



## **Patron Conduct Policy**

This Conduct Policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Union Library Company of Hatborough to promote a safe, attractive, and orderly environment; to ensure every patron's ability to use the library and library materials to the maximum extent possible; and to have reasonable access to library facilities without interference. The policy cannot anticipate every possible event or situation. Employees and patrons are expected to use their best judgement in the spirit of this policy.

The Union Library Company of Hatborough supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Friendly, courteous, and respectful service;
- Free and equal access to information;
- Privacy and confidentiality in their use of library services and collections;
- A clean, comfortable, and pleasant environment; and
- Use of the library without threat of harm, interference, or discrimination.

Use of Library facilities and resources implies acceptance of our Patron Rules of Conduct, which are based on these basic principles:

- Respect other patrons and their right to have a positive experience of the library.
- Respect library employees, whose responsibilities include assisting you in getting the most from your library experience and maintaining a safe and comfortable atmosphere for all patrons.
- Respect all library facilities, materials, computers, equipment, and resources, and understand and follow rules related to their use.

### **Respect for other patrons and library employees**

To ensure individuals' rights to use the library free of disruption, library patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library while in the building. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, learning, using library materials or services, attending programs or classes, or viewing exhibits may be asked to leave the building.

Noise and conversations are expected to be kept at low levels out of consideration for other patrons. Disruptive conduct, which is any behavior that disrupts the normal functioning of the library or library programs by behaving in a manner which reasonably can be expected to disturb or be a nuisance or distraction to others is not tolerated. Bringing pets or animals into the Library, other than service animals necessary for accommodation, must be authorized by the Director.

The safety and security of our employees and patrons are a priority for us. Library employees have the right to a safe and respectful workplace environment. Patrons will use polite language and keep their tone of voice moderate.

Conduct that causes or threatens harm to others, interferes with library employees' performance of duties, or constitutes persistent, unwanted behaviors will not be tolerated. This includes use of library computers or wireless service to harass, threaten, or bully people on the internet. All patrons are expected to comply with reasonable requests of any library employee.

### **Respect for facilities, materials, computers, equipment, and resources**

The Library is supported by taxpayers who reside in the borough of Hatboro. These patrons expect our facilities to be clean, comfortable, and safe. It is expected that all library users will treat library property with care, and use library property as intended.

Shirt and shoes are required in the library building. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to others may be required to leave the buildings

Capped beverages are allowed only in the adult department in areas away from library computers.

Soliciting is not permitted except in support of the library and sanctioned library activities.

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the welfare and behavior of their minor children (under 18) while in the Library or on Library grounds, regardless of whether or not they accompany their child. The Union Library Company of Hatborough assumes no responsibility for unattended children.

### **Enforcement of the Patron Conduct Policy**

- Library employees may at any time request that patrons show library cards and other documents (driver's license, school ID, e.g.) for purposes of identification
- The library reserves the right to inspect all bags, purses, briefcases, or backpacks.
- It is expected that patrons will follow federal, state, and local laws and policies. Library employees are authorized to call the police for assistance in case of violent or threatening behavior or illegal activities; or to ensure enforcement of this policy.
- Library employees have the authority to decide what is considered appropriate behavior and to enforce the Patron Conduct Policy. Library staff will inform the patron of the relevant conduct policy and warn the patron that continued violation will result in loss of privileges. Staff may ask the patron to leave the Library property for the day if they are uncooperative or argumentative. The Library reserves the right at all times to immediately eject a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening employees or other patrons.
- Library may pursue remedies under Federal, State, or local law where applicable.
- Bringing alcoholic beverages and illegal substances into the library, or entering the library intoxicated by them, is prohibited. Breach of this rule is considered a major offense and will result in outright ban of the offending patron.
- Unattended minors who do not abide by library rules and policies, or who exhibit unacceptable behavior, will be asked to leave, and/or call their parents for a ride home. If unable to reach their parents, or if a ride is unavailable, the children may be considered abandoned and the local police department or Child Protective Services may be called.

## **Suspension of Library Privileges**

- The Union Library Company of Hatborough Board of Directors authorizes library staff and law enforcement officers to enforce the library's published Patron Conduct Policy.
- Depending on the nature and frequency of the behavior, consequences may include suspension of library privileges or permanent banning of an individual from the library.
- The Library Director has the authority to ban from the library premises any individual whose behavior is a sufficient threat to the ability of the library to operate in a safe manner or individuals who repeatedly violate the Patron Conduct Policy.
- If the individual facing exclusion is under the age of 18 a registered letter will be mailed to the parent/legal guardian informing him/her that the minor has been banned from the library. This letter will note the reason the minor was banned from the library and inform the parent/legal guardian that the child will not be allowed to return to the library unless he/she is accompanied by the parent/legal guardian and assurance is made that the unacceptable behavior will not reoccur.
- **Reinstatement.** In the event of a permanent ban by the Library Director, the patron may appeal the decision in writing to the Board of Directors at the library's address. Any such appeal must account for the nature of the behavior or incident that led to the ban, and what change may be expected in the event that the decision is reversed. Any such appeal will receive a decision in writing within sixty (60) days.
- Banning or exclusion from library premises denies the patron access to the building, grounds, and services of the Union Library Company of Hatborough. The individual will receive the suspension notice in writing and a copy will be kept at the library. The patron may still access from an offsite computer the library's webpage and any databases available through that site.
- If any individual named in a suspension notice enters the Union Library Company of Hatborough before the return date listed on the suspension notice, it will be considered criminal trespass and the individual will be asked to leave. If the individual does not leave when asked, staff will contact local law enforcement.

## **Weapons Policy**

Except for active duty law enforcement officers, possessing on library property any dangerous weapon is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: knives, clubs, martial arts weapons, pellet guns, BB guns, air guns, paint ball guns, dart guns, or electrical devices designed to incapacitate someone. An individual may possess a chemical spray, such as mace, as long as such a device is carried only for personal self-defense and is not brandished or displayed in an aggressive or threatening manner.

Possession of any firearm is strictly prohibited on library premises, regardless of permits held, with the exception of on-duty law enforcement officers. Failure to comply with this will result in an instant permanent lifetime ban from the library.