

# Thomas Memorial Library Policy Manual

## General Use Policy

### Purpose

Thomas Memorial Library provides access to all through its collections, programs, facilities and resources. We strive to serve our visitors effectively by providing a welcoming and safe environment. At the same time we ask that visitors help us to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to inquiry, exploration, and community engagement by following these guidelines.

Entering the library constitutes an implicit acceptance of these guidelines and an acknowledgement of the right of library staff to take any action they see fit while interpreting these guidelines for the safety and enjoyment of all visitors and staff. Library staff are expected to treat visitors with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Similarly, library visitors are expected to behave in a manner such that their actions do not interfere with the functions of the library or with the convenience and comfort of other visitors.

The library is open for specific and designated civic, educational and cultural uses, including reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled library programs, and using library materials. We welcome everyone to:

- Read, work, study, and enjoy our environment within the limits of its intended use.
- Feel safe and respected while using the library.
- Find curated materials of interest to the community, in good condition, and access to accurate and relevant sources of information through our resources.
- Attend library programs and events.

No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct on the premises of the library, when using library facilities, or when participating in library programs (virtual or in-person).

### Intellectual Freedom

The staff and administration of Thomas Memorial Library support the principles of intellectual freedom. The library endorses unrestricted First Amendment freedoms for all its visitors. The library imposes no restrictions on visitor access to constitutionally protected information.

We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources. We respect, within the limits of the law, each Library visitor's right to privacy and confidentiality with regard to information sought or received and resources consulted, acquired, or transmitted.

# Thomas Memorial Library Policy Manual

## General Use Policy

For more information, see **Appendix A: ALA Library Bill of Rights, ALA Freedom to Read Statement, ALA Freedom to View Statement, ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom.**

### Enforcement

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in the following actions:

- Behaviors will be addressed as outlined in the Progressive Action Matrix.
- Library visiting privileges may be suspended for an extended time period at the discretion of the Library Director.
- Library staff may call local law enforcement to provide assistance in enforcing these guidelines. Illegal activity in the library may result in arrest and/or prosecution in addition to suspension of library privileges.
- Visitors who return to the library before a suspension has ended may be charged with trespassing.

### Additional Information

- In case of an emergency, promptly follow all library staff instructions.
- Illegal activity of any kind will be reported immediately to law enforcement.
- In any situation involving the safety of children or vulnerable adults, and specifically whenever the parent or caregiver or police are contacted, staff will complete an Incident Report.

### Prohibited Conduct and Activities

In consideration of all library visitors and staff, the following activities are not allowed:

- Leaving a vulnerable adult or a child under the age of 13 unattended. For more details, **Safe Child and Vulnerable Adults Policy.**
- Attending a program for children, or using a designated children's computer without being accompanied by a child (0 to 12.)
- Using the designated teen area during posted teen hours or attending a program for teens, without being accompanied by a teen (13-17) or without a demonstrated need to access the teen collection.
- No food or drink is allowed at computer stations. Computers are located in public areas and shared by people of all ages and backgrounds. Visitors are expected to use library computers in a responsible and courteous manner. For more details, refer to the **Computer Use and Internet Policy.**
- Viewing or displaying inappropriate, sexually explicit, or illegal material in the library. For more details, refer to the **Computer Use and Internet Policy.**

