

Shutesbury Public Library

Library Conduct Policy

Adopted by the Shutesbury Board of Library Trustees, February 9, 2026

Purpose and Philosophy

The Shutesbury Public Library is a tax-supported community resource that is open and welcoming to all. The Library strives to provide a safe, comfortable, and respectful environment where patrons and staff can learn, read, work, and gather without disruption, harassment, or intimidation.

To protect the rights of all library users, ensure the safety of patrons and staff, and preserve library facilities and materials, the Library may impose reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of library use. This policy is established by the Shutesbury Public Library Trustees and is administered by the Library Director or designee.

All patrons, staff, and volunteers are expected to follow this Library Conduct Policy. Failure to comply may result in a limitation or suspension of library privileges.

General Expectations

While using the Shutesbury Public Library, patrons are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and courtesy
- Follow all posted rules and applicable laws
- Respect library staff, materials, furnishings, and property
- Comply with requests from library staff

Library staff will determine when conduct interferes with the appropriate use of the Library.

Children and Caregivers

- Children under the age of **10 must be accompanied and supervised at all times** by a parent or caregiver
- Library staff and volunteers are not responsible for unattended children

- Caregivers are responsible for their children's behavior at all times
(See the Library's Unattended Child Policy for additional information.)

Animals

- Only service animals, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are permitted inside the Library
- Animals may not be left tethered or unattended on Library grounds

Solicitation and Distribution

- Limited selling of items is permissible under the [Library Sales Policy for External Organizations](#) and the [Policy on use of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library by outside groups for fundraising purposes](#)
- Election-related signature gathering and petitioning is permitted on Library grounds in compliance with the [Policy on Collecting Signatures for Nomination Papers and Petitions at the Library](#).

Technology Usage

- Library computers, Wi-Fi, and electronic resources must be used in accordance with the [Shutesbury Public Library Internet Use Policy](#)

Food and Drink

- Covered beverages and neat food are allowed in designated areas
- Food and drink may be restricted in certain areas or during programs

Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is not permitted on Library property, including inside the building and on Library grounds. This list is not exhaustive.

Disruptive or Unsafe Behavior

- Excessive noise or behavior that disrupts others' use of the Library
- Harassment, intimidation, threats, or unwanted physical or verbal interaction
- Hate speech* or discriminatory behavior directed at patrons or staff
- Fighting, aggressive behavior, or challenges to fight

- Blocking entrances, exits, aisles, or access to Library services

Misuse of Library Property and Facilities

- Removing library materials from the building without checking them out
- Damaging, defacing, or misusing library materials, furniture, equipment, or the building
- Entering staff-only or nonpublic areas without permission
- Moving furniture without staff approval

Tobacco

- The Library building and grounds are **tobacco-free and smoke-free**; smoking, vaping, and e-cigarettes are prohibited

Illegal or Dangerous Activity

- Any behavior that violates local, state, or federal law;

Including but not limited to: carrying dangerous weapons on Library property, use, possession, or sale of drugs or alcohol, and gambling

Enforcement and Consequences

Library staff are authorized to address behavior that violates this policy. Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, consequences may include:

- A verbal warning
- A request to leave the Library for the day
- Temporary or longer-term suspension of library privileges
- In cases of illegal activity or threats to safety, involvement of law enforcement

Enforcement of this policy will be conducted in a fair, respectful, and consistent manner.

Consequences are generally progressive in nature; however, serious or dangerous behavior may result in immediate suspension without prior warning.

Questions or Concerns

Library users with questions about this policy or concerns about library user behavior are encouraged to speak with a Library staff member or contact the Library Director.

Appeals

Patrons may appeal a suspension of library privileges by submitting a written request to the Library Director. Appeals will be reviewed by the Library Director and/or the Board of Library Trustees.

*According to guidance from the American Library Association published on February 9, 2026, hate speech refers to any form of expression intended to vilify, humiliate, or incite hatred against a group or class of persons based on characteristics such as race, religion, sexual identity, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, or national origin.

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