

Library Code of Conduct

Policy Statement

The Mastics Moriches Shirley Community Library (MMSCL) Code of Conduct strives to protect the rights and safety of library users, protect the rights and safety of staff members, and preserve and protect the library's materials, facilities and property.

Library users who violate the Code of Conduct may be subject to the suspension of their Library privileges, be excluded from the Library and/or face legal action. Suspension of Library privileges and exclusion from the Library is at the discretion of the Library administration.

Regulation

In situations where MMSCL staff members feel that the health, safety or security of library users or staff members are threatened, they may take any and all appropriate action including, but not limited to, calling the police for assistance.

Library staff members may ask a Library user to leave the premises with or without prior warning, depending upon the seriousness of the violation. Library staff members may also exclude a patron or visitor from MMSCL facilities.

The MMSCL Administration may impose a further suspension of Library privileges. If Library Administration decides to impose such a suspension, the patron or visitor will be so advised in writing. Any patron whose Library privileges are suspended under these rules has a right to appeal to the Library Board in writing the appeal must be submitted to the Library Board within 30 calendar days after the date of the letter advising the patron that their privileges have been suspended.

Guidelines

The following behavior is not permitted.

Illegal Activities, including but not limited to:

- Committing or attempting to commit any activity that constitutes a violation of any federal, state or local statute or ordinance.
- Engaging in sexual conduct or lewd behavior on Library premises, as defined under New York Penal Law. (New York State Penal Code, Section 245 Public lewdness)
- Use of controlled substances on Library premises. (New York State Penal Code, Section 220)
- Vaping, smoking or other use of tobacco inside Library buildings. (New York State Public Health Code, Section 1399)
- Drinking alcoholic beverages on Library premises.

Harmful, Disruptive, or Destructive behavior, including but not limited to:

Adopted: March 11, 2024

Revised: September 29, 2025

Revised: October 27, 2025

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- Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the Library, or disturbs staff and Library users. Such conduct includes:
 - The use of abusive or threatening language or gestures.
 - Creation of unreasonable noise.
 - Loud or boisterous behavior or talking, including on a cell phone.
- Using Library materials, equipment, furniture or fixtures in a destructive, abusive or potentially damaging manner, in a manner likely to cause personal injury to any person or in any other manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof.
- Disobeying the reasonable direction of Library staff members.
- Interfering with the free passage of MMSCL staff members or users in or onto Library premises including, but not limited to, placing objects such as bicycles, strollers, shopping carts or bags in such a manner as to impede free passage in or onto the premises. The Library also reserves the right to limit the size and number of items brought into the Library. The Library will place signage in the Library should there be a limitation on the size or number of items.
- Use of bicycles, scooters, roller-skates, skateboards, wagons, shopping carts or similar wheeled devices in the Library.
- Use of open flame or any burning/heating elements.

Other inappropriate behavior:

- Bringing animals other than service animals inside library buildings without the prior permission of Library staff.
- Monopolizing Library space, equipment or outlets so as to preclude or limit the use by other patrons/visitors.
- Violating the Library's Food and Drink Policy. A copy of this Policy is posted on the Library's website and at the reference desk.
- Violating the Library's Technology Use Policy. A copy of this Policy is posted on the Library's website and at the reference desk. ☒ Sleeping in public areas.
- Use of MMSCL restrooms for bathing, shaving, washing hair, or changing clothes.
- Use of any communication or entertainment devices at a volume that disturbs others, with or without headphones.
- Entering Library buildings with bare feet or bare chest.
- Disturbing others because of offensive body odor.
- Unhygienic behavior such as spitting, clipping nails, or changing diapers in public areas.
- Adults or teens not accompanied by a child in the Children's Department or Children's areas.

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Unattended Children:

- The MMSCL welcomes and encourages children to visit the Library, use its resources and services, and attend its programs. Staff members are available to help and support children; however, the Library cannot provide short- or long term childcare, or be responsible for unattended children.
- **Unattended children are children of any age who are not accompanied by a parent, guardian, and/or responsible caregiver.** Children who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves may not be left alone in the Library and must have adequate supervision while in the Library. Unattended children must be able to communicate with staff, be comfortable at the Library on their own and be able to follow the Library Code of Conduct. The Library is not responsible if an unattended child leaves Library property on their own initiative.
- Parents, guardians, and/or caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of children at all times in the Library and on Library property. Children are expected to adhere to the Library Code of Conduct. If an unattended child violates the Library Code of Conduct, the child and the parent, guardian or caregiver may be subject to a suspension of Library privileges.

Library staff will attempt to contact a parent, guardian, and/or caregiver in circumstances such as the following:

- An unattended child is engaging in behavior that is disruptive to other library users, staff, or the normal operations of library business.
- An unattended child is involved in a situation that is potentially harmful to the health or safety of the child and/or others.
- An unattended child is left alone at the Library at closing time.

Such situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If parents, guardians, and/or caregivers cannot be reached, or are unresponsive, the Library will work with other government agencies as needed, including Suffolk County Police and/or Suffolk County Department of Social Services.

Telephone Use:

Telephones at MMSCL are reserved for staff use on Library business. Telephone lines need to remain open for Library staff to assist patrons. Library patrons may not use Library telephones. If there is a true emergency Library staff will place a call for police or emergency assistance on behalf of the patron.

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