

1007 - Inappropriate Patron Conduct towards Staff

Date Policy Approved: September 27, 2012

Library patrons and the public have a right to express their concerns, disagreement and appraisal of library services and staff performance and have these comments heard. These appraisals are welcomed. Library staff have the right to a work environment that allows them to perform their duties and responsibilities in an appropriate and businesslike environment that is free from unreasonable interference in performing their jobs. While public appraisal is welcomed, name-calling, conduct towards staff that is intimidating, insulting, humiliating, hostile, patently offensive, bullying, threatening or reasonably inappropriate is unwelcome and is not acceptable. The standard of such inappropriate conduct is normally beyond that of a single offensive utterance and beyond conduct that is simply "difficult."

If such unwelcome conduct is observed, the supervisor should immediately be notified. The supervisor is to tell the patron that they would like to hear about the patron's complaint in private, and invite the patron to a private area. In privacy the supervisor will tell the patron that they seem to be displeased and that they would like to hear about it. Afterwards, the manager will tell the patron that they will investigate and ask if they want to be contacted with the results. If necessary and possible, the manager will conduct a conference with the patron and staff member. If the patron cannot participate civilly in such a conference, the manager will tell the patron that "there seems to be a communication breakdown and the complaint will be referred to the library director." Take their name and number and give them the Director's name and number. Remember to use only the word "inappropriate" in referring to the patron's conduct. If necessary, use our "Disruptive Library User Policy" (Policy 805).