

## MENDOCINO COUNTY CULTURAL SERVICES AGENCY *Standards of Behavior*

Staff of the Mendocino County Library and Museum support a welcoming and safe environment for visitors and employees. Everyone has a right to quality library and museum services in an atmosphere that is calm, safe, and free from disturbance by others. While you are visiting the museum and County Library branches, please be considerate of other visitors, staff, facilities, and building contents. Visitors who violate this policy may be asked to leave the premises.

**Abusive Behavior:** Abusive behavior, such as threats or violence toward staff or visitors, is prohibited.

**Animals:** Only trained service animals, or animal otherwise allowed in County buildings pursuant to Mendocino County Code section 14.20.010 are permitted in the Library branches and Museum.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Using bikes, skateboards, scooters or skates, fighting, running, pushing, shoving, and any other rowdy or unsafe behavior, in or anywhere outside the Library branches or Museum on walkways or parking areas surrounding the branches or Museum is prohibited. Defacing Museum or Library property is prohibited.

**Disturbing Noise:** Disturbing anyone with unreasonable noise is prohibited inside the Library branches and Museum. This includes yelling, talking on a cell phone, video conferencing, loud conversations, singing, radios, and other electronic devices.

**Dress Code:** Being fully clothed, including shirt, shoes, pants, dress, or skirt, is a requirement to visit the Mendocino County Library and Museum.

**Following/Stalking:** Stalking is the willful, malicious, and repeated following of another person in a manner that causes the other person to reasonably fear for their safety. Stalking of any person is prohibited.

**Food or Drink:** Eating or drinking in the Library branches and Museum are allowed only in designated areas or for programs and meetings held in meeting rooms and lobby areas. All food-related trash must be disposed of in the proper receptacle.

**Furniture and Property:** Leave furniture in its place. Avoid putting feet on furniture. Use the facilities, materials, and furnishing as intended.

**Harassing Behavior:** Harassing behavior is prohibited. Harassing includes any verbal or non-verbal conduct which is likely to frighten, embarrass, anger, or annoy a person to the extent that that person's use of the Library or Museum or ability to work in the Library or Museum is unreasonably curtailed by the conduct. Harassing behavior by a Library or Museum patron shall include behavior which occurs anywhere, both on and off Library and Museum property, over the telephone, by mail, or by any electronic means. Harassing behavior may include, but is not limited to verbal abuse, advances of a sexual nature, obscene gestures or sounds, offensive touching, and staring at library staff or at other persons so that performance of their duties or use of library resources is disrupted.

**Loitering:** We welcome everyone to explore our services and facilities. Blocking the path of visitors into the buildings, on the steps, entryways, or other areas, thereby creating a nuisance to those who are trying to enter, exit, or use resources, is prohibited. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of a Public Library and/or Museum while in these buildings.

**Museum and Art Exhibits:** To protect the CSA's collections, touching Museum artifacts is not permitted unless signage indicates otherwise. Please do not touch, lean on, climb, sit, or place items on the exhibit platforms, interpretive panels, display cases, or walls. For all open displays such as art or other items, please keep at least a 12-inch distance from the art or object.

**Offensive Odors:** Anyone whose body hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to other persons (as verified by staff) shall be required to leave the building. Since some people are sensitive to strong fragrances, patrons are asked to refrain from excessive use of perfumes or colognes.

**Personal Belongings:** For safety reasons, Mendocino County Library and Museum staff reserve the right to restrict the following personal items from the premises: boxes, umbrellas, packages, large backpacks, bags or purses, or other items that cannot be stored entirely under the owner's chair. Weapons should not be brought onto Library/Museum grounds. Personal property should not be left unattended anywhere on Library/Museum grounds.

**Photography or Video Recording:** Patrons may not bring flash photography, video lighting, selfie sticks, tripods, drones, or other equipment onto Mendocino County Library or Museum property without prior permission. No commercial photography is allowed without written consent of the Mendocino County Cultural Services Agency. Special requests for the use of photography equipment must be submitted and approved by Library/Museum staff.

**Public Display of Obscene Material:** Public displays of this that interfere with the ability of others to use resources, or as prohibited by law, is not allowed.

**Restroom Use:** Using the public restrooms as shaving, bathing, or laundry facilities is prohibited.

**Selling, Soliciting, or Mass Distribution of Materials:** Selling, soliciting, panhandling, and mass distribution of unapproved materials is not permitted.

