

Patron Code of Conduct

Welcome to the Martins Ferry Public Library System. This library is supported by the taxes of the citizens of the state of Ohio. The Public Library is a place where citizens come to select materials, do research, study, and read. Citizens have a right to expect each of our facilities to be clean, pleasant, and safe places for selecting materials, reading, researching, studying, writing, and attending Martins Ferry Public Library or community-sponsored programs and meetings.

While at the library we encourage you to:

- Ask for help when you need it.
- Give us your suggestions about how we can improve our services, collections and facilities.
- Enjoy the time you spend here.

The following rules have been adopted for the comfort and protection of everyone using the library. The library staff will enforce these rules in a courteous yet firm manner. We ask that everyone using the library cooperate by maintaining a pleasant atmosphere conducive to study. If any person is confronted with violations of these rules, he/she should alert a staff member immediately.

Examples of disruptive or unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

Engaging in loud conversation or rowdy behavior, including disciplining children in a manner which disrupts use of the Library by others.

Verbal abuse, physical abuse or sexual harassment of library users or staff.

Consuming food or beverages, except in designated areas - (i.e. meeting rooms with kitchens).

Parents are responsible for the safety or well-being of children left on Library property. Children under 9 must be attended by an adult.

Smoking in the library.

Removing materials or equipment from the library without checking the items out with a valid library card.

Bundles, packages, backpacks, briefcases, purses, and other containers may be subject to search upon entering or leaving the library in order to protect and preserve the safety and security of property and people using the library.

Following staff or customers around the building or staring at staff or customers such that performance of their duties or use of library services is disrupted.

Damaging, defacing, or misusing library materials, equipment or facilities.

Possessing or using alcohol or controlled substances on library premises.

Restrooms must be used only for their intended purpose. Bathing or laundering is prohibited.

Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other people shall be required to leave the building.

Shoes and shirts must be worn in the library.

Disruptive use of cell phones, radios, televisions or other electronic products.

Violation of Guidelines:

If, in the judgment of staff, a library patron is in violation of these guidelines or is behaving in such a way as to make library use difficult for others, he/she may be asked to leave library property. Further abuse may lead to loss of library privileges and/or criminal prosecution. The designated library staff should call the police if a disturbance occurs.

Unattended Children Under 9:

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children in the library and if they fail to take responsibility for their children's behavior, library staff will assume that responsibility.

Children under nine should never be left alone in one area of the library building while a parent or accompanying adult is using another area. When it has been determined by library staff that a child has been left at the library without supervision, the following steps should take place:

Staff will attempt to contact the child's family to pick them up.

If staff is unable to contact the family, the police may be contacted for assistance in locating the abandoned child's family and caring for the child.

Unattended Children Over 9:

Children over nine, unaccompanied by a parent/adult, who behave in a disruptive manner will be warned and if the behavior continues, asked to leave the library. If

the child needs a ride home, library staff will assist the child in contacting a parent or guardian to pick them up.

Youth Left At Closing:

If a child under 16 years of age is not picked up by 30 minutes after closing, and attempts to contact a parent or guardian are unsuccessful, the person-in-charge will contact the Martins Ferry Police Department to report an abandoned child.

Pursuant to sections 3375.40 and 2935.041 of the Ohio Revised Code the Code of Conduct was adopted by the Martins Ferry Public Library Board of Trustees on May 27, 2003.