



RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Title: Rules and Regulations for Conduct in
Library and on Library Property Policy

Policy Number: 04.02 Revised Date: 07/23/2025

Richmond Public Library is committed to providing safe and welcoming environments for all patrons. It is a shared learning and community space, intended for use by many different people for a wide variety of reasons. The following rules protect the rights and safety of library patrons and staff members and preserve and protect the library's materials, facilities, and property.

I. Definitions and Scope:

These rules shall apply to all buildings, interior and exterior, and all grounds controlled and operated by Richmond Public Library (such buildings and grounds are hereafter referred to as the "premises") and to all persons entering in or on the premises.

Listed below are the library's rules. Library and security personnel will determine whether a particular behavior is prohibited by the rules. People who violate the rules may be asked to leave the premises and excluded from all library premises for the period of time listed below, by authority of the Richmond Public Library Director on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees.

II. Library Rules

Any person who violates one or more of rules 1 through 5 while in or on library premises will be asked to leave immediately and excluded from all Richmond Public Library premises without first being given a warning.

Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges for a period of up to three years, and the incident may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

1. Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any federal, state, or local criminal statute or ordinance.
2. Directing a specific threat of physical harm against an individual, group of individuals, or property. Violation of this rule will result in a minimum exclusion of one year.
3. Engaging in sexual conduct, including, but not limited to, the physical manipulation or touching of a person's sex organs through a person's clothing in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification.
4. Being under the influence of any intoxicating liquor or controlled substance.
5. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic beverage (except as allowed at a library-approved event).

Any person who violates one or more of rules 6 through 20 while in or on library premises will be given up to one warning at the discretion of library staff; then the person will be asked to leave the premises for the day. If the violation involves threatening behavior or behavior that is significantly disruptive, then the person may be excluded for a longer period.

Subsequent offenses by that person will result in that person being asked to leave library premises and excluded from all Richmond Public Library premises. Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges for a period of up to one year.

6. Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the library, or disturbs library staff or patrons, including, but not limited to, conduct that involves the use of abusive or threatening language or gestures, conduct that creates unreasonable noise, or conduct that consists of loud or boisterous physical behavior or talking.
7. Using library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures, or buildings in a manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof; or in a destructive, abusive, or potentially damaging manner; or in a manner likely to cause personal injury to the actor or others.
8. Not following the reasonable direction of a library staff member or library security officer.
9. Soliciting, petitioning, canvassing, or distributing written materials inside a library building, including the doorway or vestibule of any such library building or in a manner on the library premises that unreasonably interferes with or impedes access to the library.
10. Interfering with the free passage of library staff or patrons in or on the library premises, including, but not limited to, sitting or lounging on the floor when not actively browsing shelves or participating in library programs.
11. Using personal belongings in a manner that interferes with the operation of library facilities.
 - Personal items that are not related to using the library must be able to be stored under a chair.
 - Leaving personal belongings unattended is prohibited.
 - Placing personal belongings on, against, or within buildings, walkways, furniture, equipment, or fixtures in a manner that impedes library staff or patron use of the library facility is prohibited.
12. Bringing bicycles or other similar devices inside library buildings, including, but not limited to, vestibules or covered doorways.
13. Operating roller skates, skateboards, motorized transport, scooters, or other similar devices in or on library premises.
14. Parking vehicles on library premises for purposes other than library use. Vehicles parked in violation of this rule may be towed at the owner's expense.

15. Smoking, any use or preparation of tobacco, Cannabis, or any use or preparation of vaping devices or substances. Smoking is prohibited within 20 feet of library entrances and exits.
16. Consuming food on library premises (except at library-approved events or designated areas) or possessing food or drink that creates a potential nuisance because of odor, garbage, or spills. Beverages in covered containers are allowed. No food or drink of any kind is allowed inside the Special Collections at the Main Library.
17. Bringing animals inside library buildings (with the exception of service animals recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act and animals allowed at library-approved events), or leaving an animal tethered and unattended on library premises. Pets in Library Park must be on a leash and owners must clean up after their pets.
18. Violating the library's rules for acceptable use of the internet and library public computers, which are posted at every public computer.
19. Removing Library materials from the premises without following established lending procedures is prohibited.
20. Taking library materials into restrooms if the materials have not been checked out.

Any person who violates one or more of rules 21 through 24 while in or on library premises will be given up to two warnings at the discretion of library staff; then the person will be asked to leave the premises for the day.

Subsequent offenses by that person will result in that person being asked to leave the premises and excluded from all Richmond Public Library premises. Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges for a period of up to six months.

21. Sleeping or appearing to sleep in or on library premises.
22. Improperly using library restrooms, including, but not limited to, bathing, shaving, or washing hair. Disrobing in public view.
23. Using phones or other personal electronic equipment at a volume that disturbs others.
24. Leaving one or more children under the age of eleven (11), who reasonably appear to be unsupervised or unattended, anywhere in or on library premises. Police will be contacted in all circumstances where a child's safety may be in question.

Any person who violates one or more of rules 25 through 29 while in or on library premises will be excluded from the premises until the problem is corrected.

25. Entering or remaining upon library premises without wearing shoes or sufficient clothing.

26. Disturbing others because of odor.

27. Entering or remaining upon library premises with belongings that cannot be carried in a single trip and stored under a library chair without disturbing others.

28. Entering or remaining upon library premises with an unauthorized weapon as defined by the Virginia State Code.

29. Carrying concealed weapons is prohibited, except as permitted by Virginia State Law.

III. Repeat and multiple offenses.

People who violate any library rule after having been excluded for one or more library rule violations may face a longer exclusion than indicated in this document.

Patrons need not violate the same rule to be subject to stricter enforcement and may not be warned that their behavior is inappropriate before being excluded.

See also Policy 4.7 Supervision of Children

See also Policy 6.1 Computer and Acceptable Internet Use

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