

Berne Public Library (BPL)

Policy Title: Rules of Public Behavior

Application: Director, staff, Library Board of Trustees, patrons

Statement of Purpose:

This policy applies to all members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) and staff of the BPL and to patrons. The purposes of this policy are to ensure that:

1. Library patrons are able to use Library materials and services without being disturbed or impeded by other Library users.
2. Library staff is able to conduct Library business efficiently and without interference.
3. Patrons and staff feel and are safe and comfortable in the Library and on the grounds.

Definitions:

1. **Covered Persons:** Director, staff, Library Board of Trustees and patrons of the BPL
2. **Interested Persons:** Director, staff, Library Board of Trustees and patrons of the BPL

Procedure: Rules of Public Behavior

Berne Public Library values its responsibility to enhance the general welfare and quality of life in the community and region it serves. The Library pursues excellence in its mission: to meet the needs of the community for life-long learning and entertainment.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the following rules of behavior necessary to protect the rights, safety, and comfort of patrons and staff. Library staff has been directed to courteously, but firmly, enforce these rules.

The Berne Public Library Board hereby adopts the Rules of Behavior attached to this declaration of policy, and directs the Library Director to take the steps necessary to enforce these rules.

Rules of the Berne Public Library

1. Children under the age of 11 must be accompanied by an adult except with prior approval of Library staff. Staff is not responsible for the safety, care, supervision, or entertainment of unattended children. If a parent cannot be located at closing time or in an emergency, staff will make every effort to contact the parents or guardian. If the staff is not able to contact the parents or guardian, the police will be called.
2. Patrons shall not deface, mar or in any way destroy or damage any materials, furnishings, equipment, or other Library or patron property.
3. Appropriate attire, including shirts, shorts/pants/skirts and shoes must be worn in the Library at all times.
4. Activities such as skateboarding, in-line skating and bicycling are not permitted inside the Library building. Equipment left outside the building may not obstruct any entrance or exit.
5. Patrons may not bring animals other than service animals into the Library building unless they are participating in a library program. Animals must be attended at all times.
6. Behavior prohibited by Federal, State or Local Law is also prohibited on the premises of Berne Public Library.
7. **Berne Public Library rules prohibit:**
 - a. Consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages on Library property except when specifically approved by the Trustees as part of a Library program or function.
 - b. Smoking, vaping or use of illegal substances on Library property.

- c. All weapons, including lawfully registered concealed weapons, on town property.
- d. Limiting other patrons' or staff use of Library equipment, materials or space by sleeping on Library property.
- e. Obstructing entrances, exits, or access to Library materials or facilities.
- f. All campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, soliciting, sales, or other speech or conduct that result in the disruption of normal activities. Permission to conduct activities such as interviewing, surveying or public speaking may be granted by the Library director, subject to review by the Library Board of Trustees.
- g. Gambling on Library property.
- h. Public disturbance such as loud, offensive, abusive or threatening language or behavior on Library property. Cell phone conversations should be conducted in the lobby or outside whenever possible.
- i. Having bodily hygiene that is so offensive as to constitute a disturbance to other patrons using the Library.
- j. Consumption of foods and beverages in the Library except in uncarpeted areas. Water in covered containers is permitted throughout the Library.
- k. Soliciting or panhandling on Library property.

Any patron not abiding by these or any other rules and regulations of the Library may be asked to leave the Library premises. Repeat offenders may have Library privileges revoked by the Library Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the Library director.

First Offense: Library privileges may be revoked for up to six months.

Second Offense: Library privileges may be revoked for up to one year.

Appeal Process:

A person whose Library privileges are revoked pursuant to the above rules may appeal for reinstatement to the Library Board of Trustees by appearing in person at any regularly scheduled Board Meeting following receipt of the Library's mailing of notice of revocation of privileges.

Notwithstanding the revocation of privileges, the persons will be allowed to enter the Library for the limited purpose of attending the Board meeting, at which time the Board will hear their appeal. The Board shall hear the appeal during Executive Session, and respond in writing within ten (10) days.

Revised and Approved: 11/13/2018

Revised: 05/09/2024