



## MERIDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY PATRON SUSPENSION POLICY

In order to provide and maintain a welcoming and safe environment for all patrons and library staff, the Board of Trustees has adopted a Patron Suspension Policy. Violation of the Meriden Public Library Code of Conduct may warrant suspension of Library privileges. Suspension of Library privileges will result in removal from, and denial of access to, all services of the Meriden Public Library and Library grounds for a designated period of time.

Enforcement of the policy will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff has the responsibility to apply this policy in determining behavior that does not comply with the policy. The Library staff also has the responsibility to intervene by explaining the Rules of Conduct and stopping the prohibited activities and behaviors. Failure to comply with the Library's established rules, regulations, and policies could result in removal from the premises and expulsion from the Library and Library grounds for a period of one day to one year, or in arrest or prosecution. Violations could also result in the restriction and/or termination of Library privileges, including the use of Library computers and other equipment. Expulsion for more than one week may be appealed in writing to the Director of Library Services.

*Sec. 11-32. Legislative body of municipality may establish or operate a public library. Such library and reading room shall be free to the use of the inhabitants of the city, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the board of trustees may adopt in order to render the use of the library and reading room of the greatest benefit. Such board may exclude from the use of such library and reading room any person who willfully violates such rules, and may extend its privileges to persons residing in this state outside the city upon such terms and conditions as it may prescribe. (Connecticut General Statutes)*

1) **Initial Warning:** A staff-member will attempt to communicate with the patron to resolve the immediate disruption or violation, and, if possible, will provide the patron a copy of the Library's Code of Conduct. The patron will be told that continued violations may result in suspension of Library privileges for a day or longer.

2) **Continued disruption or violation** (same or different day): Library privileges will be suspended for the day by an authorized staff member and the patron will be asked to leave the Library building.

3) **Third disruption or violation:** Longer than one-day suspensions will be issued if a patron continues to display disruptive behavior after receiving a one-day suspension. If disruptive behavior continues a patron may be suspended for seven days or longer. Any suspension longer than seven days will be issued in a minimum of one month increments. Library patrons who feel the treatment is unfair may ask for the Request for Appeal of Suspension Form so that they may communicate their concerns.

**Serious disruption or violation:** A ban for one year or longer may be imposed at any time and is for very serious problems, such as verbally or physically threatening behavior, physical assaults of patrons and/or staff, nudity, or criminal activity in the library. The police are usually called for this type of incident and the patron may be arrested. This can also include patrons who have repeatedly violated the Meriden Library Code of Conduct and have a prior history of suspensions from the library.

Any patron suspended has the right to a hearing with the Library Director. The Library Director may determine whether or not to modify or reverse the suspension. To receive a hearing the patron must return the REQUEST FOR APPEAL OF SUSPENSION FORM to the Meriden Public Library within seven days of receiving the suspension. All hearings are held at the Meriden Public Library. The decision of the Library Director may be appealed further by written request to the Board of Trustees who will hold a hearing. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

**Approved by the Meriden Board of Trustees, September 25, 2023**