**Sleeping:** Sleeping is prohibited in the Library Branches and the Museum.

**Smoking:** In accordance with Government Code Sections 7596-7597, smoking is prohibited inside the Mendocino County Library and Museum buildings, entryways, and within 20 feet of any entrance or exit.

**Trespassing:** Trespassing is prohibited. Trespassing includes entering any Library or Museum building during a suspension of privileges, entering any non-public area of the building, failing to leave immediately upon closing, or being inside before or after public hours without express permission from Cultural Services Agency personnel.

**Unattended Children:** We encourage children to visit our Library branches and Museum. Staff are concerned for children's safety and welfare. We recognize parents' or guardians' responsibility for the behavior and well-being of their children. We respect the privacy of all patrons and intervene only when a child is deemed to be at risk. **If an unattended child, age 8 or younger, comes to the attention of staff, we will make a good faith attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child will be referred to the local law enforcement agency. Children aged 8 and under may not be left unattended anywhere in the Library or Museum and must be accompanied and directly supervised by a responsible party.**

**Unlawful Behavior:** Engaging in any unlawful activity is prohibited and staff will call law enforcement. Unlawful behaviors include, but are not limited to, carrying unlawful weapons, assault, indecent exposure or sex acts, use of illegal drugs or alcohol, damage to property, theft, attempted theft, brandishing a weapon, public drunkenness or intoxication, public urination and defecation.

## **ENFORCEMENT PROCESS**

Patrons who do not comply with the Mendocino County Cultural Services Agency Standards of Behavior may be asked to leave the Library or Museum for a period of one to thirty days by the Branch Librarian, Person in Charge, or Museum Administrator. The Cultural Services Agency Director handles any proposed suspensions between 30 days and one year. In rare instances a visitor's behavior may lead to a longer suspension of County services if his/her/their actions are an ongoing problem for staff, volunteers, other patrons, or the building or its contents. In addition to the suspensions provided for in this policy, violations of local, state, or federal law will be reported to law enforcement. This policy is available at the CSA and online.

## **SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES/NOTIFICATION AND APPEALS PROCESS**

### **A. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION WITH FURTHER ACTION TO FOLLOW**

The following behaviors will result in an immediate suspension:

- Physical abuse or assault
- Fighting or challenging to fight
- Making violent or threatening statements or brandishing a weapon
- Damaging, destroying, theft, or attempt of theft of County property
- Sexual harassment
- Acts of sexual misconduct, including indecent exposure, harassment, sexual contact, sexual intercourse, and/or exhibiting lewd and lascivious acts or behavior

Authorized Cultural Services Agency staff will instruct anyone displaying these behaviors to leave the facility immediately. Police will be called, and additional legal action may occur, as appropriate. In addition, based on the severity of the situation, a suspension of Library or Museum privileges for up to one year will be applied without advance warning or prior suspension. Library and Museum staff will notify CSA Administration immediately, where a determination of the appropriate suspension period and procedures will be assigned by the CSA Director.

### **B. ALL OTHER PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS WILL BE ADDRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER**

**First violation:** Initial warning and given copy of the Standards of Behavior

**Second violation:** Privileges suspended for the day

**Third violation:** Privileges suspended for 1 to 7 days

**Fourth violation:** Privileges suspended for 1 to 30 days

**Fifth violation:** Privileges suspended for 1 to 365 days

At the recommendation of Library Branch and Museum staff, the Cultural Services Agency Director or designee will issue a letter to the patron specifying the behavior that violated the CSA Behavior Policy, the penalty for doing so, which may include a suspension of privileges from all Mendocino County Library Branches and the Museum, and the designated suspension time of up to one year. In rare instances, a patron may be suspended for more than a year.

## **RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Anyone who has had his/her/their CSA privileges suspended for more than six months may appeal to the Cultural Services Agency Director. Anyone who has had his/her/their CSA privileges suspended for more than a year may appeal once in writing to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. An appeal petition must be mailed or delivered to Cultural Services Agency Director, 105 N. Main St., Ukiah, CA 95482, within 21 days of the suspension. The appeal petition must include all reasons the patron believes he/she/they is/are not in violation of the Mendocino County Cultural Services Agency Behavior Policy or why the suspension is not appropriate.

The Board of Supervisors, upon reviewing the petition during a public meeting, will issue a written determination of the appeal within 30 days of their receipt of the petition, not necessarily within 30 days of the appeal being delivered. The Board of Supervisors may uphold the suspension, overturn the suspension, or impose an alternative. The determination is final and shall have no precedential value. An appeal may not be repeated.

Approved by the Board of Supervisors on Sept. 13, 2022.