

BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY

EMERGENCY PATRON CONDUCT POLICY

Policy adopted by the Library Board of Trustees January 13, 1997

Revised and approved September 9, 2002

Revised and approved February 11, 2008

Revised and approved October 11, 2016

EMERGENCY PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES Sept. 1, 2020; Nov. 9, 2020; Dec. 14, 2020; May 10, 2021

EMERGENCY UPDATES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

We have implemented the following emergency provisions to keep staff and patrons safe when visiting the library:

- Library patrons (over age 2) must wear a mask to enter the library building and in designated outdoor areas. Masks must remain in place at all times. No other face coverings will be allowed (e.g., face shield, gaiter, bandana, t-shirt, masks with valves, mesh masks)
- Library patrons need to sanitize hands before entering the building.
- The number of members of the public allowed in the library at one time will be at the discretion of the library director.
- Public browsing hours will be limited
- Library patrons are encouraged to conclude their browsing activity within 30 minutes
- Public computer equipment will be provided at the director's discretion.
- Practice social distancing while in the library or attending library events.
- Patrons attending outdoor activities sponsored by the library agree to adhere to the library's mask and social distancing procedures as outlined in this policy. These procedures may be updated by the library director informed by the CDC, NYS and Albany County Health Departments. The Library board will be notified of changes via email and changes will be discussed at the following month's board meeting.
- The library staff may require patrons to leave library property if they are unwilling to comply with these safety guidelines.

If these emergency provisions cannot be met, please contact the information desk at information@bethpl.org or 518-439-9314 ext. 2 to find an alternative solution to meet your service needs.

Bethlehem Public Library values its responsibility to enhance the general welfare and quality of life in the community and region it serves. The library pursues excellence in its mission: to provide equal and uncensored access to resources and services that encourage lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, and professional growth.

Library patrons have the right to use library materials and services without being disturbed or impeded by other library users. Library staff have the right and obligation to conduct library business efficiently and without interference. Patrons and staff alike have the right to safety and comfort in the library and on the grounds.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining rules of behavior necessary to protect the rights, safety, and comfort of patrons and staff. Library staff have been entrusted to courteously, but firmly, enforce these rules.

Rules of Behavior

1. Children under the age of nine must be accompanied by an adult. Staff cannot assume responsibility for the safety, care, supervision, or entertainment of unattended children. If a parent cannot be located at closing time or in an emergency, staff will request a police officer to escort the child to the Bethlehem Police Department (447 Delaware Avenue).
2. Conduct prohibited in the library includes but is not limited to:
 - a. public disturbance
 - b. loud, offensive or abusive language
 - c. sleeping
 - d. solicitation, selling, or distribution of leaflets within the library or impeding anyone's progress into or out of the library for such purposes
 - e. gambling
 - f. loitering
 - g. using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - h. smoking
3. Patrons may not bring animals, except those specifically required for service purposes, into the library. Animals, including service animals, must be attended at all times. (See Animal Policy)
4. Appropriate attire, including shirts and shoes, must be worn at all times.
5. Activities such as skateboarding, in-line skating and bicycling are not permitted inside the library building.
6. Bicycles should be placed in bicycle racks provided for this purpose. Bicycles may not be left inside the library.
7. Cellular phone use must not disturb other patrons. Cell phone conversations should be conducted in the lobby whenever possible.
8. Patrons shall respect requests to examine materials that have activated the alarm when passing through the security system.
9. Patrons shall not deface, mar or in any way destroy or damage any materials, furnishings, equipment, or other library property.

Any patron not abiding by these or any other rules and regulations of the library may be asked to leave the library premises. Repeat offenders may be denied library privileges by the Library Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the library director. Library employees may contact local police if necessary.