

Baxter Memorial Library – Patron Behavior Policy

Approved October 16, 2025

The purpose of this policy is to protect the rights of all library patrons to pursue learning and knowledge in a safe, welcoming, and peaceful environment. It also defines disruptive behavior that interferes with the use of the library by others or with the ability of staff to provide services.

"Disruptive behavior" is defined as **any action or behavior that interferes with library services, staff duties, or another person's ability to use and enjoy the library.**

Prohibited Behaviors

1. Safety, Security, and Prohibited Items

- In accordance with 13 V.S.A. § 4003, any individual who carries any weapon, including a firearm, with the intent or "avowed purpose" of injuring or intimidating another person will be immediately reported to law enforcement and banned from the premises.
- Possession of dangerous or deadly weapons, excluding firearms. This includes, but is not limited to, switchblade knives with a blade of three inches or longer, brass knuckles, slung shots, and any other instrument designed primarily for use as a weapon
- Possession or use of alcohol or illegal substances on library property
- Being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or other controlled substances in a manner that causes impairment or disruption
- Use of tobacco or nicotine products, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices
- Bringing animals into the library, except for service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

2. Disruptive, Abusive, or Harassing Behavior

- Using loud, abusive, threatening, obscene, or insulting language
- Engaging in abusive, threatening, or harassing behavior toward patrons or staff
- Continuing to engage another patron or staff member in conversation after being asked to stop
- Engaging in sexual harassment, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, physical contact, or inappropriate personal or sexual comments
- Stalking, following, or otherwise intimidating patrons or staff
- Taking photographs or videos of patrons or staff without their consent
- Displaying or viewing pornography or sexually explicit material on screens or in print

3. Hygiene, Attire, and Physical Conduct

- Exhibiting poor personal hygiene that results in strong odors or unsanitary conditions that interfere with others' use of the library
- Wearing inappropriate attire, including not wearing shoes or a shirt, or wearing clothing that is excessively revealing or displays offensive content

4. Misuse of Library Facilities or Materials

- Stealing, damaging, defacing, or altering library property or another person's belongings
- Tampering with or bypassing library security, computer, or internet systems
- Misusing restrooms, including but not limited to using them for bathing, shaving, washing clothes, or engaging in sexual activity
- Entering staff-only areas or restricted spaces without authorization

5. Unauthorized Activities

- Petitioning, soliciting, distributing materials, or selling merchandise on library property without prior permission
- Using electronic devices (e.g., phones, tablets, speakers) at a volume or in a way that disturbs others
- Engaging in activities that are disruptive or inconsistent with normal library use, including but not limited to horseplay, running, or excessive noise

Enforcement of Policy

Baxter Memorial Library reserves the right to restrict use of its facilities to individuals who do not comply with this Patron Behavior Policy. Library staff are authorized to address and respond to policy violations, which may include:

- A verbal warning and opportunity to cease the behavior
- Being asked to leave the library for the remainder of the day
- Suspension of library privileges for a specified period of time
- Permanent loss of library privileges
- Referral to law enforcement
- Legal prosecution

When privileges are suspended for more than one day, the patron will be provided with written notice stating the reason and duration of the suspension.

Appeal Process

A patron may appeal a permanent suspension of library privileges by submitting a written request to the Library Director. The Director will forward the appeal to the Board of Trustees, whose decision shall be final.