

Patron Code of Conduct

The Library's mission is to provide an enriching environment where life-long habits of learning, self-improvement and self-expression are encouraged.

The Missouri Revised Statutes [RsMo.] §182.230 (2000) provide that every Library and reading room:

...shall be forever free to the use of the inhabitants of the city where located, always subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the Library board may adopt in order to render the use of the Library and reading room of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. The board may exclude from the use of the Library and reading room any and all persons who willfully violate such rules.

The following statutes, codes and rules governing use of the Cape Girardeau Public Library (CGPL) are for the purpose of assuring a reasonably safe environment for staff and patrons, protecting the public's access to Library service and materials, and protecting Library resources and facilities. Children are encouraged to use the Library, its resources and facilities. The safety and responsibility for the well-being of children using the Library, however, lies solely with their parent/guardian or assigned chaperon, and not with Library personnel.

Violation of any federal or state statutes or local ordinances while on the premises of the Cape Girardeau Public Library will be regarded as a violation of CGPL rules as well.

It is the policy of the Cape Girardeau Public Library:

- 1. To prohibit conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the Library or disturbs Library patrons and staff, including but not limited to, use of abusive or threatening language or gestures, unreasonable noise, or loud/or boisterous behavior or talking.*
- 2. To prohibit using Library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures or buildings in a manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof, or in a destructive, abusive or potentially damaging manner, or in a manner likely to cause personal injury to the self or others.*
- 3. To require cardholders to use their own personal CGPL card when using or reserving Library computers.*
- 4. To prohibit the access of non-staff to non-public areas, unless accompanied by a staff member.*
- 5. To prohibit the consumption of food and alcoholic beverages except as authorized by the Library for specified occasions, or in specified areas of the Library. Nonalcoholic beverages are allowed in non-breakable lidded containers in specified areas of the Library.*
- 6. To ban animals from the Library except for service animals and as authorized for special events by CGPL.*
- 7. To prohibit all campaigning, petitioning, canvassing, interviewing, survey taking, distribution of materials, soliciting or sales in Library buildings and on Library property without written permission from Library administration.*
- 8. To allow photography or audio/video recording in accordance with the Library's Public Forum Areas policy.*
- 9. To require that patrons of all ages wear shirts and shoes at all times in the Library, except babies being carried or in strollers and not walking or crawling on floors.*
- 10. To prohibit bathing, doing laundry or other inappropriate behavior in CGPL facilities.*

11. *To require patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to constitute a nuisance to other patrons to leave the building.*
12. *To prohibit interfering with the free passage of Library patrons or staff in or on Library premises, including, but not limited to, blocking entrances, exits, stairways, aisles, and sidewalks, or placing objects such as bicycles, skateboards, backpacks or other items in areas that will interfere with free passage.*
13. *To prohibit placing personal belongings on or against Library buildings, equipment, furniture or fixtures in a manner that will interfere with patron access.*
14. *To prohibit patrons from bringing in articles that are too large to fit underneath or behind one Library chair so as to block aisles or otherwise interfere with patron access. Patrons may not use wheeled devices in Library property, including skateboards, roller skates, rollerblades, scooters and shopping carts, except for wheelchairs, walkers and strollers.*
15. *To prohibit littering on all CGPL properties.*
16. *To prohibit begging or soliciting.*
17. *To require that cell phones may be used provided their ringers are set to vibrate and conversations on them are kept to a minimum. Should a person using a cell phone prove disruptive, he or she will be asked to terminate the call immediately or take the call outside.*

Violators of paragraphs #1 - 16 are subject to withholding of CGPL privileges as follows:

- *First Offense: Patron will be removed from CGPL and prohibited from returning for the remainder of the day.*
- *Second Offense: Patron will be removed from CGPL and CGPL privileges will be revoked for one week.*
- *Repeat Offenses: CGPL privileges will be revoked for six months.*

CGPL privileges may be rescinded for one day or one week by the Library director, or adult or youth services coordinators, for offenses numbers 1 through 16 for periods specified. Patrons will be notified verbally, and in the case of minors, parent or guardian will also be notified verbally. The police will be notified of the presence of patrons whose privileges have been revoked, as their presence shall be considered trespassing.

Patrons will be notified of Library privileges revoked for six months by written correspondence via certified mail to the patron's last known address.

In accordance with Missouri Revised Statutes, Cape Girardeau City Ordinances and CGPL Code of Patron Behavior, no person on Library premises shall:

18. *Be intoxicated.*
19. *Carry beverage bottles holding alcoholic beverages or consume alcoholic beverages at unauthorized times and places.*
20. *Summon or cause a false report to be made to the police, fire department or any other official agency.*
21. *Persist in disturbing the public peace by loud or aggressive conduct.*
22. *Solicit or accost any person for the purpose of inducing him or her to participate in an act of prostitution.*
23. *Harass any other person or cause alarm to another person or persons on the premises.*

24. Promote or conduct gambling activity on CGPL premises.

Persons who violate paragraphs #17 - 23 are subject to withholding of CGPL privileges:

- First Offense: CGPL privileges will be revoked for one month.
- Second Offense: CGPL privileges will be revoked for six months.
- Repeat Offenses: CGPL privileges will be revoked for one year.

Patrons will be notified of revoked privileges by written correspondence via certified mail to their last known address.

Persons in apparent violation of federal, state or local law will be reported to the police by Library staff. Legal action may be taken by the Library through the filing of a criminal complaint.

In addition, on CGPL premises, no person shall:

25. Commit an assault or battery upon any person.
26. Engage in fighting.
27. Steal or take property not his/her own.
28. Deface, destroy, damage or remove any property if not authorized by CGPL.
29. Engage in any indecent or obscene conduct or make any indecent exposure of his/her body.
30. Use, give away or sell any controlled substance.
31. Possess a weapon unless authorized by state law.
32. Smoke (in areas other than designated) or carry ignited material.
33. Remain in the building after regular closing hours, except by invitation of CGPL.
34. Break federal or state statutes or local ordinances that cause disruption of Library operations.

Violation of statutes, ordinances and rules as listed in paragraphs # 24 - 33 are subject to withholding of CGPL privileges as follows:

- First Offense: CGPL privileges will be revoked for one year.
- Second Offense: CGPL privileges will be revoked for three years.

Patrons will be notified of revoked privileges by written correspondence via certified mail to their last known address.

If a patron has Library privileges revoked or rescinded, staff shall document the incident on an incident report form.

APPROVED by the Board of Trustees of the Cape Girardeau Public Library this 26th day of June, 2008. #16
Cell phone use policy approved 8/27/09. Amended May 4, 2023.