

## DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Every patron has a right to quality library service at the Northlake Public Library District. Each patron has a right to that service in an atmosphere that is calm, quiet, safe, and without disturbance from another patron. The staff of the Northlake Public Library District will adhere to the service orientation outlined in the *Community Relations Guidelines (Personnel Policy, Appendix A)*. The staff has a right to provide services without fear of abuse or threatening behavior from Library patrons. Any behavior that interferes with Library service, endangers Library patrons or staff, or causes damage to Library property is not acceptable and will be corrected.

### DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Any conversation, laughter, noise, or action that is disturbing to other users or to staff.
- Ring tones (all cell phones should be on silent while in the library)
- Blocking or in any way interfering with the free movement of any person.
- Soliciting of any kind on library property
- Use of library telephones unless approved.
- Consumption of food or uncovered beverages in undesignated areas. Designated areas include the lobby, meeting and study rooms.
- Running, chasing, or roughhousing.
- Bringing pets into the Library. Certified service animals are allowed.
- Leaving unattended personal property in or on the Library property is prohibited. The Library takes no responsibility for unattended items.

### PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

The Library staff is expected to exercise good judgment and sensitivity when intervening with patrons whose behavior is disruptive. Many times the patrons are unaware of their problem behavior and a look or a few words discreetly spoken by a staff member are sufficient. Whenever this is ineffective, the following procedures should be used:

1. The first contact with the offending patron should be a request to stop a specific behavior.
2. If the patron does not comply, the staff member will repeat the request with the warning that the patron will have to leave the Library for the remainder of the day.
3. Patron is told to leave the building when the second reminder is ignored. Whenever possible, 2 staff members or security guard if possible should be present when a patron is told to leave the building. Staff members are never permitted to touch a patron, but may take defensive action if warranted.
4. Under extreme circumstances, disruptive patrons may be barred from the Library for a length of time to be determined by the department supervisor, not to exceed 5 days. Severe problems should be referred to the Director for resolution. Staff will fill out an Incident Report and place it on file with the Library Director. Parents will be informed in writing and requested to contact the Director before a child will be readmitted.

## Northlake Public Library District

5. If a patron behaves in a violent or threatening manner, staff members should not attempt to defuse the situation themselves. Since a threatened staff member may not be able to call the police for assistance, any staff member who is aware of the situation should immediately call 911.

### SEVERELY DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

More severe violations will result in immediate expulsion and/or prosecution to the full extent of the law. The police will be contacted if patrons fail to comply with a request to leave Library property. Severely Disruptive Behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Any obscene or abusive language, gesture, or public display of a hate or gang-related symbol.
- Harassment. Including following staff or patrons around the building, or any other behavior such as making rude noises, gestures, physical contact, or other intimidating acts.
- Inappropriate display of consensual physical contact.
- Hitting, fighting, or verbally threatening others.

### PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING SEVERELY DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

1. Patron is told to leave the building. Whenever possible, 2 staff members or security guard if possible should be present when a patron is told to leave the building. Staff members are never permitted to touch a patron, but may take defensive action if warranted.
2. If a patron behaves in a violent or threatening manner, staff members should not attempt to defuse the situation themselves. Since a threatened staff member may not be able to call the Police for assistance, any staff member who is aware of the situation should immediately call 911. Staff will fill out an Incident Report and place it on file with the Library Director.

### ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

Illegal behavior is behavior that is prohibited by law. Illegal behavior will not be tolerated on the Library premises and the Police will be called. Illegal behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Assault (verbal, physical, or sexual).
- Indecent Exposure
- Viewing child pornography.
- Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, or smoking
- Removing Library materials from the Library without checking them out will be considered theft
- Theft or damage of another person's property.
- Using false identification or using fictitious names or addresses.
- Vandalism or defacement, such as willful destruction or damage to any Library property, whether indoors or outdoors.

Patrons who engage in illegal behavior in the Library or on Library grounds are subject to removal and or arrest. Staff will fill out an Incident Report and place it on file with the Library Director.

## **Northlake Public Library District**

### **CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF NINE (9)**

If a child under the age of 9 is causing a disturbance, a staff member should correct the child. If the disturbance continues, staff should remind the parent or responsible party caregiver of the Parental Responsibility Statement (see below). If this reminder is ignored, staff should ask the responsible party to remove the child from the library.

### **Parental Responsibility Statement**

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children while their children are in the Library. Children under the age of 9 must be within eyesight of a parent or responsible person of at least 12 years of age at all times while in the library. Children 9 and up are left on their own in the building at the parent's discretion. The library does not provide childcare, nor do we accept responsibility for children. (Please see the "Safety of Children in the Library" policy for complete details.)