

Prince William Public Libraries Library Policies

Code of Conduct

**Reviewed by Library Advisory Board
Approved by Acting Director 2/28/2024**

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Introduction

Prince William Public Libraries (PWPL) is committed to protecting the rights and safety of staff, visitors, and volunteers. PWPL is a shared public space that respects all library users' needs and diverse expectations. Everyone is expected to comply with the Code of Conduct to allow all visitors to enjoy a welcoming and safe environment. The Code of Conduct applies everywhere PWPL provides service: on all library property, at library events in the community, through our website or social media, and by phone, chat, or email.

Visitors are responsible for abiding by the following guidelines:

1. Visitors on library property must remain fully clothed and wear shoes.
2. Only ADA-recognized service animals and animals performing in library programs are permitted in library buildings.
3. Violent, threatening, harassing or abusive behavior toward another person—verbally, physically, or in writing, including all electronic media that inhibits staff from performing their duties or visitors from using the library is prohibited.
4. Visitors are expected to maintain safe behavior and not engage in activities or behavior that may result in damage to library property or the property of others.
5. Visitors may not possess, dispense, use, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol on library property.
6. Visitors are not permitted to smoke, vape, or use tobacco products of any kind within library buildings.
7. Visitors are expected to maintain reasonable noise levels. Unreasonable noise levels include but are not limited to shouting and listening to electronic devices at a volume that disturbs staff from doing their duties or visitors using the library.
8. Visitors are prohibited from using computers or internet access if the activity is in violation of applicable federal, state, and local laws, including Virginia Code §18.2-374.1:1 (child pornography), Virginia Code §18.2-372-§18.2-374 (obscene materials), or Virginia Code §18.2-377 (obscene materials), or materials deemed harmful to juveniles Virginia Code §18.2-390. See “Library Internet and Wi-Fi Acceptable Use Policy” for more information.
9. Visitors must always keep all personal property with them and must not block aisles, shelves, or entrances.

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10. Visitors may only consume food in designated areas. Covered drinks are permitted within the libraries.
11. Food and drink are permitted in the Community Room. Please see "Use of Community and Study Room Policy" for details.
12. Soliciting or distributing literature without prior approval is prohibited. See "Solicitation and Signage Policy" for more details.
13. Children under the age of 12 must always be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver and should not be dropped off at the library. If a child is unattended, PWPL staff will contact the child's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver. Children 12 and older may use the library unattended, provided they follow the PWPL Code of Conduct. See "Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy" for details.
14. Staff can assist vulnerable adults using library resources but cannot provide assistive care or assume responsibility for their safety. Legal guardians or caregivers are responsible for their vulnerable adult's behavior and appropriate use of the library materials and space. PWPL staff will intervene if vulnerable adults are left unattended or if there are concerns over safety, disruptive behavior, property damage, or well-being. See "Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy" for details.
15. Visitors must obey all local, state, and federal laws on library property, at library events, and through the library website and social media.

Please be aware that staff may ask any visitor to leave when they are in violation of the Code of Conduct. Staff may contact the appropriate authorities if a visitor refuses to leave when asked or engages in any unlawful activity. Visitors could lose certain library privileges depending on the circumstances.