

BEHAVIOURAL POLICY

Rules of Conduct for the Use of Library Services

The Anguilla Library Service is committed to freedom of access to information and strives to treat the public with courtesy, respect and fairness in a welcoming and safe environment that supports activities for reading, research, communication and recreation.

To enable the library to fulfill its mandate, the Department of Library Services is responsible for establishing and enforcing rules of conduct to

- protect the rights and safety of library patrons
- protect the rights and safety of staff members
- preserve and protect the library's property
- provide equitable access to materials and services for all users

Definitions and scope

No individual or group may engage in inappropriate conduct on the premises of the Edison L Hughes Library & Education Complex or when participating in library programmes. Behavior becomes unacceptable when it violates the law, when it interferes with another person's use of the library, when it could result in injury to oneself or others, or when it could result in loss or damage to customer or Library property. Inappropriate conduct includes any individual or group activity which reasonably can be expected to disturb other individuals using library facilities, materials and/or premises.

These rules of conduct shall apply to the library's property i.e all buildings, the interior and exterior, the grounds under the department's portfolio, furniture, equipment, vehicles, collections and other materials. They also apply to all persons working in, entering or using the premises.

They cover procedures for violations, which may result in removal from the premises and denial of access to the library for prescribed periods or the suspension of library privileges, including the use of computers.

When possible, depending on the severity of the behavior, staff will first educate individuals about the applicable policies before taking stronger measures to enforce those policies. The involvement of social partners in the community is expected to provide support for user education and compliance.

Rules of Conduct

1. The Anguilla Library Service shall uphold all laws in regard to public behavior. Any conduct in violation of the laws of Anguilla is strictly prohibited.
2. The following actions are examples of conduct prohibited on Library property:
 - Being in possession of dangerous weapons or threatening the use of any object in such a manner that it may be considered a weapon
 - Smoking
 - Being under the influence of, selling or possessing alcohol or illegal substances
 - Eating or drinking except in the context of library sponsored events. (Users will not be allowed to enter the service areas of the library with food and/or beverages, including bottled water)
 - Littering
 - Bringing animals inside the Library (except service animals)
 - Loitering: entrances, doorways and stairways must be kept clear
 - Physical, verbal, sexual abuse or harassment of customers or staff.
 - Damaging, defacing or destroying library property
 - Not being fully clothed. This should include shoes, shirt/top, dress, skirt or pants.
3. Patrons shall be considerate of the rights of other patrons and staff and shall not engage in behavior so as to disrupt another person's use of the library by conduct that includes:
 - Loud, aggressive, threatening or obscene language or behavior
 - Soliciting, selling, conducting surveys, photographing, filming without authorisation
 - Using library computers to view pornographic or other inappropriate sites in violation of the Internet & Computer Use policy
 - Tampering with or altering, editing, or damaging computer hardware and/or software
4. Audible equipment such as radios/CD players must be used with headphones set at a volume that cannot disturb others.

5. Cell phones must be set on vibrate or silenced and can only be used in designated areas like the walkways and lobby. Even in these areas conversation should be conducted in a low voice
6. Patrons shall not enter non-public areas such as staff bathrooms, offices and storage areas without authorization
7. Patrons shall provide proper supervision for children in keeping with the Children's Use of the Library Policy
8. Patrons shall not remove materials from the Library unless they are checked out on a valid library card and must comply with the regulations applicable to the loan of materials.
9. Patrons whose personal hygiene is offensive and constitutes a nuisance to other persons may be required to leave the library.

Staff members are authorized to request identification from users as appropriate for safety and security, or when library rules or policies have been violated. Any staff member may contact the Police to preserve his or her own safety, the safety of library users or for assistance in enforcing rules and regulations.

Personal property must be safeguarded, the Department of Library Services will not be held liable for the loss of personal property.

Failure to comply with the library's policies, rules and regulations could result in removal from the premises and the suspension of privileges for a stipulated period.

Children's Use of the Library Policy

The Anguilla Library Service welcomes children to use its facilities and services. It is the goal of the Library to provide safe, enjoyable learning experiences for each child who visits the Library. Public libraries, by their very nature, are not necessarily safe for unattended children. This policy is intended to make the public aware of the organization's concern for its child patrons, seek the cooperation of parents and provide guidance for staff for dealing with unattended or disruptive children.

1. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for the safety, care and behaviour of children using the library and will be held liable for their children's actions. The library staff is not responsible for the care and supervision of children on the library's premises prior to opening, during or after operating hours.
2. Children under the age of eight (8) years must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or assigned chaperon. Parents/guardians must ensure that a chaperon is a responsible person of at least 14 years of age. Parents/guardians and assigned chaperons must directly supervise these children in the library except when the child is participating in a specific library programme.
3. Children between the age of eight (8) and twelve (12) should not be left unattended at the library for more than three (3) hours at a time unless attending a specific library programme.
4. If any child is habitually left unattended for long periods, is being disruptive, or is deemed to be at risk of coming to harm (as in the case of a child being left unattended at closing time), an effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian.
5. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their children are collected from the library before closing time. They should be aware of the library's business hours and make arrangements to collect their child(ren) within 30 minutes before closing time. If an unattended child of any age is in the Library within 30 minutes of this time frame the staff will contact the child's parent or guardian or ask the child to do so.
6. At closing time, or in the event of an early closing, if children are still in the library or on its grounds and efforts to alert parents are unsuccessful the Police will be contacted to arrange for the child's safety or to take custody of the child.

7. Children of school age, with the exception of sixth formers, visitors or homeschooled children, are not allowed in the library during school hours unless it is for a specific purpose approved by their respective schools. If a child is in the Library during school hours, the school will be notified of his or her presence in the Library.
8. All students including sixth formers must put their bags in the bag store: money or other valuable possessions should be removed. The Library does not accept responsibility for stolen items.
9. Children are subject to the same rules of conduct as other patrons and to their consequences including being asked to leave the library. Parents/guardians and school officials will receive notification of any penalties imposed for policy violations.

ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

The staff of the Anguilla Library Service shall enforce these rules and regulations in a fair and reasonable manner. Where deemed necessary the police, other law enforcement officials, social welfare, education and other officials of the Ministry of Social Development may be contacted to assist with the enforcement of these rules and any applicable laws.

Operational Guidelines

Progressive Application

The underlying policy of the Department is to educate in order to minimize displays of conduct that interfere with the proper use of the library. Although the policy is designed for progressive application, staff will use their judgment to decide on the severity of the offence and the appropriate course of action for addressing the particular circumstances. Warnings, suspension periods or the restrictions of privileges are some of the sanctions which shall be applied to violations.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension from the library means that the patron may not enter the Library for any reason or be present on outdoor library premises for the stipulated period, unless other wise exempted. If the suspended patron is in contravention of this, the Police may be called to remove the person.

Length of the suspension will depend on the following factors:

- severity of offence
- repeated offences
- safety of staff and patron
- pending the outcome of criminal proceedings arising as a result of the conduct

An offender is subject to a suspension period for one day, one week, one month, or periods of three or more months with the possibility of appeal. Any member of staff can issue a verbal suspension for the remainder of the day. Periods longer than this come under the purview of the Deputy Director.

If a patron refuses to leave when asked to do so, the staff member will warn that he/she has no choice but to call the police.

Special Consideration for Juvenile Offenders

A juvenile offender is defined as anyone under the age of 18. Parental awareness is critical. Staff will call the parent, guardian or caregiver about the challenging behavior of a child. If the behavior warrants a suspension period and/or restriction of privileges staff shall make reasonable efforts to notify the custodial parent, guardian or caregiver.

Documentation

In order to collect information for sanctions to be imposed with fairness and consistency all responses to violations (including warnings) will be recorded in a Customer Conduct Log that gives brief information about the nature of the violation and the action taken. This will provide information for tracking progressions of misconduct and will include all responses to non-compliance with rules after the first explanation e.g. If a customer stops eating after being notified that food is not allowed it would not be necessary to use the log.

Incident Reports will also be completed for circumstances that call for the involvement of other agencies and/or the issuing of restrictions to access to services and/or the premises.

1. Threatening Behavior and serious incidents

Any conduct that threatens the life or safety of any person or that is damaging to library property may result in immediate expulsion from the library's premises. For alleged criminal acts, the police will be called and a verbal suspension issued that is in effect until further notice.

For any situation that warrants emergency assistance, staff shall

- *Call the police and/or emergency medical assistance, as appropriate*
- *Issue a verbal suspension that is in effect until further notice, if appropriate for the situation*
- *Record in Customer Conduct Log*
- *Write an Incident Report*
- *Refer immediately to the Deputy Director and Director according to the gravity of the situation*
- *Notify the parent or guardian if a juvenile is involved*

If a member of staff is uncomfortable about approaching a patron, the assistance of a supervisor, the security officer or the police can be requested as appropriate.

2. Disruptive Behaviour and/or other Inappropriate Actions

Library staff may request that a patron immediately discontinue any inappropriate conduct. Although the policy is designed for progressive discipline, staff will use their judgment in each situation to determine the severity of the offence and the appropriate course of action, including a suspension from Library premises.

First Incident: warning with explanation and/or brief suspension

The staff member shall approach the patron courteously and pleasantly ask the patron who is behaving unacceptably or violating standards to stop. The staff member shall step back or walk away but continue to observe the behavior. The situation may warrant patiently asking 2 or 3 times or just once depending on the severity of the action.

- *Issue warning with explanation, give patron a copy of the ‘Rules of Conduct’*
- *Record in ‘Customer Conduct Log’*

Second Incident

The behaviour may intensify on the same day or sometimes it will happen over a longer period before it is disruptive enough to go to the next stage eg. encouraging a customer to adhere to the rule of no more than 2 persons to be seated at a computer.

- *Issue warning with explanation*
- *Record in ‘Customer Conduct Log’*

Third Incident

A customer, whose behavior does not stop or change as a result of a request or repeated requests from a staff member, will be asked to leave the library for the rest of the day.

- *Issue a verbal suspension that is in effect for the remainder of the day*

- *Warn the customer that further violations of the rules could lead to the imposition of a longer suspended period*
- *Record in 'Customer Conduct Log'*

Repeat Incidents: Longer suspension period and/or suspension of privileges

The following procedures apply to customers who have been given verbal suspensions or whose misconduct is so grave as to immediately warrant a prolonged suspension period.

- *Issue a verbal suspension that is in effect until further notice*
- *Record in Customer Conduct Log*
- *Write an Incident Report*
- *Refer the matter to the Deputy Director who should determine the severity of the misconduct and issue written notification of the suspension, stipulating its duration and other conditions like the restriction of certain privileges if applicable.*
- *Notify the parent or guardian and school administrator if the suspension is issued to a juvenile offender*

Right of Appeal: A patron who has been suspended may appeal the suspension in writing, clearly stating the basis of the appeal no later than 14 days from the receipt of the suspension notice. The Director will review and may grant an oral hearing to the patron and/or his representatives. The suspension may be affirmed, shortened or terminated at the discretion of the Director.

If the offending patron is a student the Director may consult with school officials and may include the Education Services Planner and/or the Permanent Secretary, Education, counselors, child welfare or law enforcement officials in the review of the appeal.

Posting of the Policy

The Rules of Conduct will be publicised in the Library and on its website. Copies of various sections will be available for distribution or on request.