



City of Virginia Beach

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Policies

Title: Acceptable Behavior	Policy Number: VBPL-POL-0001
Effective Date: November 28, 2016	Date of Revision: August 29, 2017

1.0 Introduction:

The Virginia Beach Public Library values a dynamic, interactive environment. While it is not intended to be an absolutely quiet place, it is one that provides an atmosphere conducive to study and reading.

The various branches within the Virginia Beach Public Library are unique in their size, layout, seating, available staff, customer demographics, and demand for service and resources. What may be acceptable behavior within a given branch may vary depending on the intensity and duration of the behavior, or the impact of that behavior on the library environment existing at a particular point in time.

Customers must obey all applicable laws and understand that all illegal behavior will be reported to the police.

Customers exhibiting inappropriate behavior in a Virginia Beach Public Library facility may be asked to leave the library in accordance with the [Banning](#) policy.

2.0 Rules of Common Courtesy:

A. Appropriate attire

Customers are required to wear shirts and shoes/sandals/flip flops while in the library. Customers should not expose private body parts.

Note: This is not a provision against the breastfeeding of a child in a public place which is permitted by law. (*Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 22-11; Code of Virginia § 2.2-1147.1*)

B. Cell phones and other personal audio/visual equipment

Using personal equipment (such as computers, cellular phones and audio players) that is disruptive or noisy is prohibited. Audio equipment may be used with headphones if it does not disturb others. While cell phone use is not a prohibited activity, cell phone users and others who speak loudly

and disturb other library users will be asked to speak more quietly or to move outside the library. Cell phones should be set on vibrate mode at all times. Taking photos or videos of minors without the permission of their parent or guardian is prohibited.

C. Food/drinks

While food and non-alcoholic drink are allowed in the library, drinks must be covered and food must not compromise a comfortable library environment for other customers.

D. Noisy/rowdy behavior

(Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 23-63)

Moderate levels of noise are acceptable. However, customers whose noise level disturbs others will be asked to lower the volume. Customers who refuse will be asked to leave the premises.

Any behavior that creates a safety risk or inconvenience to others will not be allowed.

E. Obscene or vulgar language and gestures

Use respectful language and display good conduct. Abusive, obscene, vulgar, coarse, violent, or harassing language or actions will not be tolerated. Customers who refuse to refrain will be asked to leave the premises.

F. Obstructing passage

(Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 23-16; Code of Virginia 18.2-40-4)

An individual or group of people gathered at the entrance to a building may be asked to move if they are making it difficult for others who wish to enter and/or exit the building. Individuals with items that interfere with normal library operations, such as bicycles, skateboards or personal belongings may be asked to move or remove the item from the building.

G. Personal belongings

Customers are allowed to bring into the library personal belongings such as a purse, laptop or briefcase. They may not bring in any personal item that occupies floor space exceeding 24"l x 16"w x 10"h (taken from Homeland Security's posted safety standards). Items are measured in their totality.

Bedrolls and blankets (except for use by babies and infants) are prohibited.

Any self-propelled wheeled devices, such as skateboards or razor scooters, must be carried and not ridden.

ADA assistive devices and strollers occupied by children are allowed.

Personal items may not be left unattended in the library or on library grounds. Unattended items are subject to immediate confiscation.

H. Refusing to leave/trespassing

(Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 23-43, 23-44; Code of Virginia §§ 18.2-119, 18.2-120)

A person who refuses to leave the library when he is asked to do so is trespassing and the police will be called.

I. Sleeping or lying down

Sleeping, snoring, lying down, the appearance of sleeping, or putting feet on furniture is prohibited in the library.

J. Smoking

(Virginia Beach City Code, Secs. 28.5-3(b)(3), and 28.5-8, Code of Virginia § Sec. 15.2-2802 Virginia Indoor Clean Air Act)

Smoking is prohibited in all City buildings. The use of any tobacco product is prohibited in all libraries. The use of e-cigarettes is also prohibited inside library buildings and facilities.

K. Solicitation

(*City of Virginia Beach Administrative Directive 3.01*)

Solicitation is prohibited on library property.

L. Stalking

(*Code of Virginia § 18.2-60.3*)

Stalking, which is defined as conduct directed at another person with the intent to place that other person or that other person's family or household member in reasonable fear of death, criminal sexual assault or bodily injury, is against the law and will not be tolerated.

M. Unauthorized removal of books or other library property

(*Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 17-5; Code of Virginia, § 42.1-73*)

The theft of library books or other Library or City property is considered larceny.

N. Vandalism

(*Virginia Beach City Code, Sec. 17-4, 23-28; Code of Virginia §§ 8.01-43, 18.2-138*)

A customer who is defacing, damaging, or destroying library property is guilty of vandalism. If the customer is a minor the child's parent can be required to reimburse the City for the value of the damage caused by the child.

O. Washing/bathing

Library restrooms may not be used for bathing, shaving, washing hair, doing laundry, or changing clothes.

Approved by:

Eva Poole, Director of Libraries