

Ajax Public Library

Acceptable Behaviour Policy



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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Library Acceptable Behaviour Policy encourages behaviour that supports the Library's vision, mission, and values.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **CLEO:** Chief Librarian and Executive Officer
- 2.2. **Disruptive Behaviour:** Any behaviour or action that interferes with the experience of others and/or behaviour that is abusive, insulting, lewd, or threatening.
- 2.3. **CSA:** Customer Service Associate
- 2.4. **Harassment:** As defined in the Human Rights Code as "a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known as unwelcome."

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to: inappropriate and/or unwelcome physical contact, jokes or innuendoes about a person's body, sexual suggestions, or verbal abuse because of gender.

- 2.5. **Illegal Acts:** Actions or conduct that violate Municipal, Provincial, or Federal laws.
- 2.6. **Service Animal:** An animal that supports a person with a disability. It should be readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their disability, or, the person should be able to provide a letter from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- 2.7. **Suspension:** A process in which a customer is not permitted to enter any Library branch or access services for a determined timeframe after breaching the Acceptable Behaviour Policy.
- 2.8. **Weapon:** Under the Criminal Code, a weapon means anything that is designed or intended for use to cause injury or death to, or to temporarily incapacitate, a person.

3. Scope

This policy applies everywhere the Library conducts its business including, but not limited to, Library property, in the community, over the phone, via email and live chat, or through our website.

This policy applies to:

- 3.1. All customers and visitors to Ajax Public Library
- 3.2. All Ajax Public Library employees

4. Procedures

4.1. Code of Conduct

Everyone belongs at the Library.

Please work together to create a welcoming and safe space for all to enjoy. During visits, everyone should:

Respect Others

- Respectfully coexist and be considerate of others in Library spaces.
- Follow directions of Library staff and security.
- Use the shared space in a respectful way that does not interfere with the experience of others.
- Service animals are always welcome at the Library. Occasionally, other animals may be permitted on site as part of authorized Library programs.
- Communicate with respect.

Stay Safe

- Supervise those in your care at all times.
- Keep your belongings with you. The Library is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.
- Help keep doorways and pathways clear from bags. Leave personal transportation devices (i.e.: bicycles, scooters, and other small motorized vehicles) parked outside or per staff instructions, except when used by a person with a disability.

Welcoming Space

- Tidy up after yourself.
- Use Library materials, computers, equipment, and furniture with care.
- Be mindful of personal hygiene and wear appropriate attire including footwear.

Some behaviours are unacceptable and may result in the loss of Library privileges, including, but not limited to:

- Any disruptive behaviour.
- Discrimination, harassment, or abuse of any kind.
- Hate speech, extremist symbols, or behaviour infringing on protected Human Rights
- Any behaviour that is threatening.
- Carrying, displaying, or using a weapon.
- Illegal activity.
- Using and handling intoxicating substances in the Library.
- Viewing inappropriate materials.
- Theft.
- Violation of any Library agreements, guidelines, or policies.

4.2. Procedures for Library Suspension

Library employees make every reasonable effort to apply these policies in a fair, respectful, and positive manner for the benefit of everyone. Anyone choosing to disrespect the policies of the Library and refusing to modify their behaviour will be asked to leave. This could result in a temporary suspension of Library privileges and/or exclusion from Library property.

Customers may receive a verbal warning prior to being suspended. Some incidents will result in an immediate suspension without warning. Staff may ask a customer to leave the Library for the rest of the day or up to a week if their conduct is unacceptable.

A suspension period is considered by management once an incident report has been submitted and any other documentation has been received.

Management evaluates the incident based on individual circumstances and severity. Suspension lengths will consider the context of the incident including, but not limited to, individual's age, mental health, disability, housing instability, and any grounds protected under Human Rights. Timeframes may be adjusted to shorter or longer periods pending the situation. Final authority rests with the Chief Librarian and Executive Officer.

