



## Library Use Policy

### 1. PHILOSOPHY

The Albany County Public Library System supports the rights of all individuals to free, open, and equal access to ideas and information and use of the library without discrimination, intimidation, threat of harm, or invasion of privacy. This policy is designed to foster an environment of mutual respect and courtesy and applies to all patrons, volunteers, and staff while using the library. The library environment includes the interior and exterior spaces of the Albany County Public Library building and property, as well as virtual spaces. Respect for the rights and needs of all library users must be maintained at all times. The library expects appropriate and courteous behavior from its patrons.

### 2. LIBRARY USE. While in the library, patrons are expected to:

- 2.1. Inform the staff if they need accommodation or assistance to use library services.
- 2.2. Be responsible for the safety, well-being, and conduct of children and others in their care.
- 2.3. Cooperate with the requests of library staff.
- 2.4. Be respectful of the shared library space and fellow library users.

### 3. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR. While in the library, individuals are expected to respect others and respect library property. The following examples of disruptive, unsafe, or disturbing behavior are prohibited in the library:

- 3.1. Being under the influence of alcohol or other chemical substances.
- 3.2. Fighting with other patrons or staff.
- 3.3. Pushing, running, shoving, or throwing objects.
- 3.4. Engaging in inappropriate sexual behavior.
- 3.5. Harassing or threatening others. This includes pursuing unwanted conversation, impeding access to the building, following another patron with the intent to harass, using offensive language, or other actions which are reasonably perceived as hostile.
- 3.6. Talking loudly or excessively.
- 3.7. Having offensive bodily hygiene or odor that constitutes a nuisance to others, i.e., an unreasonable or unwarranted obstruction or injury to the common right of all people to use and enjoy the library materials and services.



- 3.8. Tampering with the arrangement of library materials to the extent that it would make finding the materials difficult for patrons.
- 3.9. Destroying library materials or property.
- 3.10. Accessing non-public areas.

This list of examples is not all-inclusive. Other behaviors judged to be inappropriate by the library staff may lead to Consequences of Misconduct as outlined in Section 9 of this policy.

4. **CODE OF CONDUCT DURING EXIGENT SITUATIONS.** During exigent situations, such as a community or natural disaster, a public health crisis, or similar emergency situation, the Library Director is authorized to institute any reasonable temporary code of conduct requirements as are appropriate to the situation. Failure to comply with such temporary measures may result in an individual being denied entry into the facility and/or a temporary loss of services.
5. **SMOKING.** Smoking is prohibited per Laramie, WY Code of Ordinances Ch. 8, § 8.56.030 (2014), Original Ordinance No. 1901, as amended.
6. **SOLICITATION.** Soliciting library patrons is prohibited. Solicitation includes the gathering of signatures for petitions and the sale or distribution of informational materials, merchandise, tickets, insurance, pamphlets, or campaign material. The only exceptions are solicitations by the library, Friends of the Library, and the Albany County Public Library Foundation.
7. **UNATTENDED CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS.** Albany County Public Library strives to maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all visitors including children and vulnerable adults. Library staff is committed to helping children and vulnerable adults with activities related to the library; however, library staff is not trained nor responsible for providing care or guidance to children or vulnerable adults in need of consistent attention and supervision. Library staff is not responsible for a child's or vulnerable adult's safety and welfare when they are unattended by a parent/guardian/caretaker. Responsibility for the welfare and behavior of a child or vulnerable adult using the library or while on library property rests with the parent/guardian/caregiver.
  - 7.1. **DEFINITIONS.** An "unattended child" is any child not accompanied by a parent/guardian/caregiver. A "vulnerable adult" is any adult who cannot care for themselves independently without the assistance of a caregiver. "Parents/guardians/caregivers" are the individuals responsible for monitoring the activities and regulating the behavior of children or vulnerable adults who require supervision during their library visit.



- 7.2. Children eight (8) years of age and younger must have a parent/guardian/caregiver or a person authorized by the parent/guardian/caregiver to supervise the child in the immediate vicinity of or in visual contact with the child. A non-parent/guardian caregiver must be at least sixteen (16) years of age and be able to provide emergency contact information for the child's parents/guardians.
- 7.3. Children nine (9) years of age and older or vulnerable adults whose parent/guardian/caregiver consider them sufficiently mature or capable enough may use the library independently. Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for the behavior of the children or vulnerable adult in their care, whether or not the parents/guardians/caregivers are present. Such children or vulnerable adults must be able to provide emergency contact information for their parents/guardians/caregivers. If such a child or vulnerable adult is unable to provide emergency contact information, the parents/guardians/caregivers shall be notified that further violations of this policy may result, at the sole discretion of the library, in a suspension or revocation of library privileges.
- 7.4. RESPONSIBILITIES
  - 7.4.1. Parents/guardians/caregivers of children of all ages and vulnerable adults are responsible for supervising their child's access to library resources. While library staff are available to guide people to library resources selected with the child's or vulnerable adult's interests and needs in mind, it is assumed that a child or vulnerable adult who visits the library unattended is authorized to use the full range of materials and resources available to them. The full range of materials and resources includes access to the adult collections and internet via public use of either the library computers or devices and/or library Wi-Fi on personal devices.
  - 7.4.2. Parents/guardians/caregivers of children nine (9) years of age and older or vulnerable adults, who have determined the child or vulnerable adult is mature or capable enough to be left alone at the library, are responsible for setting reasonable time limits for their children's or vulnerable adults' visits to the library and providing a means of transportation home from the library by the time the library closes. The library is not responsible for the care and supervision of children or vulnerable adults prior to opening or after closing.
  - 7.4.3. Library staff will intervene in the following situations: when a child who appears to be under the age of nine (9) or a vulnerable adult is left unattended; if issues relating to the safety and well-being of any unattended child or vulnerable adult arise; or if disruptive behavior occurs



