



## **Library Code of Conduct**

Madison County Public Libraries encourages people of all ages to visit the Library. Patrons and staff have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports appropriate use of library services.

- Alcohol or illegal drugs may not be brought into the Library or onto Library grounds, nor may persons under the influence of either use the Library.
- The use of all forms of tobacco is prohibited in the library including e-cigarettes.
- Weapons of any type are not allowed in the Library.
- Animals other than guide dogs and other assistive animals may not enter the Library except as authorized by the Library Director.
- Disorderly conduct in public buildings or on the surrounding grounds or premises is a misdemeanor in accordance with NC General Statute 14-132. Madison County policy states that the Sheriff's Department will be contacted. NCGS 14-132 also prohibits marking on, defacing, or injuring the walls of any public building or facility, or any statue or monument situated in any public place.
- Intentional damage or defacement of library materials or attempted theft of library property will be prosecuted according to NC General Statute 14-398. Any library materials that are accidentally damaged or lost must be replaced by the patron responsible for such damage or loss.
- Harassment toward staff and other patrons is not allowed. Harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, staring at or following another person, unwelcome physical contact, abusive language and verbal propositions.
- Abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated in the library.
- Disruptive behaviors including, but not limited to: noisy, boisterous actions, running or loud talking, misuse of library property, uncooperative attitude, or actions that annoy others or prevent the legitimate use of the library and its resources are not allowed.
- Sleeping, lying on furniture or floors, putting feet on furniture or walls is prohibited.
- Patrons are expected to wear appropriate clothing while using library facilities, including shirt and shoes.
- Food and drink are not allowed in public areas within the library except as authorized by the Library Director.
- Solicitation of any sort is prohibited.

## Safe Child Policy

It is the aim of the Madison County Public Libraries to provide a welcoming, pleasant, and safe environment for every child who visits the Library. While Library staff will take all reasonable measures to ensure safety and security, they cannot monitor the behavior or whereabouts of each person or child. It must be understood that parents or guardians are fully responsible for their children upon entering the public Library facilities.

- Children under age **10** must be accompanied by an individual 18 years or older who acknowledges responsibility for the child during their entire stay in the Library. Such children must be in the direct presence of a parent or guardians during the entire Library visit.
- Children 1<sup>st</sup> grade and higher may utilize the Madison County School System's buses to attend afterschool library programs. Parents or guardians must make the proper arrangements with their child's school in advance. Parents or guardians also must make arrangements to pick up their child after the conclusion of the program. If parents or guardians are unable to pick their child up after the conclusion of the program, they must give the Library written permission that their child can remain at the library unattended, or that they may leave the library facility.
- If a child of any age violates the rules of conduct in the Library premises, they and any person responsible for them may be asked to leave the premises, in accordance with the Madison County Public Libraries Code of Conduct policy.
- When an unattended child (17 or younger) remains on Library premises 15 minutes before closing the child will be encouraged to contact a parent or guardian to be sure that transportation has been arranged. If the child has not been picked up after the Library has closed, two staff members will wait with the child for 15 minutes.
- If the minor is still on the premises 15 minutes after closing, Library staff members shall contact local law enforcement. The staff member will record the child's name, parent's name, address, and phone number. The staff members will remain with the child until law enforcement arrives. By prior agreement, local law enforcement will take responsibility for the minor.

The rules set forth in this policy are in addition to, and do not supersede, the requirements and prohibitions applying to every person under state and federal laws. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in the suspension of privileges, including the right to use Library services or be on the premises. Any suspected violation of the North Carolina General Statutes will be documented and reported to local law enforcement.