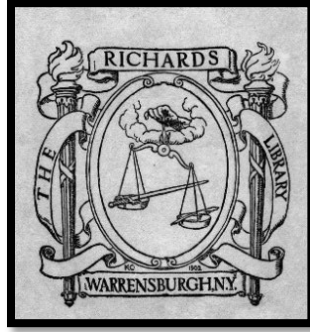


# The Richards Library



## Code of Conduct Policy

The following are rules and regulations of The Richards Library Board of Trustees. These are effective February 6, 2017 and will be reviewed every 5 years.

In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit The Richards Library in a manner that ensures both their safety and an atmosphere of courtesy, respect, and service excellence, The Board of Trustees has adopted the following Code of Conduct Policy. Its purpose is to guarantee that The Richards Library is able to carry out its mission and ensure that no person or group is denied access to Library facilities, programs or services due to behaviors that create an environment or atmosphere that is unsafe, disruptive, or not conducive to the Library's mission.

The enforcement of the Code of Conduct will be applied evenly, consistently, and fairly. Access to Library facilities and/or services may be denied to any patron involved in behavior that is disruptive, constitutes a nuisance, creates an unsafe environment, or prevents The Richards Library from accomplishing its mission.

The Library reserves the right to request patron I.D. at any time.

### **Personal Rules of Conduct include, but are not limited to:**

- Weapons of any type are prohibited;
- Use of profane, obscene, threatening, or injurious language or gestures is prohibited;
- Viewing of pornography on Library devices or through Library Wi-Fi is strongly discouraged as not to infringe upon the rights of other patrons;
- Use of skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, or "razor" style scooters is not allowed in the Library or on Library premises;
- Sidewalks must remain obstacle-free at all times;
- Library property, including all buildings, outside grounds and parking areas are designated smoke and tobacco-free areas. The use of tobacco products, electronic or "e-cigarettes", and vaping is prohibited;
- Shirts and shoes are required for health reasons and must be worn at all times while in the Library;

- Silence cell phones upon entering the building. There are labeled “cell phone friendly” locations in the Library, or outside, that may be used for phone calls;
- Use of alcoholic beverages, except for private Library events, or illegal drugs is prohibited. Persons under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs are not allowed on Library property and will be asked to leave;
- Solicitation is not allowed on Library property;
- Sleeping in the Library or on Library property is discouraged.

**Patrons may not interfere with the Staff’s performance of their duties. This includes engaging in extended conversations or behavior that engages or forces the attention of:**

- Staff for an inappropriate period of time, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment;
- Animals are not allowed in the Library with the exception of a certified service animal and animals brought in for special programs.

**The Library prohibits any activity or conditions that unreasonably interferes with Library safety or use; performance of duties by Library Staff; or the quiet and peaceful enjoyment of the Library or Library resources. This includes, but is not limited to:**

- Harassing or threatening Library patrons or Staff;
- Staring at, following, photographing or any type of videography without permission of Library patrons or Staff;
- Making any loud or unreasonable noise or other disturbances such as running or talking loudly;
- Disruptive use of personal communications or entertainment devices;
- Offensive body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume and/or cologne;
- Inappropriate public displays of affection;
- Sexual misconduct;
- Defacing or intentionally damaging Library property;
- Theft or attempted theft of Library property or the property of patrons and/or Staff;
- If the person refuses to leave the premises and/or property, the Warren County Sheriff’s Office will be called.

**The Library reserves the right to search bundles, packages, backpacks, briefcases, purses, and other containers upon a patron entering or leaving the Library in order to protect and preserve the safety and security of property and people using the Library.**

### **Unattended Children**

The Richards Library welcomes children of all ages to the Library. The present Staff is engaged in entirely circulation, reference and other library related customer service duties. The Staff is not licensed to perform child care duties. It is the responsibility of the parents and/or guardians to supervise their child or children at all times in the Library or on Library grounds.

## **For the safety and comfort of children:**

- All children under 5 years of age shall be accompanied by a responsible person or caregiver, 16 years of age or older, at all times;
- Children 5 to 11 years of age may be left unattended for up to an hour and a half, subject to the rules and regulations of the Library.
- Children 12 years and older may use the Library unattended, subject to the rules and regulations of the Library;
- Children who have special needs related to physical or mental ability, to behavior, emotional problems, lack of adequate attention span, incomplete social skills, etc., shall be attended by responsible persons at all times;
- It is recommended that any child left unattended at the Library knows emergency contact information;
- The Library is not responsible for the whereabouts of unattended minors;
- Children could be asked to leave if misbehaving or be stranded at closing time or during an unexpected closing. In this situation, if no parent or responsible adult is available or reachable by telephone, Warren County Sheriff's Office will be requested for the safety of the child.

## **Disciplinary Process**

Any Staff member will enforce this Policy by pointing out violations to patrons and requesting compliance. Failure to comply will result in the restriction of access to Library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to Library facilities for a set period or by denying access to specific services and/or programs.

## **Suspension of Library Privileges**

A Richards Library Staff member will suspend Library privileges of a patron, including access to materials, activities, services, or facilities if the situation is a serious offense and constitutes a violation of The Richards Library Policies. Examples of serious offenses include, but are not limited to: verbal abuse, violence, threatening behavior, sexual harassment, theft/attempted theft, or any behaviors that threaten the safety and security of Staff and/or patrons. The person-in-charge shall call the Warren County Sheriff's Office rather than place themselves or others in a threatening situation.

- The Staff member will issue an immediate suspension order by requesting that the offending individual(s) leave the Library immediately;
- The Staff member will issue a warning to the offending individual(s) for offenses that do not require immediate suspension of privileges (Example: situational anger inappropriately expressed in a disruptive manner);
- The Staff member will issue a suspension of privileges order when behavior is serious and/or repeated after a verbal warning has been issued. The time of suspension will be based upon the seriousness of the offense and the number of times the individual(s) has been suspended previously;
- Suspension orders will be issued in writing when possible.

## **Right of Appeal**

A patron with suspended privileges may appeal a suspension in writing to The Board of Trustees within the following 3 business days. The patron must state clearly why they believe that their privileges should be restored.

The Board of Trustees will respond to the appeal in writing within 7 business days of the date the appeal was reviewed. Privileges will remain suspended throughout the appeals process. **The decision of The Richards Library Board of Trustees is final.**

**Reformatted, Revised, Reviewed and Approved by The Richards Library Board of Trustees: April 19, 2018**

**Revised, Reviewed and Approved: May 19, 2020**

**Amended, Reviewed and Approved: October 5, 2021**

**Revised, Reviewed and Approved: June 7, 2022**