

Free Library of New Hope and Solebury

Customer Service Policy

Customer Service

Policy Statement

The Free Library of New Hope and Solebury seeks to offer excellent library services. The staff works hard to provide accurate, efficient and courteous library service to all customers in light of the principles outlined below. The Customer Service Policy is the foundation for all staff interactions with the general public. All library policies are interpreted in light of the principles outlined below:

- The Library offers the same quality of service to all regardless of age, race, gender identity, nationality, educational background, sexual preference, physical limitations, or any other criteria which may be the source of unfair or illegal discrimination
- Customers are treated politely and with respect
- Wherever possible, judgment calls are made in the patron's favor
- When a staff member is unable to comply with a request, the patron will be offered an alternative if at all possible
- Staff members are familiar with library policies and are able to inform patrons about them
- Staff members will behave in a friendly, helpful manner

Regulations

All staff members are responsible for providing excellent customer service.

If a staff member is unable to assist a patron, the patron should be referred to a staff member who does have the training and time to assist the patron. If immediate help is not available, staff members should use the information forms at the Circulation Desk to collect information about the patron and the question or request, and advise the patron that another staff member will reply as soon as possible.

Staff members are responsible for providing basic customer service, assistance with complex or unusual situations, or dealing with patron complaints or policy questions. Volunteers may provide basic customer service as directed by the staff member on duty.

All complaints will be reported to Director. Any complaint regarding the Director will be referred to the Board of Trustees. The Board will consider the complaint at their next regularly scheduled meeting, to which the Director and the complaining patron will be invited. The decision of the Board will be presented in writing. The decision of the Board will be final.

Phones will be answered promptly, with a friendly, helpful greeting identifying the "New Hope-Solebury Library." Patrons entering the library will be greeted with a smile and, if possible, a friendly welcome. Patrons waiting for service will be acknowledged and thanked for their patience.

Staff members will dress in neat, clean clothing while serving library patrons. No apparel which contains obvious advertising or which in any way endorses a political candidate, party or cause may be worn while serving patrons.

Snack food and drink at the public service desk should be kept to a minimum. Meals should be consumed away from the public areas either in the staff workroom, director's office or outside the building.

Staff will assist with copy machines and computer questions as they are able. Sometimes staff may not be available to assist with computer questions. If the staff member at the main service desk is not able to assist, but another staff member is available, the available staff member should be asked to help immediately.

It may be necessary to limit service to an individual patron, especially if staff resources are limited and other patrons are waiting. Staff members will provide the best possible service at their discretion. Patrons requiring extensive assistance may be asked to schedule a separate time for individual, uninterrupted help.

Requests for service will be handled in the order received. Telephone and in-person requests will have equal precedence, though an in-person transaction may be interrupted briefly to answer the telephone. The patron on the telephone will be politely asked to hold while the in-person transaction in progress is completed.

If the library does not own material which a patron needs, the patron will be told about Interbranch and Interlibrary loan services and assistance with these services will be

offered. Every reasonable effort will be made to acquire material requested by the patron.

Staff members will receive training in this policy. A copy of the policy will be kept at the Circulation Desk.

Approved by Board of Trustees August 20, 2018

Free Library of New Hope and Solebury

Customer Service

LIBRARY BEHAVIOR

Policy Statement

The Free Library of New Hope and Solebury values its patrons and strives to treat them with courtesy and respect. The Library has established rules of conduct so that library patrons are able to access materials and services in a secure, pleasant, safe and comfortable environment.

Regulations

Food (dry snacks only) and drink are permitted. Drinks must be covered. Library patrons are asked to dispose of their trash in the receptacles provided. Seating areas may not be used for eating meals.

Cell phone use is not permitted in designated study or quiet area. Cell phones and pagers must be set to silently alert patrons to calls, texts and other communications received while in the library. Library phones may be used by members of the public only in emergencies.

Use of audio players, including designated library computers and equipment, is permitted only with headphones.

