

## RESTROOMS USE POLICY

The purpose of the Restrooms Use Policy is to establish rules for behavior in order to provide all visitors with a comfortable and safe environment in which to use the library. The rules below will be firmly and courteously enforced by the library staff and, if necessary, the Holyoke Police Department:

- **The Holyoke Public Library restrooms are only for library users.**
- **All Public Bathrooms are locked at all times.** Library users *must* provide staff member with a valid library card or photo ID to acquire the key to unlock the restrooms. It is the library user's responsibility to lock the restroom after use and return the key to staff member.
- **Illegal Use of the Holyoke Public Library restrooms is *prohibited* and will result in prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.**
- **Only 1 person is allowed in a restroom at a given time.**
- **There is a time limit of 10 minutes to use a restroom.**
- **Library materials** (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) **are not allowed in the restrooms.**
- **Unreasonable use of the restrooms, including stealing bathroom items, deactivating equipment, laundering clothes, bathing, etc. Is not allowed.**
- **Damaging, or defacing any library property** (*see MGL, Ch. 266, Sec. 100*) **is not allowed.**
- **Children under 18 years of age may be directed to the restrooms located in the Children's Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.**

## The Holyoke Public Library Reserves the Right to Enforce All Library Policies

### Patron Behavior Policy Will Be Enforced as of November 2019

## HOLYOKE PUBLIC LIBRARY PATRON BEHAVIOR POLICY

The mission of the Holyoke Public Library is to provide the citizens of Holyoke with the tools and opportunities to improve themselves and their quality of life while promoting literacy, the enjoyment of reading and life-long learning through the provision of equal access to library materials, services, facilities, technology, up-to-date resources and programs to meet the educational, informational, social, cultural, and recreational needs for residents of all ages and abilities in the City of Holyoke and surrounding areas.

### Patron Rights

The Holyoke Public Library supports the rights of all individuals to:

- Receive friendly, courteous, and respectful service;
- Have free and equal access to information;
- Expect privacy and the confidentiality of the information that is shared with the Library when using our web site or other library services;
- Have a clean, safe, comfortable, and pleasant environment;
- Use the Library without discrimination;
- Use the Library undisturbed without threat of harm, invasion of property, or interference.

### Purpose of the Patron Behavior Policy

The purpose of the Patron Behavior Policy is to establish rules for behavior in order to provide all patrons with a comfortable and safe environment in which to use the library. The **patron has the responsibility** to follow all public health, safety and fire regulations, and other laws designed for the public good. The rules below will be firmly and courteously enforced by the library staff and Security personnel, and if necessary, the Holyoke Police Department.

Though this policy focuses primarily on activities inside the library facility, the scope of its coverage includes all library property including the land surrounding it, the sidewalks and the parking areas.

For the safety of children in the library, adults unaccompanied by children are asked to remain in the adult areas of the library unless they are actively using the materials or services in the children's area for purposes not served by the adult area of the building. The Teen Room and any other designated teen spaces are reserved for teens and those who accompany them, and adults interested in Teen literature while they are retrieving material from the collection.

The library encourages frequent visits by children and their families. However, parents/guardians are responsible for their children's (under eighteen) behavior and welfare in the library. They will be notified if their children are left in a vulnerable situation or require supervision due to disruptive behavior. Children *under the age of ten* should not be in the library without an adult caregiver. The library staff may contact the Holyoke Police Department if a young child is left unattended at the library. The library is not responsible for the welfare of children who are left unattended in the library.

**For the safety and comfort** of all library visitors, volunteers, and staff and the protection of library property, the following categories of specific actions are examples of conduct **NOT ALLOWED** on library property:

