

## **KFPL Report to the Board**

**Subject:** Patron Code of Conduct Policy  
**Prepared by:** L. Carter, Chief Librarian / CEO  
**Date of meeting:** September 25, 2024

### **Background:**

Library policies are regularly reviewed, both on a pre-determined schedule, and based on operational need. The Patron Code of Conduct Policy was last reviewed by a staff committee in 2015. Revisions to the Policy were approved by the Library Board in February 2016, but later reversed after a significant amount of community feedback was received in response to changes. The Library Board then formed a Community Engagement Committee and implemented the Community Engagement Policy and Toolkit. Public consultation on the Patron Code of Conduct Policy took place in 2018, led by an external consultant. Progress on updates was stalled by staffing changes and the COVID-19 pandemic.

An internal Working Group was formed in Spring 2024, with management and union representatives, including Joint Health and Safety Committee members, tasked with directing the project, making decisions on engagement opportunities and providing overall guidance regarding updates to the Patron Code of Conduct Policy.

### **Analysis:**

#### **Process**

The Code of Conduct Working Group met regularly between May and September 2024. Much of the Working Group's time was devoted to gathering and reviewing internal and external feedback and drafting an updated version of the Policy. The Code of Conduct Working Group reviewed all information collected during the engagement process and recommended changes supported by the survey data, internal incident reports, library sector best-practices and Health and Safety regulations and considerations. Community engagement activities and data used for the recommended revisions are detailed in [Public Engagement Report – Spring/Summer 2024](https://community.kfpl.ca/past-projects/code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct-engagement-activities) available on the Library's Engage site. [https://community.kfpl.ca/past-projects/code-of-conduct/code-of-conduct-engagement-activities]

#### **Staff and Board Feedback**

In addition to questions similar to those posed to the community regarding what should be

added or removed from the Policy, Library staff were asked about specific behaviours that should be addressed by the Policy in the context of ensuring a safe working environment. Aggression, violence, substance use and respect were the top answers, mentioned by approximately a third of respondents. Staff were also asked about instances where they felt the current Policy was insufficient or unclear in addressing a situation. Enforcement and consistency were the issues mentioned the most, along with loitering and bag inspections, followed by intended use of washrooms and sleeping and wellness checks. Feedback from the Library Board survey provided additional perspectives on the current limitations of the Policy and helped align the Working Group's recommendations with KFPL's strategic goals.

**Name of Policy**

Staff, Board and public surveys asked about potential changes to the current name of the Policy. Based on the feedback, the Working Group recommends a change in name from Patron Code of Conduct Policy to Library Use and Conduct Policy.

**Transparency and Enforcement**

Staff and community feedback highlighted the importance of having a set of rules that would be well-communicated and enforced transparently. Staff expressed desire for a review of procedures with respect to Policy violations and banning to aid in consistent and fair enforcement of the Policy. Staff also expressed a desire for a simplified, accessible code with clearer, objective language.

The Draft Policy refers to a "Procedure on Responding to Library Use and Conduct Policy Violations" in section 5 under Compliance. Banning guidelines will be reviewed and procedures revised as part of the implementation of the new Policy.

**Conclusion**

The engagement activities provided valuable insights from the public, the Library Board, and the broader community. The Working Group reviewed all feedback to ensure that the recommendations align with the diverse perspectives shared, Health and Safety guidelines, as well as the intended use of the Policy.

**Recommendations:**

That the Library Board review and approve the draft for public consultation.

# Library Use and Conduct Policy DRAFT

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure everyone feels welcome and has a positive experience while using the Library and its services. Along with other Library policies, it helps ensure the safety, dignity, and intellectual freedom of library patrons and staff, as well as the security of library property.

## 2. Scope

This Policy outlines expectations regarding the use of library services and spaces. It applies everywhere the Library conducts its business, whether on Library property, in the community, over the phone or email, or online.

## 3. Guiding Principles

This Policy supports the Library's mission to build and support community through inclusive, welcoming and safe spaces for all. The Library provides free and equitable access to services and collections that advance literacies and invite people to innovate, learn, explore, and connect.

Library staff make every effort to apply this Policy in a fair, dignified, and respectful manner.

