



Standards of Behavior

We welcome you to the Library. Everyone has a right to quality Library services in an atmosphere that is calm, safe, and free from disturbance by others. While you are visiting the County Library branches, please be considerate of others. Visitors must follow rules and policies of the Mendocino County Library.

Abusive Behavior

Abusive behavior, such as threats or violence toward staff or visitors, is prohibited.

Animals

Only trained service animals, or animals otherwise allowed in County buildings pursuant to Mendocino County Code section 14.20.010 are permitted in the Library.

Disruptive Behavior

Running, pushing, shoving, fighting, and any other rowdy or unsafe behavior, in or anywhere outside the Library branches or on walkways or parking areas surrounding the branches is prohibited. Defacing library property is prohibited.

Disturbing Noise

Disturbing anyone with unreasonable noise is prohibited inside the Library branches. This includes yelling, talking on a cell phone, video conferencing, loud conversations, singing, radios, and other electronic devices, unless used with headphones at a low volume.

Dress Code

Entering the library without wearing shoes and garments that cover both the upper and lower torso is prohibited. Patrons may not remove shoes or garments covering their upper and lower torsos while in the library.

Following/Stalking

Stalking is the willful, malicious, and repeated following of another person in a manner that causes the other person to reasonably fear for their safety. Stalking of any person is prohibited.

Food or Drink

Eating or drinking in the Library branches are allowed only in designated areas or for programs and meetings held in meeting rooms and lobby areas. All food-related trash must be disposed of in the proper receptacles.

Furniture and Property

Use the facilities, materials, and furnishing as intended. Leave furniture in its place. Avoid putting feet on furniture. Monopolizing library space, furniture, electrical outlets, or equipment to the exclusion of other patrons or staff is prohibited. Obstructing aisles, doorways, or stairs is prohibited.

Harassing Behavior

Harassing behavior is prohibited. Harassing behavior includes any conduct that unreasonably interferes with any person's use of the library or ability to work in the library, including but not limited to verbal or non-verbal conduct which is likely to frighten, embarrass, anger, or annoy a person (including library staff), abusive conduct, advances of a sexual nature, obscene gestures or sounds, offensive touching or staring. Harassing behavior may include conduct occurring in person, over the telephone, by mail, or by any electronic means.

Loitering

We welcome everyone to explore our services and facilities. Blocking the path of visitors into the buildings, on the steps, entryways, or other areas, thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter, exit, or use resources, is prohibited. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a Public Library while in library buildings.

Informational and Art Exhibits

To protect the Library's informational and art displays, touching displays is not permitted unless signage indicates otherwise. Please do not touch, lean on, climb, sit, or place items on the exhibit platforms, interpretive panels, display cases, or walls. For all open displays such as art or other items, please keep at least a 12-inch distance from the art or object.

Offensive Odors

Presenting offensive and pervasive odor or odors which constitute a nuisance by interfering with the use and enjoyment of the library by other library patrons or with the functioning of library staff, is prohibited

Personal Belongings

Wheelchairs, strollers, and mobility devices are permitted if being used as transportation for a person, or as a mobility or medically assistive device, or for the aid or assistance of physically limited or disabled persons. Other large, wheeled conveyances, including bicycles and shopping carts are prohibited inside library buildings. Skates, skateboards, collapsible scooters, hoverboards, and other similar devices must be carried while on library property. Bicycles should be stored in designated bicycle racks.

For safety reasons, Mendocino County Library staff reserve the right to restrict the following personal items from the premises: packages, large backpacks, bags, or purses, or other items that cannot be stored entirely under the owner's chair. Weapons should not

be brought onto Library grounds.

Personal property should not be left unattended anywhere on Library property. The Library is not responsible for any damage or loss of personal property.

Photography or Videorecording

Patrons may not use flash photography, video lighting, selfie sticks, tripods, drones, or other equipment on Mendocino County Library property without prior permission. No commercial photography is allowed without written consent of the Mendocino County Library. Special requests for the use of photography equipment must be submitted and approved by Library staff.

Public Display of Obscene Material

Public displays of obscene material that interfere with the ability of others to use resources, or as prohibited by law, is not allowed.

Restroom Use

Using the public restrooms as laundry facility, or for shaving, or bathing, is prohibited.