# Thomas Memorial Library Policy Manual

## General Use Policy

- Disturbing others by talking loudly or with other noisy activity.
- Failure to use headphones when listening to audio on any electronic devices.
- Engaging in extended conversations using a cell phone except in designated areas.
- Sleeping—as a safety precaution sleeping individuals will be awakened.
- Eating—except in the designated areas, or food provided at library-sponsored events. Eating on the floor is not allowed. For more details, refer to the **Food and Beverage Policy**.
- Drinking—except for covered beverages in the designated areas, or beverages provided at library sponsored events. For more details, refer to the Food & Beverages Policy.
- Presenting offensive and pervasive odor or odors that may make the use of the library difficult for others.
- Entering the library without shoes or adequate clothing.
- Bringing in animals other than service animals recognized under *Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*.
- Leaving pets unattended and/or unleashed in outdoor areas near the library, including but not limited to entryways, pathways, lawns, and outdoor seating areas.
- Bringing carts, bicycles, scooters, or similar items into the library or leaving them at the entrance--except when the vehicle is: used by disabled people or is used to carry an infant/child.
- Congregating in groups on the floor of the library, except in the baby/toddler area or during baby/toddler programming, where developmentally appropriate play occurs. Older children, teens, and adults will be asked to utilize the many seating options available.
- Blocking aisles, shelves or any thoroughfare with personal items, or leaving items unattended at any time--except to use the restroom for a reasonable amount of time.
- Putting feet on library furniture, rearranging the furniture or using the furniture for other than its intended purpose.
- Viewing or displaying inappropriate, sexually explicit, or illegal material in the library. For more details, refer to the **Computer Use and Internet Policy**
- Selling, soliciting or using illegal drugs on library premises.
- Consuming alcohol in the library building.
- Soliciting money, donations or signatures, or the distribution or posting of any printed material without library approval. (See **Bulletin Board Policy**)
- Smoking, or using tobacco products and other controlled substances, including using electronic and smoke-free cigarettes (vaping) inside or within 50 feet of the library building.
- Vandalizing library facilities, equipment or materials.

# Thomas Memorial Library Policy Manual

## General Use Policy

- Removing library materials from the building without checking them out.
- Engaging in sexual conduct or lewd behavior.

### Progressive Action Matrix for Addressing Prohibited Behaviors

Type	Examples of Behaviors	Library Response <i>First Occurrence</i>	Library Response <i>Second Occurrence</i>	Library Response <i>Repeat Occurrences</i>
<b>Emergency Incident</b>	Threat of physical violence to visitors or staff.  Accessing illegal material on the internet (e.g., child pornography).  Other violations of law.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Ban for one year.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Extend ban as determined by Library Director.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Extend ban as determined by Library Director.
<b>Serious Incident</b>	Harassment of library visitors or staff.  Unsafe or hazardous behavior.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Ban visitor 90 days.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Ban for one year.	Call Police.  Obtain Police Report.  File Incident Report.  Extend ban as determined by Library Director.
<b>Disruptive Behavior</b>	Violations of this policy that are not prohibited by law and do not create an immediate threat or unsafe condition, e.g., cell phone use, eating or drinking, loitering.	Give oral warning citing policy.	Provide a written copy of policy.  Management level staff will ask the visitor to leave the building for the day.  File Incident Report.	Ban visitor for 30 days.  File Incident Report.  Subsequent violations, ban determined by Library Director.

# Thomas Memorial Library Policy Manual

## General Use Policy

Type	Examples of Behaviors	Library Response <i>First Occurrence</i>	Library Response <i>Second Occurrence</i>	Library Response <i>Repeat Occurrences</i>
<b>Unattended Children or Vulnerable Adults</b>	<p>Parent or guardian who is not staying with a child under the age of 13.</p> <p>Child under age of 13 who is left alone at the library by parent or guardian.</p> <p>Vulnerable Adult left alone by caregiver.</p>	<p>Give oral warning citing policy.</p> <p>Explain policy to the caregiver.</p> <p>Monitor for compliance.</p>	<p>Provide a written copy of policy.</p> <p>Management level staff will ask visitor to leave the building for the day.</p> <p>File Incident Report.</p>	<p>Ban visitor 30 days.</p> <p>File Incident Report.</p> <p>Subsequent violations, ban determined by Library Director.</p>
<b>Violation of Acceptable Use Policy for the internet</b>	Violations of Library Computer & Internet Use Policy.	<p>Give oral warning citing policy.</p> <p>Monitor for compliance.</p>	<p>Provide a written copy of policy.</p> <p>Visitor's computer session is terminated.</p> <p>File Incident Report.</p>	<p>Visitor is barred from computer and internet use for 30 days upon review by Library Director.</p> <p>File Incident Report. Director may reinstate internet access before fulfillment of 30 days.</p>

**Revised:** March 18, 2021

**Voted for recommendation of approval by the TML Committee on:** April 29, 2021

**Adopted by the Town Council Effective Date:** July 12, 2021

**Policy Review:** This policy shall be reviewed at least every 2 years