

POLICY FOR THE USE OF THE LIBRARY BY MINORS AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

Fondulac District Library strives to provide a welcoming and safe environment for all community members and welcomes patrons of all ages to use its facilities, collections, and services. The library is particularly concerned for the safety of minors and vulnerable persons at the library.

While the Library is concerned for the safety of minors and vulnerable persons on Library grounds, the Library does not act in loco parentis (in place of parents). Our staff is happy to serve patrons of all ages, but cannot supervise minors or vulnerable persons while carrying out their work responsibilities. Library staff cannot, nor is it their responsibility to, serve as baby-sitters, caregivers, teachers, or disciplinarians.

The responsibility for the care, safety, and behavior of minors under the age of 18 and vulnerable persons of any age, as well as their use of the library's facilities, collections, and services, lies with their parent, legal guardian, teacher, custodian, or responsible caregiver (all such hereinafter referred to as caregiver).

A caregiver age 14 or older is responsible for directly supervising, monitoring the activities and location of, and managing the behavior of minors under the age of 10 at all times during library visits. The caregiver must remain in the company of the minor or vulnerable person and must maintain an awareness of the minor's or vulnerable person's location and activities.

In the event of a program where staff has informed caregivers that they are not required to attend or participate with their minor under the age of 10, caregivers must remain in the building and be present at the program room by the end of the program.

Older minors (at least 10 years old but under 18) are welcome to use the library independently during library operating hours; however, responsibility for the library usage (including facilities, collections, and services) of minors using the library independently continues to rest with the parent or legal guardian.

Staff have the discretion to require any minor under the age of 18 they determine requires additional supervision to have a responsible adult caregiver. A caregiver age 18 or older is responsible for directly supervising, monitoring the activities and location of, and managing the behavior of minors under the age of 18 that staff have determined require additional supervision during their library visits.

A vulnerable person is a person of any age who demonstrates they are unable or unwilling to care for themselves. This includes persons who need help beyond assistance with normal library services. Vulnerable persons should not be left unattended in the library, including at programs. A caregiver age 18 or older is responsible for directly supervising, monitoring the activities and location of, providing guidance to, and managing the behavior of vulnerable persons.

Minors and vulnerable persons are subject to library rules and policies, including those concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor, and patrons of any age who do not follow the library rules and policies may be required to leave the library premises.

In general, patrons not able or expected to exit the building without a caregiver should not be in the library without a caregiver. All minors and adults who rely on others for life skills, transportation, or guidance should have emergency contact information readily available and be able to contact caregivers independently, as needed, in case of emergency. The library is not

responsible for retaining this information. If a caregiver cannot be reached, the person will be referred to police and/or emergency personnel.

Safety of Unattended Minors and Vulnerable Persons

When the safety of an unattended minor or vulnerable person is in doubt, staff will attempt to contact the caregiver before calling police and/or emergency personnel. In the case of an immediate safety concern, staff will contact police and/or emergency personnel immediately and then attempt to contact the caregiver. Staff will accompany the person until help arrives.

Unattended Minors and Vulnerable Persons During Library Hours

During library operating hours, an unattended minor is a minor under the age of 10 who is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 14 years of age or older OR a minor under 18 who is required to have the supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older and is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older.

An unattended vulnerable person is someone who has demonstrated they are unable or unwilling to care for themselves AND who is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older.

During library operating hours, a member of the library staff will attempt to locate the caregiver of an unattended minor or vulnerable person. If the caregiver cannot be located in the building or by phone within 30 minutes, the police will be contacted to assume custody of the unattended patron and to take charge of the situation.

Unattended Minors and Vulnerable Persons After Library Operating Hours

After library operating hours, an unattended minor is a minor under the age of 14 who is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 14 years of age or older OR a minor under 18 who is required to have the supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older AND is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older.

An unattended vulnerable person is someone who has demonstrated they are unable or unwilling to care for themselves AND who is not under the direct supervision of a caregiver 18 years of age or older.

In the event an unattended minor or vulnerable person is at the library after the library closes to the public and is not directly supervised by a caregiver, the manager or person in charge and at least one other staff member will wait 15 minutes after closing. Attempts will be made during the 15 minutes after closing to reach a caregiver. If a caregiver cannot be reached within fifteen minutes of closing or cannot pick up the minor or vulnerable person by fifteen minutes after closing time, the police will be called to assume custody of the unattended patron and to take charge of the situation.

In no instance will staff allow those waiting to enter in non-public spaces, staff vehicles, or library vehicles or provide transportation to those waiting.

In the event an unattended minor or vulnerable person is at the library after the library closes to the public three times in a twelve-month period, the minor or vulnerable person will be required to be accompanied during all library visits by a caregiver age 18 or older who is responsible for their supervision and transportation.

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