

HAMPTON FALLS FREE LIBRARY SECURITY AND SAFETY POLICY

The Hampton Falls Free Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its staff and patrons. In order to do so, the following rules shall be adhered to at all times:

BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY:

DAILY:

- The building shall be checked nightly at close, including bathrooms, to ensure that all patrons are out of the building.
- All efforts should be made to have at least two staff members, or a staff member and a patron, leaving the library together at closing. Should a staff member stay late, the staff leaving should make sure the library doors are securely locked.
- The building will be locked every night at closing and all windows will be closed and locked.

GENERAL:

- Cordless phones for emergency use are accessible in the Staff Workroom and the Youth Services Librarian's desk. **Dial:** 603-926-3377 or 911.
- Panic buttons shall be accessible to staff from the Circulation desk, the Youth Services Librarian's desk, and the Director's office. These will call central dispatch.
- All walkways and steps shall be shoveled and sanded regularly during the winter to provide usable alternate exits in case of emergency.
- The Library shall have the building's fire alarms and extinguishers inspected annually.
- The Library will have emergency evacuation procedures and conduct two fire drills annually.
- The Library shall have a defibrillator, eye wash station and first aid kit in case of medical emergencies. The staff shall be trained and periodically retrained to correctly use the equipment.

CHILD PROOFING:

- All cleaning chemicals will be stored in a place not readily accessible to children.
- Child-proof outlet covers will be used in all outlets which children can reach.

POLICE INVOLVEMENT:

- Situations that warrant **immediate** police involvement include but are not limited to:
 - If an individual physically harms another person, or threatens to do so;
 - If an individual damages property, or threatens to do so;
 - An individual who is visibly under the influence of alcohol or controlled dangerous substances;
 - An individual views or prints child pornography;
 - An individual engages in an act of public indecency.
(*Breast-feeding is NOT included in this definition.*)
- Should a staff member encounter a belligerent patron, or someone who makes the staff member feel uncomfortable and threatened, they are encouraged to call the local police for assistance or use the panic button should the situation warrant it.
- A patron may be asked to leave the building if they verbally or physically threaten a staff member or other patron. Should a patron refuse to leave, the police may be called to remove the person.
- Should a volatile patron leave the Library, the doors should be locked and remain locked until a police officer arrives to address the situation.
- The police should be notified of problem patrons even if the situation does not escalate to violence in order to assist the police in monitoring potential issues.

*For more information about appropriate behaviors in the Library, see our **Internet and Computer Use Policy** as well as our **Behavior Policy**.*

CONSEQUENCES:

- A patron who has an episode that requires police involvement will be sent a follow-up letter from the Board of Trustees, which may require them to have a police escort should they wish to use the premises again.
- The Library also reserves the right to terminate a problem patron's right to enter the Library should the problem persist.

PATRON APPEAL PROCEDURE:

- Revocation or denial of Library privileges may be appealed if the individual files a written notice of appeal with the Director within ten days after receiving notice of the revocation or denial. Such notice shall be mailed c/o Hampton Falls Free Library, 7 Drinkwater Road, Hampton Falls, NH 03844.
- Within **10 days** of receipt of the notice of appeal, the patron shall schedule a meeting with the Director to resolve the issue of Library privileges being revoked or denied.
- If a resolution cannot be reached with the Director, the individual may make a written request to the Director, within 10 days of meeting with the Director, asking that the matter be addressed by the Library's Board of Trustees at the monthly Board meeting. The individual requesting the appeal may attend the Board meeting and make a short presentation after which the Board shall decide the matter. The determination of the Library Board of Trustees shall be final.

WEAPONS IN THE LIBRARY POLICY

It is recognized that the employees and patrons of the Hampton Falls Free Library have the right to, and should be ensured, a working environment that is free of weapons that may jeopardize their health, safety, and welfare. This policy is enacted to protect, preserve, and promote the health, safety, welfare and quality of life for the employees and patrons of the Library.

- The Library requests that no weapons, either concealed or visible, or even if permitted, be carried while on the Library premises.

Note: Duly sworn Law Enforcement Officers are exempt from this policy.

- If a weapon is sighted in the Library and the staff or other patrons feel threatened or uncomfortable, the staff may report the situation to law enforcement so the lawfulness of such carried weapons can be determined.

Adopted: August 23, 2018

Reviewed, updated and approved on: June 22, 2023