Conversation is permitted at a volume at or below the general noise level of the library in that area at that time. Conversation is not permitted in designated quiet areas or other areas currently in use by a majority of library patrons for quiet activities.

Service animals, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, are permitted in the library; other animals are prohibited. This policy does not pertain to library-sponsored activities.

The library assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of personal belongings.

Illegal activities are prohibited. Library staff will call law enforcement to handle violations of federal or state laws and local ordinances. This includes:

1. Visible impairment or possession and use of illegal substances and consumption of alcoholic beverages
2. Smoking and use of tobacco products in library buildings or areas outside the building where second-hand smoke may enter
3. Indecent exposure and sexual activity beyond non-sexual affection
4. Possession of offensive weapons per PA Title 18 CS 908*:
"Any bomb, grenade, machine gun, sawed-off shotgun with a barrel less than 18 inches, firearm specially made or specially adapted for concealment or silent discharge, any blackjack, sandbag, metal knuckles, dagger, knife, razor or cutting instrument, the blade of which is exposed in an automatic way by switch, push-button, spring mechanism, or otherwise, or other implement for the infliction of serious bodily injury which serves no common lawful purpose
5. Theft and vandalism of library, staff and user property
6. Criminal trespass, including entry into the library while banned

Harmful, disruptive or destructive behavior is prohibited. This includes:

1. Harassment, defined as any behavior that disturbs, alarms or intimidates another, including:
 - a. Loud, abusive threatening or insulting language
 - b. Physical contact or attempts or threats of physical contact
 - c. Following another person around the building or grounds
 - d. Disruptive or unsafe behavior
 - e. Committing individual or repeated acts that serve no legitimate purpose
 - f. Communicating lewd and obscene words, language or pictures either to or about another person
 - g. Sexual harassment
 - h. Conduct not described above but of a similarly serious nature
2. Use of library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures and the building for anything other than the intended purpose.
3. Damage to library materials, computers, equipment, furniture, fixtures or the building
4. Gambling
5. Use of sound and viewing of images on computers in a way that reasonably disturbs others. Disturbing images include, but are not restricted to, sexually explicit material.
6. Use of the parking spots or sidewalks for bicycling, skateboarding or other playground or sports activities is prohibited. The library assumes no liability for individuals using the parking spots or grounds during closed hours.
7. Use of skateboards, skates and other sports equipment in the library

8. Impeding access to exterior or interior walkways, entrances and common areas, either physically or with large items
9. Trespassing in restricted staff areas or camping on library property
10. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, soliciting, sales, distributing leaflets, and any speech or conduct that results in disruption of regular library activities are prohibited. This does not pertain to library-sponsored activities.
11. Disregarding the reasonable direction of library staff members.

Inappropriate behavior is prohibited. This includes:

1. Bringing animals into the library, other than service animals as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Excessive displays of affection
3. Moving furniture or equipment without staff approval
4. Loud use of electronic devices with or without headphones
5. Not conforming to generally acceptable standards of hygiene and cleanliness, such as body odor that is sufficiently foul to be a nuisance to other library users; and wearing infested clothing or carrying infested personal effects.
6. Use of restrooms for bathing, shaving or laundering
7. Sleeping
8. Loitering. Library staff member exercise discretion in considering if loitering is unacceptable. Generally, a library user is asked to leave if library staff members determine the behavior or activity is disruptive to or prevents others from utilizing the library and its services
9. Monopolizing staff time or library resources
10. Any individual or group behavior that unreasonably disrupts or interferes with normal operations or use of the library

All children under age 7 must be accompanied at all times by a parent or caregiver. Children ages 7 – 9 may use the library while a parent or caregiver is on library premises. Children ages 10 and above may use the library unattended for a reasonable amount of time. The library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on library premises or at a library program at an offsite location.

Notice and Enforcement

This Behavior Policy will be available by request at the library. Copies of the policy will be made freely available for distribution as needed.

