked to comply immediately. An individual may be asked for identification if observed in violation of these rules. Those failing to comply will be asked to leave. If violators do not leave, the police will be called and the Library will file trespassing charges.

The Security Services and Library staff send a report of all violations of Library rules to the Library Administration. A patron may lose his or her library card or be deemed persona non grata. At the discretion of the Library Director or designee, reports may be forwarded to the County Administration, the Sheriff, or the Ithaca Police Department.

## **Appeal Process**

Persons banned from the Library and/or the Internet may appeal this ban by sending a written request to the Library Director explaining the circumstances and requesting a review of the persona non grata designation. The Library Director shall respond within a reasonable time of such a request with a written decision.

These rules apply to all members of the public using the Library. Any behavior which is not consistent with these rules may result in the termination of the right to use the Tompkins County Public Library.

## Revision History

Changes	Approving by	Date
Adopted	Board of Trustees	12-14-2004
Approved	Board of Trustees	10-5-2005, 6-22-2006, 12-18-2011, 2-19-2014, 7-29-2014, 10-28-2015, 8-29-2018, 10-23-18, 5-26-2020, 10-26-2021
Added revised Computer and Internet section	Board of Trustees	12-12-17
Updated and Approved	Library Services & Policy Committee	10-11-18
Approved with updated COVID-19 language	Library Services & Policy Committee	5-22-20
Updated with COVID-19 language	Board of Trustees	7-27-21
Revised COVID-19 language to comply with Tompkins County COVID-19 Directive #5.1 issued 8-9-2021	Library Services & Policy Committee	10-14-21
Revised and approved	Library Services & Policy Committee	6-10-22
Reviewed	Library Services & Policy	7-14-22
Approved	Board of Trustees	7-26-22
Revised – removed language related to sleeping	Library Services & Policy	11-10-22
Approved	Board of Trustees	11-15-22