Selling, Soliciting, or Mass Distribution of Materials

Selling, soliciting, panhandling, and mass distribution of unapproved materials is not permitted.

Sleeping

Sleeping is prohibited in the Library Branches and grounds.

Smoking

In accordance with Government Code Sections 7596-7597, smoking is prohibited inside the Mendocino County Library buildings, entryways, and within 20 feet of any entrance or exit.

Trespassing

Trespassing is prohibited. Trespassing includes entering any Library building during a suspension of privileges, entering any non-public area of the building, failing to leave immediately upon closing, or being inside before or after public hours without express permission from authorized Library personnel.

Unattended Children

We encourage children to visit our Library branches. Staff are concerned for children's safety and welfare. We recognize parents' or guardians' responsibility for the behavior and well-being of their children. We respect the privacy of all patrons and intervene only when a child is deemed to be at risk.

Children aged 8 and under may not be left unattended anywhere in the Library and must

be accompanied and directly supervised by a responsible party. If an unattended child, age 8 or younger, comes to the attention of staff, we will make a good faith attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child will be referred to the local law enforcement agency.

Unlawful Behavior

Engaging in any unlawful activity is prohibited and will be reported to law enforcement. Unlawful behaviors include, but are not limited to, carrying unlawful weapons, assault, indecent exposure or sex acts, use of illegal drugs or alcohol, damage to property, theft, attempted theft, brandishing a weapon, public drunkenness or intoxication, public urination and defecation.

ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

Patrons who do not comply with the Mendocino County Library Standards of Behavior may be asked to leave the Library. The Branch Manager or other staff person in charge may authorize 1-day suspensions. Suspensions longer than 1 day and up to 30 days may be authorized by the Branch Manager. The County Librarian must authorize suspensions longer than 30 days and up to one year. In addition to the suspensions provided for in this policy, violations of local, state, or federal law will be reported to law enforcement. All suspensions shall be reported to Library Administration. Staff shall consult with Library Administration as needed to determine appropriate length of suspensions and to ensure consistent application of this policy among library branches.

SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES/NOTIFICATION AND APPEALS PROCESS

A. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION WITH FURTHER ACTION TO FOLLOW

The following behaviors will result in an immediate suspension:

- Physical abuse or assault
- Fighting or challenging to fight
- Making violent or threatening statements or brandishing a weapon
- Damaging, destroying, theft, or attempt of theft of County property
- Acts of sexual misconduct, including indecent exposure, sexual harassment, sexual contact, sexual intercourse, and/or exhibiting lewd and lascivious acts or behavior

Authorized Library or Security staff will instruct anyone engaging in these behaviors to leave the facility immediately. Law enforcement may be called, and additional legal action may be taken, as appropriate. In addition, based on the severity of the situation, a suspension of Library privileges for up to one year may be applied without advance warning or prior suspension. Library staff will notify Library Administration immediately of any such incident.

B. ALL OTHER PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS WILL BE ADDRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER

First violation: Initial warning and given copy of the Standards of Behavior

Second violation: Privileges suspended for 1 day

Third violation: Privileges suspended for 2 to 7 days

Fourth violation: Privileges suspended for 8 to 30 days

Fifth violation: Privileges suspended for 31 to 365 days

A patron who has violated this Policy will be issued a letter specifying the behavior that violated this Policy, the penalty for doing so, which may include a suspension of privileges from the Mendocino County Library, the time period of the suspension and will be notified of any right to appeal the suspension.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Anyone who has had their Library privileges suspended for more than one week may appeal to the County Librarian. Anyone who has their Library privileges suspended for more than six months may appeal once in writing to the Mendocino County Chief Executive Officer or their designee.

An appeal must be in writing and be mailed or delivered to County Librarian, 105 N. Main St., Ukiah, CA 95482, within 21 days of the date the suspension letter was received. The appeal petition must include all reasons the patron believes they are not in violation of the Mendocino County Library Standards of Behavior Policy or why the suspension is not appropriate. The County Librarian, Chief Executive Officer or designee, upon reviewing the petition will issue a written determination of the appeal within 30 days of their receipt of the petition, not necessarily within 30 days of the appeal being delivered. The determination is final and shall have no precedential value.

Approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 11, 2025