Any customer under an active suspension period may not enter any Library branch, unless pre-approved by management. A customer may briefly enter to request a Reinstatement Request Application form from staff, as long as they are exhibiting respectful behaviour. After the form has been provided, the customer must leave Library property immediately. Should they need an accommodation to complete the form, a supervisor can provide assistance if it is safe to do so. A customer may bring in a support person and/or request interpretation.

Customers who repeatedly enter the Library while not permitted may have their suspension period extended or have any request for reinstatement denied.

4.3. Eligibility for Reinstatement

Customers who have been suspended for one (1) day are permitted to return to the Library on the next day the Library is open.

Customers suspended from the Library will be informed through a written or verbal notice which will include the length of their suspension.

For a suspension greater than one (1) month, the customer may apply for reinstatement. Accommodation is available to customers upon request.

Reinstatement requests will be reviewed, based on age, the level of accountability for the customer's behaviour, any plans to help prevent similar behaviour, and a commitment to following the Library's Acceptable Behaviour Policy in the future.

The request will be reviewed by Library Administration, and it will consider:

- Circumstances that led to suspension.
- Any relevant mitigating factors.
- Customer's history of behaviour.
- Impact of reinstatement on the safety of others.

In cases where severe violation has occurred or a customer has repeatedly come into the Library during their suspension period, applications for reinstatement will not be considered.

Library Administration will decide to uphold, modify, or overturn the suspension and approve or refuse an application for reinstatement within two (2) weeks of receipt of request.

A customer may appeal the decision to the Chief Librarian and Executive Officer or delegate within seven (7) days of the reinstatement request decision. The CLEO's decision will be final.

Customers whose applications were successful for either reinstatement or modifying their suspension length will be required to meet with a member of Library management prior to returning to the Library. This meeting will review expectations, develop any support plans, and an overview of the Library's policies. The customer may bring in a support person and/or request interpretation.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. Chief Librarian and Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation of this policy.
- 5.2. Management and supervisors are responsible for ensuring staff have received training and are applying the policy equitably.
- 5.3. Employees are responsible for applying the policy.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

The Library protects the privacy and confidentiality of all customers' personal information in keeping with the access to information and privacy provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56 (MFIPPA) and other applicable legislation.

The Library collects personal information of customers under the authority of Section 23 (4) of the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44, and personal information will only be used to administer services and programs at the Library.

Access to personal information is limited to only those employees who need access to perform their assigned duties. The Library also maintains security standards and procedures regarding unauthorized access to personal information to prevent unauthorized removal or alteration of data.

The Library will not disclose personal information to any third parties without having obtained prior consent of the person to whom the information pertains, except when MFIPPA permits disclosure, in support of police investigations, or other applicable law requires that the Library disclose the personal information.

7. Accessibility

The Library is committed to using its services to provide all individuals, including those with disabilities, an equal opportunity to effectively use the Library in an independent, dignified manner. The Library strives for accessible spaces and services in accordance with the Accessible Customer Service policy.

8. Communications

This policy will be distributed on the Library's website and shared with all staff.

9. Exemptions

Library staff and volunteers are required to adhere to all Library policies. Any investigations of staff will be in accordance with internal human resources policies and procedures.

10. Inquiries

Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to the Manager of Public Service.

11. Related Documents

11.1. LIB-AP-006 Accessible Customer Service Policy

- 11.2. LIB-OP-501 Customer Service
- 11.3. LIB-006 Letter of Trespass
- 11.4. LIB-027 Reinstatement Request Application
- 11.5. LIB-075 Incident Report
- 11.6. LIB-WI-518 Customer Suspension Procedure
- 11.7. LIB-171 Reinstatement Denied Response Letter
- 11.8. LIB-037 Reinstatement Granted Response Letter
- 11.9. LIB-035 Reinstatement Meeting Letter
- 11.10. LIB-AP-045 Workplace Violence Prevention
- 11.11. LIB-AP-096 Workplace Harassment Prevention
- 11.12. LIB-AP-112 Suspected Opioid Overdose Policy

12. Distribution

This policy should be posted on the website and shared with all staff.