by any unattended child or vulnerable adult. Library staff may contact law enforcement regarding children or vulnerable adults left unattended in the library if there is concern regarding their safety or welfare or if the behavior of the child or vulnerable adult falls outside acceptable behavior in the library. Please refer to section 3 of this policy for more information regarding acceptable behavior.

8. **ANIMALS IN THE BUILDING.** Service animals, as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, or animals with the express prior approval of the Library Director may be allowed into the library building. All animals must be housebroken and under the immediate control of their handlers. The following behaviors are prohibited by service animals while in the library or on library property:
  - 8.1. Aggressive behavior toward people or other animals, including, but not limited to, biting, snapping, snarling, growling, lunging, or barking.
  - 8.2. Jumping up on people or furniture.
  - 8.3. Soliciting food or seeking petting from people other than their owner. Service animals may not go up to people, whether in a friendly manner or not.
  - 8.4. Sniffing merchandise or people or intruding into another dog or person's space while on library property.
  - 8.5. Roaming so that the leash is a tripping hazard.
  - 8.6. Blocking an aisle or main walkway.
  - 8.7. Unruly behavior or unnecessary vocalizations in the library.
  - 8.8. Urinating or defecating in the library.
9. **CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT.** The Library Director or designee will apply these rules in a fair and equitable manner for the benefit of all. The Library Director and library staff shall keep a record of all incidents of misconduct. The consequences of misconduct may be any of the following:
  - 9.1. **VERBAL WARNING:** A staff member or designee will verbally remind the offender of their inappropriate behavior and request they comply with this Library Use Policy.
  - 9.2. **EVICTION:** The offender is asked to leave the premises immediately for a specified period of time.



- 9.3. DENIAL OF ACCESS: The offender will not be granted access to the library building or library property.
  - 9.4. LOSS OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES: Offender is barred or restricted from all physical library materials and/or services for a set period of time or permanently.
  - 9.5. REFERRAL TO LAW ENFORCEMENT: The library reserves the right to prosecute offenders to the fullest extent of the law, should the misconduct so warrant.
10. REINSTATEMENT OF PRIVILEGES AND APPEALS. Individuals who have been evicted, denied access, or who lose library privileges have the right to request reinstatement of privileges from the Library Director. Individuals whose request for reinstatement of privileges is denied by the Library Director also have the right to appeal the decision of the Library Director to the Albany County Public Library Board of Directors. Requests for reinstatement and appeals of the Library Director's decision shall be made in writing, providing the individual's name and current mailing address, and include the approximate date of and description of the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges, and any relevant information the individual wishes to provide to the Library Director or Board of Directors. Requests for reinstatement of privileges and appeals of the Library Director's decision which are not in writing and do not contain the individual's name and current mailing address shall not be considered. Such requests and appeals shall observe the following procedures:
- 10.1. To make a request for reinstatement of privileges following an eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges, the request shall be mailed or hand delivered within thirty (30) days of the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges to:
    - Library Director  
Albany County Public Library  
310 South 8th Street  
Laramie, WY 82070The Library Director may exercise discretion in accepting a request for reinstatement of privileges which is received more than thirty (30) days after the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges.
  - 10.1.1. The Library Director, after investigating the events causing the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges and the actions of library staff in response to such events, shall provide a written decision on the request for reinstatement within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the request. The Library Director's decision shall either vacate, modify the duration of, or affirm the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges and provide the reasons for the decision.



- 10.2. To appeal the Library Director’s decision on a request for reinstatement of privileges, an individual must mail or hand deliver a written appeal within forty-five (45) days of the Library Director’s decision to the Board of Directors:

Albany County Public Library Board of Directors  
%: Albany County Public Library  
310 South 8th Street  
Laramie, WY 82070

The Board of Directors may exercise discretion in accepting an appeal which is received more than forty-five (45) days after the Library Director’s decision.

- 10.2.1. The Board of Directors shall consider the appeal at a public hearing within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the appeal. The Board may consider the written appeal, documentary evidence, and testimony regarding the individual’s denial of access, eviction, or loss of library privileges, and may request further information from library staff, the individual, and any other relevant persons. The Board of Directors shall issue a written decision on the appeal within fourteen (14) days of its public hearing. The Board of Director’s decision shall either vacate, modify the duration of, or affirm the eviction, denial of access, or loss of library privileges and provide the reasons for its decision.