

Scituate Town Library: Policies Regarding Patron Access and Behavior

The Scituate Town Library's stated mission is to create a safe and welcoming environment that provides and promotes open and free access to learning opportunities, cultural experiences, and informational resources. In order to facilitate this environment, the following behavioral expectations have been approved by the Library Board of Trustees.

Any patron having a concern or question about a policy or procedure should speak with library staff.

If a patron has concerns about another patron's behavior, the patron must speak with a staff member rather than interacting directly with the other patron.

Threatening other patrons, volunteers, or staff verbally, physically or in writing, including all forms of electronic or social media is prohibited.

Any conduct that threatens the life or safety of any person or that is damaging to library property, equipment, or building will result in the immediate expulsion from the library. Library staff will call the Scituate Police when they deem it necessary.

Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, library staff or volunteers, including stalking, staring, touching or use of offensive language or gestures is prohibited.

Patrons cannot engage in any activity in violation of Federal, State, or local laws.

Patrons must not engage in disruptive behavior. Disruptive behavior may include excessive noise, physical altercations, pranks, foul language, excessive talking, running, inappropriate gestures, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs and other behaviors that disturb patrons. The library staff determines what conduct constitutes disruptive behavior.

Those who damage or deface library material or property will be prosecuted (MGL Ch. 266, Sec. 100). Parents can be held liable for damage done by a child under age 18 (MGL, Ch. 231, Sec. 85). Theft of library materials, use of false identification to obtain a library card, or use of another person's library card without his/her permission is against the law (MGL Ch. 266, Sc. 99).

When circumstances dictate evacuation, i.e. power failure, fire, threatening weather or similar situation, patrons must comply with staff direction. Failure to do so will result in expulsion or with library staff contacting the Scituate Police Department.

Blocking of entrances, exits, or aisles is not permitted.

Library staff is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended.

Craft activities in public service areas not scheduled by staff must be preapproved. Because of the potential damage to library materials and/or property, no craft activities involving glue, paint, play dough, etc., shall be allowed.

Photographs or videos may only be taken on the upper level of the library, or there must be a reason for filming/photographing consistent with the library's mission. Photographers are asked to respect people's wishes not to be photographed.

Patrons must wear proper attire which conforms to the standard of the community for public places, including shirt and shoes.

No consumption of tobacco products, marijuana or e-cigarettes is allowed in the library or on its grounds. (MGL Ch. 270, Section 6(a) and 22.)

Patrons are asked to refrain from eating food, except at approved programs and in designated locations. Beverages in spill-proof containers are permitted, except in the Local History Room.

Pets or animals are not allowed in the library, other than service animals necessary for assisting individuals with disabilities, except as authorized by the Library Director.

Cell phone ringers should be turned off inside the library. Extended phone conversations may be disruptive to other library users. Cell phone conversations should be brief and quiet. Longer calls should be taken in the vestibule or outside. Phone conversations are permitted in certain meeting rooms and in all study rooms, but consideration must be made for nearby patrons.

Canvassing, soliciting, campaigning or distributing materials inside the library is prohibited except when approved by the Library Director.

Signature collection for town offices or ballot initiatives may be done in person in the vestibule. Prior notice to the Library Director is strongly recommended.

Patrons may not enter "Staff Only" areas without permission.

A mother may breastfeed her child in any public place or establishment or place which is open to and accepts or solicits the patronage of the general public and where the mother and her child may otherwise lawfully be present. (MGL Ch. 111, Section 221).

Sleeping is generally not permitted in the library. Library users who doze off for a short time will not be disrupted, but staff may use a loud voice to attempt to wake them should there be any concern of a medical issue, intoxication, or disturbance to other patrons such as snoring.

Excessive displays of affection are inappropriate behavior for the library.

Staff will issue a 'closing time warning' 15 minutes prior to closing; patrons should allow adequate time for checking out materials, shutting down computers, and leaving meeting room spaces unless after-hours permission has been granted.

While these rules apply to the entire library, patrons should review specific guidelines for the [Children's Room](#) and the [Teen Room](#) for rules pertaining to their use.

Any patron who violates the library rules and regulations will be asked to cease the behavior and may be asked by library staff to leave the premises. Library employees will contact the Scituate Police for assistance when warranted by safety concerns.

Patrons who are asked to leave the premises will typically be welcomed back the following day should they follow library rules and policies. However, especially grievous violations of policy will be subject to longer expulsions and review by the Trustees. A second request to leave the premises will result in a one-week ban from the library, and a third request will result in a one-month ban with a possible extension to be determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Any patron who wishes to appeal a ban may submit an appeal in writing to the Library Board of Trustees to be considered at their next possible meeting. The Library Director will then follow up with the patron regarding the Board's decision.