

A901b Public Code of Behavior

Last updated: August 2024



Purpose:


The Hedberg Library Board of Trustees has established the Public Code of Behavior and other rules so that everyone can share the library and its resources in a clean, safe, and welcoming environment. The Public Code of Behavior is based on Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 43.52(2). Activities that violate any federal, state, or local criminal statute or ordinance are prohibited.

Library staff will enforce this Public Code of Behavior courteously and firmly. Everyone using any of the Hedberg Public Library branches is expected to do so responsibly, appropriately, and courteously. People who do not follow the library's rules may be suspended or blocked from using the library. Repeat violations will mean longer suspensions from the library and its grounds, including the front porch, surrounding parking lots and sidewalks, and library park, and may mean permanent loss of the use of the library. The police may be called for assistance at staff discretion.

Inappropriate behavior in the library includes (but is not limited to):

- Dangerous behaviors such as running, skateboarding, or rollerblading in the building or on library property; blocking passageways or stairways.
 - Stealing, damaging, or altering any library property or that of library staff or patrons.
 - Threatening or violent behaviors such as swearing, threatening physical contact, using abusive language or images, fighting, displaying a weapon, or brandishing a toy, tool, or other object as if it were a weapon.
 - Harassing behaviors such as malicious comments, prolonged staring, making sexual remarks or advances, following others, displaying sexually explicit materials or explicit sites online, inappropriate touching, requesting sex, or payments for sex.
 - Wearing clothing that can reasonably be deemed obscene.
 - Smoking, vaping, drinking, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco on library property or within 20 feet of the front entrance.
 - Subjecting others to offensive odors such as strong body odor, overpowering perfume or cologne, odors from tobacco, marijuana, or vaping smoke.
 - Making excessive noise, such as talking, singing, rapping, or playing music loudly, separate from an authorized library program.
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- Entering the library with any animal other than a service animal (except where specifically authorized by staff).
 - Distributing literature, asking staff or patrons to sign petitions, or soliciting donations without prior approval.
 - Entering non-public work areas unescorted by staff.
 - Unattended Children. Responsibility for children using the library rests with their caregiver or guardian, not with library personnel. Any child ages seven or younger must always be directly supervised by a responsible adult or caregiver at least 12 years old. Unattended children under age 8 or any child requiring repeated intervention by library staff or who are violating the Public Code of Behavior may be asked to leave. Library staff may contact the caregivers, guardians, or the police.
 - Occupying the Children's Room (for ages 0-11 only) or Teen Central (for ages 12-18 only) after aging out of those areas. The Collection Materials in the Children's Room and Teen Central are available to all. Computers, toys, games, lounge spaces, etc., are reserved for in-library use only for the designated ages in each area. The Children's Room is designated for Children ages 0-11 and their caregivers. Teen Central is designated for Teens ages 12-18. Those who do not meet the age designations for each space may be asked to relocate to another area by a staff person. Library staff may make appropriate exceptions at their discretion, such as special circumstances, patrons with special needs or accommodations, or pre-arranged group visits. Patrons who violate this age designation or fail to comply with staff direction may be suspended or banned from the library. If you feel that the child or teen you are caregiving for has special circumstances that require different arrangements, please speak with the staff person in that area so that we may assist you to the best of our abilities to ensure a welcoming and safe atmosphere for all. Group Visit Notes: If your organization is bringing minors to the library for a chaperoned group visit, we ask that you have enough staff to maintain the group presence in the designated age areas. Staff are not required to supervise your group participants but will intervene if necessary.
 - Any behavior or actions not listed above will be left to the discretion of the library director or their designee for review and action. Behavior threatening to library staff or patrons will not be tolerated.
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Addendum Concerning the Behavior and Supervision of Minors and Children’s Areas of the Library:

Parents/caregivers are fully responsible for their child’s safety and behavior in the library. The library assumes no responsibility or liability for the actions, care, supervision, or safety of children under the age of 18.

A responsible adult or a responsible individual at least 12 years of age must directly supervise children under 8 years of age. Library staff will attempt to contact the parent/caregiver of unattended children under 8 years of age. If a parent or caregiver cannot be located, staff may contact the Janesville Police Department or other known resources at their discretion.


