

Code of Conduct (Patron)

Last Revision Date: **July 6, 2021**

The Port Colborne Public Library provides free and equitable access to services in a welcoming and supportive environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The purpose and objective of this policy is to define and maintain a safe, enjoyable facility for all staff, volunteers, and patrons of the library, and further, to protect and preserve library property.

The rules set out here are intended to ensure the dignity and safety of the public and the staff, and to maintain the security of library property without disruption to library service. The mandate to set such rules is given under the *Public Libraries Act*, Section 23 (4), which states that the Library Board may make rules:

- For the use of library services
- For the exclusion from the library of persons who behave in a disruptive manner or cause damage to library property
- Suspending library privileges for breaches of the rules
- Regulating all other matters connected with the management of the library and library property

Within this context, the Library's top priority is to ensure a positive experience for users while in the library.

Section 1: Code of Conduct

Persons shall use all collections, facilities, and property of the Port Colborne Public Library for the intended purposes and must abide by the Code of Conduct established herein:

1. In general, behaviour that violates the law, or compromises the use and enjoyment of the library by others, or interferes with library employees or volunteers in the performance of their duties is prohibited.
2. While on library premises, all individuals must comply with instruction or direction from library personnel, whether for safety, conduct, or other library-regulated purpose as provided in this policy.

3. No person shall enter the library, nor remain in or on library property if instructed to leave the premises by authorized personnel.
4. It is an offence pursuant to the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44 and *The Criminal Code*, R.S.C 1985, c. C.46 to steal, vandalize, mutilate, or destroy library property including, but not limited to, all reading material, other public use media, and the library physical plant, such as equipment, furniture, fixtures, appliances, structural components, landscape, etc.
5. The consumption of food and beverages is not allowed inside the library building except in designated areas.
6. Smoking and vaping are prohibited in the building and on library property.
7. The use of alcoholic beverages on library property is restricted to special events as authorized by the Board, and so licensed.
8. Public health codes must be observed. Library users must be fully clothed and wear shoes.
9. Except for guide dogs, and animals used in authorized library programmes, patrons shall not bring animals into the library.
10. Dogs may not be left unattended or tethered on library property.
11. The use of roller blades, skateboards, scooters, bicycles and the like is not allowed on library property.
12. Bicycles must be parked in the designated bicycle rack. Scooters and small recreational motorized vehicles must be parked outside the library and must not block any entrance to the library.
13. No person shall:
 - a. Enter library premises when banned or otherwise prohibited from entering (such as by court order)
 - b. Obstruct library entrances or exits
 - c. Enter unauthorized areas on library premises
 - d. Take library materials into the washrooms

- e. Remain on library premises at closing times
14. Library users shall be respectful of others and will:
 - a. Speak and work at a soft volume
 - b. Set mobile devices to vibrate or mute
 - c. Take conversations on mobile or any personal communication devices outside the library
 - d. Refrain from foul, abusive, or discriminatory language or actions
 - e. Respect the sensibilities of others when viewing materials in the library
 - f. Respect others with sensitivities to scents, and limit the use of scented products
 - g. Use the library's materials, computers, equipment, and furniture with care
 - h. Keep aisles, corridors, and spaces clear so that others can easily access them
 - i. Throw out or recycle their garbage
 - j. Report disruptive behaviour to a library employee
 15. The library is not responsible for lost items. Library users must keep their personal belongings with them and not leave items unattended. Library staff cannot supervise, store, or care for an individual's personal property.
 16. No person shall use library computers in a manner that contravenes the Port Colborne Public Library *Internet Services Policy*.
 17. Library staff cannot be held responsible for the welfare of children left unattended on library premises, except during the time said children are part of a library-sanctioned activity. Pursuant to the *Child and Family Services Act*, when it has been determined that a child has been left at the library without supervision, library staff are obligated to report the situation to Family and Children's Services.
 18. Where security systems are available, library users shall individually pass through the system upon exiting the library. If the security system alarm is activated, or, if library staff have reasonable grounds to believe that library property has not been properly checked out, individuals shall, upon request, allow a library employee or agent to inspect their belongings.
 19. No person shall exhibit rude or disorderly behaviour while on library premises by:
 - a. Making undue noise

- b. Causing physical disruption or disturbance
- c. Being intoxicated or under the influence of a drug or narcotic substance
- d. Being verbally abusive
- e. Engaging in sexual misconduct or harassment
- f. Stalking
- g. Voyeurism
- h. Otherwise interfering with another's use and enjoyment of the Library

Section 2: Harassment and Workplace Violence

1. The Port Colborne Public Library is committed to building and preserving a safe, productive and healthy working environment for its employees, including its volunteers. In pursuit of this goal, the Board does not condone and will not tolerate acts of violence or harassment/bullying against any employee or volunteer. In accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, all persons employed at the Port Colborne Public Library have a right to freedom from harassment of any kind in the workplace.
2. No person shall harass, bully, or commit any act of violence against a library employee or volunteer.
3. The Director of Library Services, under the authority of the Board, will investigate all written complaints received from library employees and volunteers regarding alleged acts of violence, harassment or bullying by members of the public, and may take some or all of these actions:
 - a. Suspend or revoke the patron's borrowing privileges
 - b. Prohibit the patron from entering the library facility for a specified period of time
 - c. Call the police for assistance, who may then commence proceedings under the *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C.46, *Trespass to Property Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21
 - d. Prosecution

Section 3: Consequences of Violation of the *Code of Conduct Policy*

1. This policy outlines the Code of Conduct for users of the Port Colborne Public Library. Library users are asked to respect this Code of Conduct and follow all library policies. Library employees will make every effort to apply these policies in a fair, dignified, and consistent manner for the benefit of everyone. Anyone choosing to

disrespect the policies of the library and refusing to modify behaviour will be asked to leave. Staff will inform the person of how he or she violated the library's Code of Conduct.

2. If a library user contravenes any provision of this policy, the Director of Library Services, under the authority of the Board, may take some or all of these actions:
 - a. Suspend or revoke the patron's borrowing privileges
 - b. Prohibit the patron from entering the library facility for a specified period of time
 - c. Call the police for assistance, who may then commence proceedings under the *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C.46, *Trespass to Property Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21 or *Child and Family Services Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11
 - d. Charge for cost-recovery
 - e. Prosecution

Section 4: Exclusion and Appeals

1. A person has a right to appeal a letter of exclusion or extension of an exclusion, in writing, during the period of exclusion.

Related Documents:

- *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44
- City of Port Colborne. Administrative Policy 55. *Workplace Violence and Harassment* Port Colborne Public Library. *OP-07 Internet Services Policy*
- *Trespass to Property Act*, R.S.O. CT21
- *Criminal Code* (R.S.C., 1985, cC-46p)