

CUSTOMER POLICIES

SUSPENSIONS

Board Policy:

DATE REVIEWED: 05/29/2024
DATE APPROVED: 05/29/2024
EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/2024
REPLACING POLICY EFFECTIVE: 03/01/2024

The Board of Trustees of the Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) establishes rules for public behavior on library property to promote the safety of customers, employees, and volunteers. Customers are expected to abide by CML's Customer Code of Conduct while on library property. Customers who do not abide by CML's Customer Code of Conduct are subject to being suspended from all CML properties. Suspensions will be issued based upon the administrative procedure and suspension guidelines detailed below.

In its commitment to supporting young minds, CML supports the use of Restorative Practices (RP) which is a model of engagement that recognizes the developmental, social and emotional needs of youth and seeks to avoid or reduce suspensions for youth.

Administrative Procedure:

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Suspensions of 7 days or less may be decided upon and imposed by Security Officers, Security Management and Public Services Managers/Supervisors. All employees are authorized to suspend a customer from the premises for the remainder of the day.

Suspensions of greater than 7 days must be approved by a Public Services Director. The customer in question will remain suspended from all CML properties until a decision on the duration of the suspension is made. Employees requesting suspension periods greater than 7 days should note their recommended suspension period in the security incident report and/or contact a Public Services Director.

Alternatively, employees are empowered to apply RP with youth as outlined in the procedures detailed in section G below.

Employees are to address customer behavior that violates the Customer Code of Conduct in the following manner:

- A. Inform customers immediately when improper conduct is observed or reported. Customers should be given a chance to respond to the allegation. If, after giving the

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customer a chance to respond, the employee still believes that the customer has engaged in improper conduct, they should provide the customer with a verbal warning so that the customer can correct the behavior.

Customers engaged in behavior that poses a threat to the safety of themselves or others or that is illegal will be asked to leave immediately without being provided a chance to respond to the allegation or a verbal warning. Additionally, a customer who has been given a prior warning for improper conduct or has been previously suspended for improper conduct may be asked to leave immediately if engaged in similar behavior.

- B. Whenever possible, warnings and suspensions issued to customers should be witnessed by another employee.
- C. Employees that witness or are involved in incidents should complete a security incident report for each incident that results in a suspension. The customer's information as well as details about the incident, including date, time and location will be recorded in the report.
- D. Employees should attempt to identify the customer being warned and/or suspended by name. If additional information can be obtained, such as mailing address, telephone number and library card number, employees will record that information in the security incident report.
- E. If the suspended customer's identity is known and they have a library account, a block will be placed on the customer's account and relevant details about the suspension (e.g., infraction, incident number, date eligible to return) will be added as notes. The block is to be removed after the customer's suspension ends. This is only necessary for suspensions of seven (7) days or more.
- F. Customers suspended for thirty (30) days or more will be mailed a suspension notice informing them of their infraction(s) and the duration of their suspension if their identity and mailing address are known. Suspension notices will be completed, mailed and filed by Public Services Administration when the duration of the suspension has been determined.
- G. Restorative Practices
 - RP offer a model to increase engagement with youth and build community by repairing harm through alternatives to punitive suspension.
 - 1. Youth between the ages of 7 and those still in high school, who violate the Code of Conduct may be eligible to participate in RP. Some infractions, such as those involving illegal activity or those deemed especially harmful to others, library property or the customer themselves, may disqualify a youth customer from the

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option of RP. Public Services Managers/Supervisors or Security Officers will be consulted in these instances.

2. Youth who are suspended for seven (7) or more days will be given a “Returning to the Library” notice. This notice will inform the customer of their infraction(s), the duration of their suspension and available options to reduce the suspension by participating in designated RP.
3. Staff will work with youth to determine the appropriate RP activities, such as conversations to understand harm done, reflections of impact, peer talking circles or conferences with a parent/guardian. Further guidance can be found in the Restorative Practices Service Expectation.
4. If the suspended youth chooses to participate in RP, employees will determine appropriate next steps to make elected RP activities available to the customer. Youth may decline participation in RP and opt for the original suspension period.
5. If a customer elects RP but fails to participate in or properly complete such RP activities, the original suspension period will remain in effect.

Suspended youth may still participate in core library activities, such as School Help Center and after school snack, at the discretion of the Manager or their designee.

