

Code of Conduct Policy

JPAB Policy # 318

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Santa Cruz Public Libraries supports the rights of all individuals to free and equal access to information and use of the library without discrimination, intimidation, threat of harm, or invasion of privacy. We are dedicated to providing friendly, courteous, and respectful service. The role of Santa Cruz Public Libraries is to provide an accessible, welcoming, clean, comfortable, and safe environment for all library users.

To Provide a Comfortable and Welcoming Environment

Santa Cruz Public Libraries provides a comfortable and welcoming environment. Mutual respect makes it possible for everyone to enjoy library materials and services. We require library users to be respectful of each other. Library users must behave in a manner that does not disrupt other library users or interfere with standard operation of the library.

To Make Information Resources and Materials Accessible for All

Santa Cruz Public Libraries makes collections, equipment, and resources accessible for current and future library users. Damaging, stealing, or blocking access to any materials, equipment, or property belonging to the library, another patron, or staff member is prohibited.

To Ensure a Safe and Secure Environment

Santa Cruz Public Libraries ensures a safe and secure environment. Committing or attempting to commit any act that is a violation of any federal, state, or local law is prohibited on Santa Cruz Public Libraries property.

To Maintain a Healthy and Clean Environment

Santa Cruz Public Libraries maintains a healthy and clean environment for all library users. Personal hygiene, attire, restroom use, and/or food consumption cannot interfere with other patrons' use of the library.

Enforcement of the Library Code of Conduct

Enforcement of the Library Code of Conduct will be administered in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff, security, and/or law enforcement will intervene to prevent and/or stop prohibited activities and behaviors. Individuals who fail to observe the Library Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the library property, have their library privileges suspended for a designated period of time, be subject to arrest, or be subject to other lawful action.

Prohibited Behaviors

Examples of prohibited activities and/or conduct on Santa Cruz Public Libraries property include but are not limited to:

1. Conduct that interferes with a **Comfortable and Welcoming Environment**
 - a. Behavior, including unreasonable noise, which disrupts other library users or interferes with standard operation of the library.
 - b. Soliciting, panhandling, or gambling on library property.
 - c. Using audible devices without headphones, using headphones set at a volume that disturbs others, or having an audible cell phone ringtone.
 - d. Using any communication devices in a manner that disturbs others.
 - e. Distributing literature, gathering signatures, soliciting contributions, or conducting surveys inside a library facility.

2. Conduct that interferes with making **Information Resources and Materials Accessible for All**
 - a. Damaging or stealing any materials, equipment, or property belonging to the library, another patron, or staff member.
 - b. Blocking aisles or walkways with personal property or leaving personal property unattended. *Note: Unattended items are subject to immediate removal.*
 - c. Lying down or appearing to be sleeping; having feet on furniture; or blocking aisles, exits, or entrances.
 - d. Bringing into the library personal items with total dimensions exceeding 65 inches (ex.: 20"x20"x25"), with the exception of items necessary for medical or child care reasons.
 - e. Setting up blankets or bedding with the intention to camp anywhere on library property.

3. Conduct that does not **Ensure a Safe and Secure Environment**
 - a. Using roller skates, bicycles, skateboards, scooters or similar wheeled devices inside the library, with the exception of items necessary for medical or mobility purposes, or child care.
 - b. Disciplining a child in a manner that disrupts other patrons.
 - c. Leaving young children/adults with special needs unsupervised. Children under nine years must be accompanied by a person 14 years of age or older.
 - d. Parents and caregivers are responsible for the behavior of the individuals under their charge. Children/adults with special needs are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not violate the Code of Conduct or disrupt other patrons.
 - e. Adults loitering in the Children's areas for no legitimate purpose is prohibited (see [State of California PENAL CODE Section 653b](#)). Adults are welcome to access the materials and collections in the Children's areas without a child present.

- f. Inappropriate use of library property including computer hardware, software, network, systems, printers, copiers, phones, and other equipment (see [Library Policies - Internet Access Policy](#)).
 - g. Engaging in activities not reasonably associated with use of a public library.
 - h. Failing to comply with a staff request to cease behavior that interferes with the effective functioning of the library, or failure to leave the library during emergencies or at closing time.
 - i. Intimidating, harassing, or threatening staff, volunteers, or other patrons; including stalking, staring, or lurking using profane, obscene, or abusive language including racial, ethnic, or other epithets; verbally, physically, or in writing including all forms of electronic media.
 - j. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
 - k. Trespassing in nonpublic areas, being in the library without permission of an authorized library employee before or after library operating hours, remaining on library property once suspended.
 - l. Engaging in any other behavior that would constitute a criminal act under applicable law.
4. Conduct that does not **Maintain a Healthy and Clean Environment**
- a. Entering into the library barefoot or without a shirt, or removing one's footwear or shirt while in the library, or being otherwise attired so as to be disruptive to the library environment (with the exception of infants or toddlers).
 - b. Body odor, personal hygiene, or excessive fragrance that interferes with other patrons' ability to use the library and its facilities, or that poses a health risk.
 - c. Consumption of snack food and/or a covered beverage at computers. Patrons are asked to keep areas in which food consumption is allowed clean and free of residue, spills, crumbs, or wrappings. Consumption of food that causes a disruption to other patrons, harms library resources, leaves a mess, and/or failure to clean up any residue, wrappings, or spills after consuming these items will be a violation of the Library Code of Conduct.
 - d. Bringing pets or animals, other than service animals necessary for disabilities, into the library, except as allowed during special library programs.
 - e. Littering.
 - f. Using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cannabis, chewing tobacco, or other tobacco products.
 - g. Using restrooms for bathing or shampooing, or doing laundry.

Violators of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries Code of Conduct may be asked to leave and/or be photographed to assist in identification.

Related Documents: *Library Suspension APO / Notice of Suspension from Library Form / Request for Suspension Appeal_Hearing Panel Procedure / Request for Suspension Appeal_Hearing Panel Form / Suspension Appeal_Hearing Panel Determination Notice*