Staff Response to Inappropriate Behavior:


Unacceptable behavior may result in a suspension or a ban from the library and loss of library privileges. The length of the suspension/ban will be based on the severity and/or frequency of the behavior. Library staff are authorized to contact the Janesville Police Department for severe misbehavior or when an individual refuses to leave library property when directed to do so.

Library staff will contact the parents/guardians of an offender under age 18 by mail, email, or phone if the offender is suspended from the library for more than a week.

Suspension and Banning Procedures:

If a person has behaved inappropriately in severe ways or more than one time, and staff has decided that the individual involved should be suspended or banned:

1. Staff will inform the patron that they need to leave the library and its grounds, including the front porch, surrounding parking lots and sidewalks, and the library park.
 2. The Head of Access Services & Security will issue a written suspension letter to the offender notifying them that they are suspended or banned from the Hedberg Public Library building and property. (The Head of Youth Services may write letters to the parents of offenders under 12 years of age.) The letter will clearly state the reasons for the suspension or ban, the date the suspension/ban begins and ends, any terms of reinstatement, and records of any previous suspensions/bans with reasons and dates.
 3. The statement “You are banned from all branches of the Hedberg Public Library, including all buildings and surrounding properties, until the date listed. If you are seen in or around any library location before the return date listed below, the police will be called. You may be arrested or ticketed for trespassing under Janesville City Ordinance Sec. 24-732 ([link is external](#)).” This statement will appear in all suspension letters.
 4. Involved staff and/or the Head of Access Services & Security will report the incident in the Incident Report database. The report will include the name and description of the offender—including a picture or video, when possible, a description of the unacceptable behavior, the date the suspension or ban begins and ends, and any terms of reinstatement.
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5. The Head of Access Services & Security will officially inform all staff involved about the reason for the suspension/ban and the length of the suspension/ban. If a suspension/ban is more than a month, a copy of the letter, the incident report, and a photo will be forwarded to the Janesville Police Department when possible.

Reconsideration and Appeal Procedure:

An offender who believes they were suspended or banned unfairly may request reconsideration of the suspension/ban by the Library Director.

Request for Reconsideration Procedure:

1. A person who believes they were suspended or banned unfairly may file a written Request for Reconsideration to the Library Director, Hedberg Public Library, 316 S. Main St., Janesville, WI 53545, asking for reconsideration of the suspension/ban. The written request should clearly state the reasons the person believes a review is warranted.
2. The Library Director will respond to the request within ten business days. The length of a suspension or ban shall remain as stated unless the Director issues a written statement altering the terms of the suspension/ban. Persons who are not satisfied with the Director's decision may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees.

Appeal Procedure:

1. Notice of Appeal: An individual may file a written Notice of Appeal within ten days of receiving the Director's response to a Request for Reconsideration. Such notice shall be filed with both the Library Director and the Library Board President, Hedberg Public Library, 316 S. Main St., Janesville, WI 53545. The Board shall hold a hearing within 30 days after the notice has been filed. The appellant shall be notified at least ten days before the hearing.
2. Hearing: At the hearing, the appellant may be represented by counsel, present evidence, call and examine witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses of the other party. The President of the Board shall conduct the hearing and follow the Rules of Evidence provided in the Wisconsin Statutes, [227.45 \(link is external\)](#) for administrative proceedings. The staff shall record the proceedings.
3. Decision: Within 30 days of the completion of the hearing, the Board shall issue a written decision, including their reasons, to the suspended or banned person. The Board shall have the power to affirm or reverse the Director's written response or to remand it to the Director or designees with instructions for reconsideration. The Board's decision, except for remand, shall be a final determination for the purposes of judicial review.

Non-compliance with Ban - Trespassing:

If a banned individual enters the Hedberg Public Library or any branch before the return date listed in the ban letter, the police will be called, and the individual may be arrested for trespassing under Janesville City Ordinance Sec. [24-732 \(link is external\)](#).