Library staff is authorized to enforce the Behavior Policy. Library volunteers are authorized to enforce the Behavior Policy only when paid staff members are not present in the library. If staff members are present, volunteers must alert staff to the situation and allow staff members to enforce the policy. While library staff will generally give a warning before asking someone to leave the building, an individual may be asked to leave immediately, depending on the severity of the situation.

Library patrons will be given the opportunity to appeal the enforcement of the Behavior Policy or actions taken by library employees by being told they may submit a written request to the Free Library of New Hope and Solebury Board of Trustees, 93 West Ferry Street, New Hope, PA 18938.

Procedures

Library staff and volunteers will contact 911 without hesitation in any circumstance that poses an immediate danger to health or safety or that may involve a willful violation of federal or state laws or local ordinances.

Library staff will use discretion in calling law enforcement, respecting the use of 911 for emergencies and using non-emergency numbers when appropriate.

Library volunteers will not contact law enforcement unless no paid staff member is in the library and there is an immediate danger present. If there is no immediate danger, and if no paid staff member is present, volunteers will attempt to call the Library Director or President of the Board of Trustees, or such person as the Director and President shall designate.

Library staff will otherwise approach library patrons with respect and discretion, delivering a warning as quietly, privately and politely as possible, contingent upon the circumstances.

All occurrences of inappropriate behavior will be documented in writing. Library patrons who violate the regulations are subject to banning in accordance with the Library's Banning Guidelines. Any library staff member may ban someone from the Library for the remainder of a day. Repeated violations with repercussions beyond expulsion from the library premises for the rest of the day will be handled by the Library Director. Notice of banning beyond the remainder of the day will be sent by certified mail to the person's last known address. In the event that another library in the Bucks County system bans a patron from use of its facilities, then upon notification from that library,

the Free Library of New Hope & Solebury will also ban that patron from use of its facilities pursuant to the county system's reciprocal banning policy.

Parents or legal guardians will be notified if possible of the expulsion from the library of anyone under age 18 or when law enforcement is contacted because of library behavior.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees March 19, 2014.

Free Library of New Hope and Solebury Customer Service Unattended Child Policy

Policy

The Free Library of New Hope and Solebury welcomes children of all ages to use its materials and services. However, because library staff members have many duties and cannot supervise children nor act as a substitute for daycare, the general responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of children lies with parents, guardians or caregivers, both in library buildings and on library grounds. The library staff may not take responsibility for the care of any child, and the library is not responsible for any child left unattended.

Regulations

Children of any age who exhibit disruptive, destructive or potentially harmful behavior will be subject to the policies and procedures set forth in the library's **Behavior Policy**.

- 1) A child aged 6 and under may never be left alone at the library even for a short period of time. They must be accompanied and the parent, guardian or caregiver must remain within sight and conversation distance of the child at all times. A caregiver is an individual aged 13 and over who is assuming responsibility for a younger child with the permission of the child's parent(s) or guardian(s). This may include, for example, siblings, babysitters, nannies or teachers.
- 2) A child 7, 8 or 9 years old need not be in the immediate presence of a parent or caregiver at the library, but the parent, guardian or caregiver of the child must be somewhere in the library at all times.
- 3) A child aged 10 and over may use the library unattended for an amount of time appropriate to his/her age and maturity, subject to the child complying with the library's **Behavior Policy**.

While these regulations are age specific, the library reserves the ability to modify these regulations and apply them differently to certain children on a case-by-case basis. For example, the library staff could review a situation and determine that a certain 10-year-old child cannot be left unattended.

Procedures in the Event of Unattended Children

- 1) If a child aged 9 and under is found unattended while the library is open, library staff will attempt to locate the parent, guardian or caregiver in the library. If the parent, guardian, or caregiver cannot be found, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care.