H. Rights of Redress:

Any suspended customer has the right to appeal their suspension using the following process:

1. The customer should contact Public Services Administration to initiate an appeal. The customer should explain the reasons for the appeal and include any additional information that they would like to be considered during review. Contact information for Public Services Administration is provided on the suspension notice sent to the customer or can be obtained by calling the library.
2. In consultation with the Director of Security, a Public Services Director will consider the appeal and advise the customer of their decision within seven (7) business days. Notice of the decision may be delivered via telephone, mail or email.
3. The customer may further appeal the decision to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The customer should explain the reasons for the appeal and include any additional information that they would like to be considered during review.
4. The CEO will consider the appeal and advise the customer of their decision within seven (7) business days. Notice of the decision may be delivered via telephone, mail or email.
5. The CEO’s decision will be considered final. CML’s failure to meet any of the deadlines set forth above shall not invalidate a suspension.

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- The incident report and the customer's account (if applicable) will be updated to note that an appeal was made as well as the final decision regarding the duration of the suspension.

Suspensions will be determined in general accordance with the guidelines set out in the table below. The seriousness of the infraction and/or repeated violations may warrant a longer suspension than indicated in the suspension guidelines. Deviation from the suspension guidelines may be allowed for infractions committed by minors or those participating in RP.

Related Policies/Forms:

- Weapons
- Customer Code of Conduct
- Computer Security and Internet Access
- Unattended and Disruptive Children

Suspension Guidelines

Infraction	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation
Improper dress, including bare feet and no shirt.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Offensive odor	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Storing personal belongings on library property, including leaving personal belongings unattended.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Leaving children under age 7 unattended.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Insufficient supervision of children resulting in acts disruptive to customers and staff.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Sleeping, if age 7 or older.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.
Distributing/posting unauthorized printed materials.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.

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Consuming food or beverages (in type or quantity) that are disruptive or damaging because of odor, waste or spills or eating or drinking outside of designated areas.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Eating at public computers.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Bringing animals, other than service animals, into the library.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Improper use of furniture, equipment or materials.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Smoking, chewing tobacco or vaping in non-designated areas.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Unreasonable noise including loud talking, singing, boisterous activity/cell phone use or loud headphones or speakers	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Monopolizing/obstructing space, seating, tables or equipment, including restrooms.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Gambling, panhandling or soliciting money, goods or services.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Running, pushing, rough play or other disruptive physical activity.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Personal grooming such as bathing, shaving or washing clothes on library property.	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.
Failure to comply with applicable health and safety regulations as mandated or	Warning, and may be asked to leave to correct the problem.	Asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.

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recommended by federal, state or local health officials.			
Profane, obscene or abusive language.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.	30-day suspension with approval
Possessing or using drugs or alcohol.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	7-day suspension.	30-day suspension with approval.
Unwelcome conduct and/or unwelcome comments of a romantic or sexual nature, including, but not limited to, references to a person's body or physical appearance as well as requests for dates or personal information.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	30-day suspension with approval.	4-month suspension with approval.
Public urination.	Asked to leave immediately. 7-day suspension.	30-day suspension with approval.	4-month suspension with approval.
Trespassing, including refusing to leave library property when asked.	Asked to leave immediately. 30-day suspension with approval.	Re-start of suspension period with approval.	4-month suspension with approval.
Actively distributing drugs or alcohol.	Asked to leave immediately. 1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.
Brandishing or using knives or other items in an unsafe manner that could reasonably result in personal injury or property damage.	Asked to leave immediately. 1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.
Engaging in or soliciting any sexual act. Indecent exposure.	Asked to leave immediately. 1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.	1-year suspension with approval.
Use of the internet for unlawful purposes as defined by federal, state and local laws.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.

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	be determined after review.		
Intentionally damaging or destroying property belonging to CML, another customer or staff.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.
Theft of personal or library property.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.
Inducing panic, including making false 911 or emergency calls.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.
Possessing weapons or replicas of firearms, dangerous ordnance, explosive devices (including fireworks) or other items that a reasonable person would consider to be dangerous to themselves or others in a public library environment, excluding knives.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.
Harassing or threatening customers or staff. Repeated or severe behavior and/or comments that are unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, offensive or threatening. Acts, statements, jibes, jokes, images or epithets which may reasonably create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.

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Fighting, physical abuse or assault.	Asked to leave immediately. Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.
Other acts disruptive to customers and/or staff.	Warning, and may be asked to leave for the day.	Suspension period to be determined after review.	Suspension period to be determined after review.