## Category A: Library-Specific Violations

- **ANIMALS:** Bringing animals into the library except those needed to assist a disabled person is not allowed.
- **AUDIO EQUIPMENT:** Playing audio equipment so that others can hear it is not allowed.
- **BAGS:** All bags and other articles are subject to inspection by library personnel. The library reserves the right to limit the size and number of items brought into the library. A patron may be required to leave athletic equipment, large parcels, or other belongings deemed inappropriate with library staff until ready to leave the building.
- **BICYCLES:** Bicycles must be parked in designated areas outside the building.
- **BULLYING:** Bullying and cyber-bullying is not tolerated.
- **CELL PHONES:** While the use of cell phones, per se, is not prohibited, loud voices and ring tones that may be disruptive to others may prompt library employees to request cell phone users take the phones away from other users and/or out to a foyer, or shut them off.
- **CLOTHING:** For hygiene purposes shirts and shoes are required. For security purposes, face coverings (e.g. caps, hats, hoods, sunglasses) must be removed in the library.
- **CRAFT ACTIVITIES:** Due to potential damage to library materials and/or property, unscheduled craft activities in public service areas involving liquid materials, such as glue, paint, play dough, etc, must be preapproved by library staff
- **DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION:** *Excessive* displays of affection are inappropriate behaviors for the library.
- **FACIAL DISGUISE:** For security purposes
- **FOOD AND DRINK:** Because of the potential damage to library materials, the consumption of food and/or beverages is not allowed in the library, except at designated times or in designated rooms. Patrons may consume food outside and then return to the library.
- **HYGIENE:** Patrons may be required to leave the library if their personal hygiene interferes with the ability of other patrons to use and/or enjoy the facility.
- **LIBRARY FURNITURE (MISUSE OF):** In order to maintain clean and attractive library facilities and furniture, it is forbidden to sit on tables and heating units, place feet on furniture, lie on floors, or to deface walls, tables, chairs, doors shelving, elevators, etc. Patrons should sit one to a chair and should not tip back.
- **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS:** Personal possessions should not be left unattended or at public service or entrance points for safekeeping. The library is unable to guarantee the security of such items.

- **RUNNING:** For safety and avoiding disturbances, running is not allowed in the library building.
- **SKATEBOARDS AND ROLLER SKATES:** Patrons may bring these into the library while using library services/resources, however they may not be used in the building.
- **SLEEPING:** Habitual sleepers, noisy sleepers and those who are sprawled on furniture or the floor in a manner that is disturbing to other persons will not be tolerated.
- **SOLICITING:** Soliciting patrons and staff for donations, for the purpose of obtaining signatures on petitions, or for any other reason is not allowed on library premises.
- **STAFF ONLY AREAS:** Patrons are not allowed to enter areas posted “Staff Only” without permission.

## Category B: Municipal and State Law Violations

- **COMPUTER EQUIPMENT (MISUSE OF):** The abuse of library computer equipment violates the law (*see MGL, Ch. 266, Sec. 100*) and will be prosecuted. Abuse of equipment includes: banging on the keyboard or other use of excessive force, misappropriation of hardware or software, and attempts to alter software. Consult the Library’s *Computer Services Policy* and *Equipment Use Policy* for a more comprehensive description of acceptable use.
- **DAMAGES:** Those who damage or deface library materials or property will be prosecuted (*see MGL, Ch. 266, Sec 100*). Parents can be held liable for damage done by a child under the age of eighteen (*see MGL, Ch. 231, Sec. 85G*)
- **DISTURBANCES:** Creating a disturbance by making noise, talking loudly, or engaging in other disruptive conduct is not allowed (*see MGL, Ch. 272, Sec. 41*).
- **DRUGS, TOBACCO & ALCOHOL:** The distribution of any illegal or harmful drugs on library property is not allowed (*see MGL, Ch 272, Sec. 3*). Smoking, the use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes/vaping and chewing tobacco, and the use of alcohol is prohibited in the library and on the two reading terraces (*see MGL Ch. 270, Sec. 22*).
- **HARASSMENT:** Harassing behaviors such as intimidation, panhandling, drug dealing, prostitution, obstructing a public way, etc. is a violation of library policy, and in some cases, the law.
- **LITTERING:** Littering on library property is not allowed. Patrons must dispose of trash, wrappers, and empty containers in trash and recycling bins (*see Holyoke City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 74 Article IV, Sec. 74-91*)
- **THREATS:** Threatening patrons, volunteers, or staff, either verbal, physically, or in writing, including all forms of electronic media, is prohibited.
- **VIOLENCE:** Violence, threats of violence, and possession of weapons is not allowed on library premises.

**Approved by the Board of the Holyoke Public Library, November 2019**