



VERMILION PARISH LIBRARY

PO DRAWER 640 ABBEVILLE, LA 70511
405 E. ST. VICTOR ST. ABBEVILLE, LA 70510
337-893-2674 FAX: 337-898-0526

Code of Conduct Exposition-Preamble

Because the Library functions under U.S. law as a limited public forum, and as a public place it is open to all who would visit and make use of it, it is necessary that it establish rules that govern proper and reasonable use and behavior, and to balance the rights of all users against those of the individual user.

The Library is a learning place, dedicated to the lifelong pursuits of the citizens. Accordingly, it is not a shelter, it is not a game parlor, it is not a daycare center. It is a Library. Patrons who use the Library will be engaged in activities that fulfill the educational, recreational, and informational purposes of the Library.

In making the rules below, the Library's Board of Control requires the Library administration and staff to apply them consistently and fairly to all citizens. Any citizen who takes exception to decisions rendered by the Library under any of these rule provisions is entitled to appeal to the Library Director, who will arrange for meeting with the Library's Legal Counsel.

These rules are posted in all VPL facilities for the comfort and protection of all library users who enter them. They will be firmly but courteously enforced by the Library's Administration and Staff. We ask for your cooperation in maintaining an environment that supports study and enjoyable use of the Library.

- Disorderly conduct is prohibited on library property whether inside or outside the building.
- Disorderly conduct is conduct which disrupts the operation of the library or which disrupts the use of the library by other patrons.

The following is based according to the Louisiana Children's Code Chapter 6 Article 606 (Grounds: Child in need of care)

- **No child ages zero (0) - ten (10) can at any time be unattended by the parent /custodian.**
- **Parents/Custodians are responsible for the children they bring to the library and/or leave at the library.**
- **The library is not responsible for unattended children.**
- **Children left after closing will be turned over to law enforcement**
(In accordance with the Unattended Child Policy, approved by the Library Board of Control on August 2010.)



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Library Rules:

- Food and drink are prohibited except in designated areas.
- Soliciting is prohibited.
- Smoking and use of all tobacco products is prohibited on all library properties except in designated areas. This prohibition is for library buildings and also for the grounds outside library buildings. **Allowable in designated areas only.**
- Cell phones and pagers should be turned off or placed on silent mode.
- Physical abuse, assault on another person, or the use of abusive, insulting, or threatening language to a person in this building shall be cause for removal of the offending party or parties.
- Sexual harassment or abuse, or the use of sexually offensive language, innuendo, or inquiry to a person in this building shall be cause for removal of the offending party or parties; likewise, unwelcomed requests for personal information, unwelcomed attempted conversation, and unwelcomed following or approaching of other patrons on library premises.
- Persons intoxicated from alcohol or other drugs will be advised to leave the premises.
- Improper acts, which are subject to prosecution under criminal or civic codes of law, are prohibited.

Library users will comply with the Electronic Resources Use Policy.

Guide dogs for the visually impaired or service dogs for persons certified by a medical doctor, are admitted; otherwise, pets are to remain outside.

Persons carrying guns and/or knives, whether concealed or not, will not be allowed into the library. Such entry will constitute criminal trespass.

Anyone known to have violated any of the above rules or anyone known to have habitually violated the law may be excluded from the use of the Library as a matter of administrative policy.

Duration of exclusion will be determined by the Library Director in consultation with legal counsel based on the facts and circumstances of each individual case.

In order to protect the Library's facilities, personnel, users, and resources, the Library reserves the right to call for a search of a citizen's person, handbags, briefcases, etc. when reasonable cause for such search is found to exist.

Persons violating the above rules may be instructed to leave the building by a person in authority. Failure to leave as instructed constitutes unlawful trespass and may result in criminal prosecution of the offender and/or a civil lawsuit against the offender.

Approved August 2010 by the Vermilion Parish Public Library Board of Control.



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Unattended Child Policy

The Vermilion Parish Library asks parents to join us as partners in ensuring the safety of our younger customers. Because the public library is a public place, children may be at risk. And, because library staff is generally busy helping library customers, they are not responsible for supervising children who are using the library. They are often unaware of children's activities, movements, and circumstances.

The following is based according to the Louisiana Children's Code Chapter 6 Article 606 (Grounds: Child in need of care)

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Parents, please make sure your children are with responsible caregivers at all times.

Also, get involved in your children's library use. Know what they are reading and viewing. And take responsibility for their Internet use.

The VPL is dedicated to providing a welcoming and safe environment for customers of all ages. Sharing this learning environment with other people requires that everyone follow the Library's "Code of Conduct", established by the Library Board of Control, posted prominently in each library facility, on the Library's website, and in handout at each Loan desk. The VPL wants children to use its facilities and services.

Children in the library should always be accompanied by a parent/guardian or assigned caregiver.

When children are left alone they may become frightened or anxious. If they wander through the building, they may encounter hazards, such as doors, furniture, or electrical equipment. They may also become bored, restless, and may disturb others who are using the library.

The safety of children left alone in a library building is a very serious concern.

Responsibility for the safety and behavior of children in the library rests with the parent/caregiver, **not** with library personnel.

Because library employees **cannot be responsible** for children who are unattended, or who demonstrate inappropriate behavior, the following guidelines are established:

- Children ages zero (0) - ten (10) must have a parent/caregiver in the immediate vicinity of, and in visual contact with them at all times. The assigned caregiver must be a



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responsible person and must carry emergency contact information. An exception would be children attending a library program without the parent or caregiver in the room, but the parent/caregiver is expected to remain in the library building and to immediately join the child at the end of the program.

- If a child ages zero (0) - ten (10) is found unattended, library staff will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver in the library and inform him/her of the rules. If the parent/caregiver cannot be found, or if the child is found unattended again, the Police/Sheriff's department will be called for assistance.
- If a child ages zero (0) - ten (10) violates the Library's "Code of Conduct", the child and the parent/caregiver will be informed of the rules. If inappropriate behavior continues, the family may be asked to leave the library, in order to maintain the best library environment.
- Children age 11 and older may be allowed to use the library on their own. However, parents are still responsible for the actions of their children.
- Children age 11 and older using inappropriate behavior may be asked to leave the library.
- If a child is not able to leave the library without an adult, he/she should not be in the library alone. This is a particular concern in inclement weather and after dark.
- It is recommended that children age 11 and older be accompanied during their library use, either by an older sibling, or by a parent/caregiver. All children should have the telephone number of someone who can assist them in an emergency.

CHILDREN LEFT UNATTENDED AT LIBRARY CLOSING TIME. As indicated in the Library's "Code of Conduct", children left after closing time will be turned over to law enforcement authorities. For this situation, an unattended child in Louisiana is defined as a person under the age of 18 years. Children on tours, field trips, etc. must be accompanied by chaperones at all times, with sufficient number of chaperones for any group. The recommended minimum is one chaperone per fifteen children.