- 2) If a child aged 10 and over has become ill or frightened, has become disruptive and will not respond to verbal warnings from library staff, is upset because of weather conditions, long hours out of contact with the parent, guardian or caregiver, or other special circumstances, parents or guardians not in the library will be contacted, if possible, by library staff, informed of safety concerns, and asked to immediately pick up the child. If the library staff is unable to contact a parent or guardian, law enforcement officials may be called, and the child may be placed in their care, depending upon the circumstances.
- 3) Closing Due to Inclement Weather or Closing Time: Under no circumstances will a staff member give a child a ride home, take a child outside of the building, or remain in the building alone with an unattended child.
 - a) If a child aged 9 or younger is left unattended when the library is closing because of inclement weather or closing time, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care. If possible, two library staff members or a staff member and a volunteer will wait with the child until law enforcement arrives.
 - b) Children aged 10 and older will be encouraged by library staff to call and arrange rides home from the library at least 30 minutes before closing because of inclement weather or closing time. Children will be permitted to use the library telephone (or to have staff phone for them) to request to be picked up from the library. If at closing time a parent or guardian has not arrived to pick up the child, law enforcement officials will be called, and the child will be placed in their care. If possible, two library staff members or a staff member and a volunteer will wait with the child until law enforcement arrives.

Parents, guardians and caregivers of children of any age left unattended and without transportation at regular library closing time will be sent a letter, signed by the Library Director expressing the library's concern for the child's safety and well being. A copy of the letter will be submitted to the President of the Board of Trustees.

- 4) Internal Documentation: All occurrences will be documented by staff in writing.

Consequences of Violations of This Policy

Staff will provide a written copy of this policy to the library patron when discussing violations or issuing a warning.

A member of the public who violates the **Unattended Child Policy** will be subject to any of the following steps depending upon the severity of the violation(s):

- Asked to stop the behavior;
- Receive a verbal or written warning;
- Be banned from the library for one or more days; or

- Be required by the library to resolve the matter with assistance from social/family services and/or law enforcement.

The Library Director will contact the parent or legal guardian in writing and follow up with social/family services if it is habitual.

Repeated violations with repercussions beyond expulsion from the library premises for more than one day will be handled by the Library Director.

Library patrons may appeal any actions taken by library staff to enforce the Unattended Child Policy by submitting a written request to the Free Library of New Hope and Solebury Board of Trustees; 93 West Ferry Street; New Hope, PA 18938.

Miscellaneous

Children attending library programs at an offsite location must be in the care of a parent or guardian for the duration of the event. Library staff may not take responsibility for the care of any child nor provide transportation for the child to or from the program.

The Unattended Child Policy is available for distribution as needed.

Approved by the Board of Trustees August, 2018

Free Library of New Hope and Solebury

Customer Service Policy

Examination Proctoring

Policy Statement

The Free Library of New Hope and Solebury supports the lifelong learning of community members. Distance learning courses, professional development courses, and similar pursuits may require students to take examinations under the supervision of a certified proctor. The Library will provide this service as staff time allows. The purpose of this policy is to make clear the circumstances under which the Library may offer this service.

Regulations

Only the Director or designated staff member will proctor examinations.

The Library will not proctor examinations which require constant supervision.

Online examinations will not be proctored if they require installation of special software on library-owned computers.

Students will be notified that it will probably not be possible to offer a quiet space.

Examinations will be scheduled as staff time allows. Scheduling will be done at the Director's discretion. The Library may refuse to proctor an examination if it will place an unreasonable demand upon Library resources or interfere with Library operations or special events.

The Library will not be responsible for special deliveries, faxes, emails, or grading of examinations. The Library will accept delivery of examinations by regular mail and will be responsible for sealing completed examinations in an envelope provided by the school or the student, and for placing this envelope in the normal Library mail pick-up area. The Library is not responsible for lost or destroyed examinations.

A fee of \$25 is charged per exam. Any fee may also be waived at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

Approved by Board of Trustees June 17, 2009