## 4. Policy

Adhering to the following will ensure a safe, welcoming and harassment-free environment where everyone can respectfully co-exist:

- Use respectful language and respect the rights of others to enjoy the Library. Abusive, coarse, violent, or harassing language, as well as discrimination based on Ontario Human Rights Code protected grounds will not be tolerated.
- Take responsibility for those in your care during your visit.
- Respect the privacy of library patrons at service desks, printing stations, computers, meeting rooms and other KFPL spaces.
- Refrain from canvassing, soliciting, or distribution of materials without prior authorization.
- Obtain approval and consent before taking photographs, filming, or recording.
- Use library facilities, materials, and furniture with respect and only for their intended

purposes.

- Sleeping on library premises is not permitted. To ensure KFPL patrons are well and not in need of emergency services, staff will conduct wellness checks where there is a concern about a patron's well-being.
- Preparing, selling, or using cannabis, alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes or illegal drugs is not allowed on library premises.
- Weapons are not permitted on library premises.
- For health and safety reasons, footwear must be worn in the Library.
- Snacks and lidded beverages are permitted in most areas, with some exceptions.
- Keep personal belongings with you. Ensure that doorways, aisles and walkways remain clear and that belongings do not interfere with others' use of the Library.
- Leave equipment such as bikes, carts and scooters in designated areas outside.
- Bring in only service animals, as defined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005, Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards.
- Follow KFPL staff or security personnel direction and leave the building promptly at closing and as requested during emergency situations.
- Notify KFPL staff of any issues or concerns or if assistance is required.

## 5. Compliance

Patrons engaging in conduct contrary to this Policy, other Library policies or municipal, provincial or federal laws will be asked to modify their behaviour and/or directed to leave the premises.

Continued or serious violations may result in loss of library privileges, including a ban from physical and/or digital spaces and services. Please refer to Kingston Frontenac Public Library Procedure on Responding to Library Use and Conduct Policy Violations (*to be developed*) for information regarding suspension and banning procedures.

Information related to an individual's use of the Library will be disclosed to law enforcement as required to support investigations and legal proceedings.

## 6. Related Policies

Access to Information and Protection of Privacy

Accessibility for Users with Disabilities

Bulletin Boards – Posting and Displaying Materials

Internet Access (Public)

Occupational Health and Safety

Public Use of KFPL Online Forums and Social Media

Service Feedback Standards

Unaccompanied Children in the Library

Video Surveillance

Workplace Harassment

Workplace Violence Prevention

## **7. Document Control**

Original Policy Date:

Last Reviewed: 2015

Changes Made:

Next Review:

## KFPL Patron Code of Conduct

Everyone is welcome at the Kingston Frontenac Public Library (KFPL).

The library is dedicated to providing an accessible, inclusive, comfortable and welcoming place for all members of the public to meet and interact. Library staff make every effort to apply these rules in a fair, dignified and respectful manner. We ask your cooperation in maintaining a welcoming environment for everyone to enjoy while using KFPL facilities, collections and services.

These are some of the conditions for ensuring the comfort and safety of everyone:

- Please use respectful language and respect the rights of others to work and enjoy the library. Abusive, coarse, violent, or harassing language or behaviour towards fellow library users or staff will not be tolerated.
- Speak and work at a quiet volume. Minimize distracting noises.
- Cell phone use is permitted at low volume. Please set cell phones to vibrate or mute.
- Use library materials, computers, equipment and furniture with respect and care and only for their usual and intended purposes. Interfering with the designated use of computers and networks is not permitted.
- Please report disruptive behavior to a KFPL staff member immediately.
- Obtain authorization before posting materials, taking photographs, filming or recording. Canvassing, soliciting, or unauthorized distribution of material is not permitted in the library.
- Loitering or sleeping on library premises is not allowed.
- Use authorized entrances and exits only and respectfully keep clear of any areas designated as "Staff Only".
- Enjoy cold food and covered drinks in designated areas of the library.
- The use of alcohol, cigarettes or illegal drugs is not allowed on library premises. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is not allowed on library premises. The possession of illegal drug paraphernalia is not allowed on library premises.
- Weapons are not permitted on library premises.

- Attend to and supervise the children or other individuals in your care.
- Wear appropriate attire, including shirts and footwear.
- Use your sports equipment off library premises.
- Permit inspection by library staff or security of personal bags or cases when leaving the library.
- Your guide and/or service animals are welcome in the library.

Anyone who violates KFPL policies and refuses to modify disruptive behaviour on library premises will be asked to leave. Anyone who shows disrespect to other library users or staff members on the phone – or through any other means of communication – may have their library access and privileges suspended.

Updated January 2015