

General Policies and Rules

- Patron Code of Conduct
- Unattended Children/Child Safety and Vulnerable Adults

Rev. 2/15/2024 to rev. & combine Patron Code of Conduct, Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults policies.

Patron Code of Conduct

The Claverack Free Library is dedicated to providing access to knowledge and information through reading, writing, quiet contemplation, and the use of technology. The Library is committed to providing patrons with the right to use materials and services without being disturbed or impeded and providing patrons and employees with a secure and comfortable environment.

The Library Director establishes and implements procedures to ensure that the General Policies and Rules in place are adhered to and that the Library is preserved for the purposes for which it is intended. Procedures relating to conduct issues are to be approved by the Library Director and made available on the library website.

Library staff will be respectful of all patrons and enforce the rules to ensure that the Library is preserved for the purposes for which it is intended. Patrons are expected to follow staff directives regarding use of the Library. Those who violate the rules and/or disregard staff directives may be asked to leave the Library. Suspension of Library privileges may result. Written records of Library suspensions and incident reports will be kept on file with the Library Director. As necessary, the local Police Department may be called. Suspected child abuse will be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services.

We ask patrons to respect the rights of others and to work together to create an environment conducive to equitable and enjoyable use of the Library by all. Behavior that is disruptive, intrusive or endangers others includes but is not limited to:

- Impeding ingress or egress to/from the Library
- Bringing weapons or threatening objects into the library or onto its grounds
- Throwing objects, running or chasing indoors.
- Bullying or bothering other people
- Leaving animals unattended on Library property
- Smoking on Library property
- Not wearing appropriate public attire
- Leaving a child under 10 years old unattended in the library
- Not wearing a face mask when Library signage indicates one is required
- Not sanitizing a computer keyboard after use if such policy is posted

Other disruptive behavior includes:

- Damaging Library property such as vandalizing the facility or materials
- Consuming food in the Library (Covered beverages are permitted in the Library except near keyboards.)
- Exhibiting behavior that is inconsiderate of Library patrons such as prolonged or habitual sleeping
- Engaging in sexual behavior
- Using the restroom for inappropriate purposes, anything other than grooming, hand washing or using the lavatory
- Using the Library for purposes of solicitation
- Consuming alcohol on library property, with the exception of after hour Library events for which the Board has granted prior approval. Examples of after hour library events are fundraising activities and group meetings..
- Leaving personal belongings unattended. Unattended items may be turned into the lost and found.
- Re-arranging Library furniture without staff permission.
- Creating inappropriate levels of noise such as: shouting, conducting loud conversations, or using foul language.
- Use of headphones is required when listening to audio programs.
- Cell phone ringers should be set to silent. Staff may designate quiet, cell phone-free areas in the Library.

Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults* Policy

Children and their safety are of great concern to the Claverack Free Library. We encourage families and youth to use the Library and, while doing so, also affirm parents' responsibility for their children's safety. The Library cannot be responsible for any consequences of caregivers forfeiting their responsibilities. Library staff cannot prevent children from interacting with or leaving the Library with persons who are not appropriate caregivers.

Children, like all Library patrons, are expected to behave appropriately. Parents and caregivers, not Library staff, are responsible for the behavior and supervision of their children in the Library. Children under the age of 16 shall not be permitted on Library property during school hours, unless accompanied by a parent, teacher, or legal guardian.

Decisions as to whether to require children's supervision by parents or legal guardians during Library programs, tutoring sessions, or other non-profit events will be at the discretion of the Director or staff. Unless in library lead programs children must be with a caregiver or adult at any given time if under the age of 13.

It is up to the discretion of the Library staff to determine if vulnerable adults may be left unattended in the Library. Vulnerable adults who are unable or unwilling to care for themselves must be attended and have adequate supervision at all times. Staff will attempt to contact a parent/guardian or caregiver when a vulnerable adult's health or safety is in doubt; behavior disturbs other Library users or; actions violate any of the Library rules. Every reasonable effort will be made by the staff to assist the vulnerable adult in contacting the appropriate adult.

If a child or vulnerable adult is left unattended in the Library, the staff will attempt to locate the parents, caregiver or guardian. Staff members are not permitted to remain after hours with an unattended child or vulnerable adult nor to provide a ride home. For the safety of the child, the staff will not leave a child under the age of thirteen (13) or a vulnerable adult outside to wait for a ride. If an appropriate adult cannot be reached by the time the Library is to close, the state police may be called to escort the individual home or keep the child or vulnerable adult until parents, caregiver or guardian can be reached.

*A vulnerable adult is an individual over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that may significantly impair that person's ability to manage personal needs or behavior without assistance.