Wanaque Public Library Code of Conduct

Adopted by Wanaque Public Library Board of Trustees 10/26/2022; updated 5/26/2026

The rules and guidelines outlined in this Code of Conduct are designed to protect the safety of all library users and staff, and to maintain an atmosphere so that all library users feel comfortable and safe. All library users are expected to respect this code of conduct and follow the rules outlined here.

Acceptable Behaviors

- While inside the library building, all library patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library. Types of acceptable activities include reading, studying, attending programs, using computers or using library materials. Acceptable activities are subject to change and/or may be restricted during times of emergency or crisis (including public health emergencies).
- All library patrons must be properly attired, including footwear and shirts. Patrons whose bodily hygiene is offensive so as to conduct a nuisance to other patrons may be required to leave the building.
- Non-disruptive use of cell phones or personal electronic devices is allowed in the library. As a courtesy to other patrons, please silence all alerting tones and refrain from using speakerphones or listening to electronic devices without earphones.
- Users should not leave personal belongings unattended while visiting the library. The library cannot ensure the safety of unattended personal belongings.
- Library patrons may drink beverages from covered containers, except at the public computers. Library patrons may not consume food within the library, unless attending a program where food is served.
- All library users shall respect the rights of other patrons and of library staff. Behaviors that may harass or annoy other library users include noisy or boisterous activities, staring at or following another person around, singing or talking loudly to oneself or to others, or by behaving in any manner which reasonably can be expected to disturb or interfere with other persons' use of the library.
- Any materials borrowed from the library must be checked out in accordance with established procedures before they are removed from library premises. Library personnel reserve the right to inspect all oversized bags and packages before the library patron leaves the building.
- All library patrons must vacate the library premises by closing time, when evacuation of the building is necessary, or at any time when requested to do so by library personnel.

Prohibited Behaviors

- Library users may not engage in abusive, threatening, or harassing verbal behavior of any kind (this includes to library staff, other patrons, or while engaged in a phone call).
- Library users may not physically threaten or harass any other person within the library.
- Library users must refrain from filming or taking photographs of other people inside the library without their prior express permission.
- Library users will refrain from vaping or smoking on library property.
- While in the library, patrons shall not use or be under the influence of alcohol or controlled dangerous substances.
- Library users may not damage or misuse library equipment or furnishings (such as newspapers, computers, printers, chairs, library restrooms).
- Library users must not disrupt other users by selling merchandise or conducting surveys (except where prior approval is obtained, such as an author selling copies of their books at a library-sponsored program), attempting to obtain signatures for petitions, or soliciting for charitable, religious or political reasons.
- Library users may not attempt to purposely circumvent computer security or filtering software. Tampering with the operation of the computer network is strictly prohibited.
- While using the library, children age 7 or under must be supervised by a responsible person age 13 or older. Children age 7 or under may not be left unattended in the library.
- Library patrons may not conduct financial transactions, including the exchange of money or payment for services, on library premises.
- Library patrons may not engage in behavior that disrupts the normal operation of the library, including its opening and closing procedures.

Illegal Activities

All activities defined as illegal by local, county, state or federal ordinance are specifically prohibited within the building and on the property of Wanaque Public Library. Anyone found to be engaging in illegal activities will be required to leave the premises and/or the police will be called. Illegal activities include, but are not limited to:

- Drug or alcohol use
- Assault
- Theft
- Viewing or sharing child pornography
- Public indecency

Conclusion

This Code of Conduct is not intended to be a complete list of expected behaviors, but to provide guidance. Library staff has the authority to determine what constitutes disruptive behavior.

Rule Violations

If a library user has violated a rule in this Code of Conduct, they receive three warnings.

First warning: This is a polite reminder to the patron that they are violating the Code of Conduct and a request to stop the behavior.

Second warning: Another reminder that the patron is expected to abide by the rule, and a warning that continuing the behavior will result in them being asked to leave for the day.

Third warning: If the same person does the same thing a third time, they will be asked to leave the library for the rest of the day. They will receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and will be given a written summary of why they were asked to leave. The library will keep a copy of this summary on file for one calendar year, and during that year, the transgressor will be considered to be "on probation."

If the person on probation violates the library's Code of Conduct in any way within one year after receiving their third warning and the written letter, the library director may suspend the person from using the library for a specified amount of time. The transgressor can appeal this decision by submitting a written appeal to the President of the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Board will then review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Library Director.

NOTE: Certain behaviors – including failure to vacate the library premises at closing time after being requested to do so by staff – may warrant an immediate request to leave without completing the full three-warning sequence, at the discretion of library personnel.