



Behavior Policy

Last Updated Date

May 8, 2025

Next Review Date

May 2028

The mission of the Waterloo Public Library is to provide free access to information, education, and recreation in a welcoming environment. Its primary goal is to provide quality public library service to the people of Waterloo, Black Hawk County, and the Greater Cedar Valley. The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all patrons and staff at all times. Therefore, the rules and regulations outlined in this policy apply to all patrons and staff.

- Consuming non-alcoholic beverages from lidded containers is permitted in all areas.
- Consuming pre-packaged snacks or other convenience food is permitted in all areas except at computer stations and around library equipment. Food that may cause damage to library property or disturb other patrons is not permitted.
- Bicycles are not permitted inside the library. Wheeled carts are permitted as long as they do not interfere with other patrons' use of the library by impeding passageways or access to library material. Store shopping carts are not permitted.
- The Library is not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or damage to the private property of individuals or organizations. Neither the Library Board, staff, nor the City of Waterloo will be responsible for the property of individuals or organizations in the library, or take responsibility for the storage of their materials. Patrons and organizations must take all personal property with them when the library closes. Patrons may not leave property in the entryway or outside on library grounds, except in designated areas such as the bicycle rack. Property left behind may be discarded.
- Patrons are expected to take responsibility for maintaining a clean and pleasant environment by removing crumbs, wiping off sticky surfaces, cleaning up after themselves, and properly disposing of trash.
- Sleeping is permitted as long as it does not interfere with other patrons' use of the library through excessive noise, relocating or rearranging furniture, or by impeding passageways or access to library material. Sleeping or lying on the floor of the library or the grounds is not permitted nor is use of bedding, bed rolls, or sleeping bags. Blankets are allowed for children under the age of 3 years old. Sleeping patrons may occasionally be woken up by library staff to ensure there is not a medical emergency.
- Patrons must wear shoes and clothing covering their torsos at all times. Exceptions will be made for children under the age of 3 years old in strollers, carriers, infant seats, or other carrying devices and for mothers nursing their children.
- The only animals permitted inside the library are those used during special library programs and service animals, defined as animals that are individually trained to do specific work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability (see Iowa Code 216C.1A).

We ask library patrons to be respectful of each other and behave in a manner that does not disrupt others or interfere with normal operation of the library. Examples of prohibited disruptive behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey taking, distributing leaflets or other ephemera, fundraising or selling in a way that is harassing or intimidating to other patrons and/or interferes with their free access to the library.
- Creating unreasonable noise, such as using audible devices without headphones or using headphones set at a volume that disturbs others.
- Emitting an odor or scent that constitutes a nuisance to others.
- Failing to comply with a staff request, unauthorized entry in a staff area, or failure to leave the library during emergencies and at closing time.
- Fraudulent use of another person's library account.
- Using restrooms for unreasonable or unintended purposes such as bathing or laundering.
- Taking pictures or video in staff only areas of the library.
- Using threatening or abusive language.
- Fighting or challenging to fight, running, shoving, throwing things, or using sports equipment, including skates and skateboards, on library property.
- Harassing or intimidating patrons, staff, or volunteers.
- Engaging in sexual activity of any kind.

Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any federal, state or local criminal law or ordinance is prohibited on Waterloo Public Library property. Examples of prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Trespassing or entering Library property when banned.
- The use of any tobacco, nicotine and ESD (electronic smoking device, such as a vape) products not approved by the FDA for cessation, including in the library vehicle.
- Soliciting, panhandling, or gambling.
- Possessing, consuming, selling or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances.
- Intentionally damaging, destroying or stealing any materials, equipment, or property belonging to the Library. Offenders will be held financially responsible.
- Sexual, physical, or other harassment including bullying on the basis of a person's actual or perceived age, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes/appearance, physical or mental ability or disability, or other protected classes.

Patrons will receive a warning when this Behavior Policy is violated. Continued violations may result in library privileges being suspended. Individuals may be asked to leave the library property or be banned from the library for a length of time to be determined based on the severity of the violation. Failure to comply may also result in staff calling the appropriate authorities. Library staff may ask any patrons to leave immediately if their actions disrupt the library environment.

Parents, guardians, and/or caretakers of minors will be held responsible for the minor's behavior and any disturbance or damage they might cause. Please see the Safe Child Policy for additional information. The library will attempt to notify a parent, guardian, or caretaker by phone, email, or mail in the event of damages.