

Patron Code of Conduct Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Collie Public Library is a public library funded and managed by the Shire of Collie to provide public library services for residents and visitors.

The legal basis for the operation of the public libraries in Western Australia are:

- Library Board of Western Australia Act 1951
- Library Board (Registered Public Libraries) Regulations 1985

In the following document, Western Australian Legislation is in *italics*. The original numbering of the legislation is retained. A full copy of the Regulations is available on-line via the State Government of Western Australia's website.

2. Behaviour in the Library

21. Interpretation

"librarian" means the person for the time being appointed by the library authority to be in charge of the library, or the duly appointed delegate of that person;

22. Behaviour of persons using a library

(1) A person attending a library shall comply with any reasonable direction of a librarian and shall not wilfully obstruct any officer or servant of the library authority or the Board in the execution of his duty or wilfully disturb, interrupt or annoy any other person in the proper use of the library.

(2) A person shall not —

(a) lie on the chairs, tables, floor or any other part of the library;

(b) smoke, sleep or partake of refreshment in the library, except in special areas, if any, specified by the library authority as being set aside for such activities or any one of them.

(3) Except with the consent of the librarian, a person shall not offer any goods or services for sale in a library.

(4) A person shall not behave in a disorderly manner, or use violent, abusive or obscene language in a library.

(5) A person, other than an officer or servant of the library authority shall not, after proper warning, remain in the library beyond the hour fixed for the closing of the library.

(6) A person shall not carelessly, negligently or maliciously soil, tear, cut, deface, damage, injure or destroy any book or any object forming part of the contents of the library, whether within the library or elsewhere.

(7) A person shall not take a tracing from any book except through a protective screen and with the permission of the librarian.

(8) A person shall not, without abiding by the rules of the library authority, take or cause to be taken from the library or receive or be in possession of any book forming part of the contents of the library, whether or not the property of the Board or of the library authority.

(9) A person shall not misplace or secrete any book or any record of a book in the library with the intent to withhold its use from others.

23. Animals

A person shall not permit or cause any dog or any other animal belonging to him or under his control to enter or remain in the library, except that a guide dog used to escort a blind or poorly sighted person may be permitted to enter the library with the person being escorted.

24. Vehicles

Except with the consent of the librarian, a person shall not bring into the library a vehicle or conveyance but this regulation shall not be used to restrict the entry of persons in wheel chairs into the library where that conveyance is necessary to give the reader access to the library.

25. Restricted areas

A person other than an officer or servant of the library shall not enter or remain in any part of the library which is not set apart for the use of the public except with the permission of the librarian.

26. Cleanliness

A person who is offensively unclean in person or in dress may be excluded from a library at the discretion of the librarian.

3. Complaints about other customers

Behaviour in the library is based on an expectation of civil and polite relations between reasonable adults, rather than an expectation that staff will mediate everyday interactions between customers. Customers should attempt to negotiate desirable outcomes by politely requesting fellow patrons to modify their behaviour if it is affecting them adversely, or seeking permission of fellow patrons (for example, to lower the blinds) before doing something which may affect other users.

Library staff will respond to requests to monitor conditions and serious breaches of acceptable behaviour and will endeavour to negotiate outcomes that take into account the library's multiple roles and the comfort and needs of all users.

4. Abusive and aggressive behaviour

The library is a public service for all the community and is used by people of all backgrounds and personal circumstances. All library patrons have a right to enjoy the library facilities and to feel comfortable. The Council, as the managing authority of the library, has an obligation to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for both patrons and staff.

The safety of patrons and staff is the highest priority. Aggression, violence, or damage to property is not tolerated. Violence or threatened violence will result in an instant ban, possibly permanent, and the police will be called if deemed necessary.

Inappropriate language, aggressive language, physical threats, or intimidation are behaviours NOT tolerated and accepted. This might include, but is not limited to, prolonged staring, standing too close, or preventing people from moving.

Isolated and minor lapses of civil behaviour such as making insulting personal remarks, or being rude and impolite, will result in a warning from staff if witnessed by them, however, continued or repeated displays of uncivil behaviour will not be tolerated.

Staff will ask offenders to immediately desist from the intolerable behaviour. All persons using the library must follow the legal directions of library staff.

Customers who direct negative behaviour to staff such as being rude, overbearing, impolite, or raising their voice unnecessarily while staff are attempting to apply or explain a policy or carry out an administrative task, will be asked to desist. If the behaviour persists staff concerned may cease serving that person immediately, and/or that person may be asked to leave the library. Any adverse behaviour directed at a staff member or customer which can be substantiated to the Manager's satisfaction may also result in a letter being sent to the alleged offender, to advise them of the guidelines about appropriate behaviour.

5. Removal and banning

29. Authority of librarian

(1) A librarian may cause to be excluded or removed from a library —

(a) any disorderly person;

(b) any person who is guilty of offensive behaviour;

(c) any person who appears to be intoxicated;

(d) any person who is not using the library for the purpose for which it is intended; or

(e) any person who has committed a breach of these regulations if it appears that his continued presence in the library may lead to a further breach of these regulations.

(2) A librarian —

(a) may suspend the use of a reader's ticket; and

(b) may refuse books and deny the use of the library to any person who refuses or neglects to comply with these regulations, and a person who is aggrieved by the decision of a librarian made under this subregulation may appeal against the decision to the library authority.

The most senior library staff member available at the time of an incident will make a judgement about whether a customer will be allowed to stay in the library, or be directed to leave, and not return for the remainder of the day.

The Manager may require an interview with the offending customer to discuss the effects and consequences of the person's behaviour. They will also be accorded an opportunity to put their side of the story or explain any mitigating circumstances.

For serious or repeated breaches, the Library Manager may decide to ban the offender for longer periods (or permanently) or attach conditions to the person's continued use of the library. This will be communicated, if possible, by a letter. A memo on the patron's card (if a member) indicating the nature of the ban should indicate the future use of the library.

A ban could include:

- not able to utilise library services and/or
- banned from re-entering the library.

If a patron/customer is asked to leave because they are banned from entering the library and they refuse, staff may call the Police to deal with the unlawful trespass.

Should a person wish to appeal any such decisions made by the Manager, they may do so, in writing to the CEO of the Shire of Collie.