



CODE OF CONDUCT

Welcome to Blanchard Community Library

Since 1910, the Blanchard Community Library has proudly served the Santa Paula community by connecting people to information and ideas. Working in coordination with state and county partners, the library sustains heritage, culture, and knowledge while enhancing learning and innovation.

The Board of Trustees welcomes patrons of all ages to use the library's facilities, services, and resources. We strive to provide an inclusive, safe, and welcoming environment for the community to connect, explore, and create.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is established for the comfort, safety, and protection of all patrons, staff, and volunteers, and to ensure equitable access to library resources. It ensures that everyone can read, study, engage, and participate in programs in an environment free from unreasonable interference or intimidation.

All individuals visiting or using library services or property must comply with this policy. The library reserves the right to address conduct that undermines safety, damages property, or disrupts others' ability to use and enjoy the library.

Prohibited Conduct

Patrons are expected to act safely and respectfully, engage civilly with staff and others, and follow all lawful and reasonable staff instructions. Any behavior that violates federal, state, or local law, or disrupts a safe, inclusive library environment, is prohibited.

The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive:

Disruptive Behavior and Language

- Disrupting or interfering with others' use of the library.
- Using loud, obscene, or threatening language; engaging in harassment or stalking.
- Lying down or sleeping for extended periods.
- Monopolizing tables, furniture, or technology to the exclusion of others.
- Using electronic devices at a disruptive volume.

Safety and Physical Interference

- Threatening, striking, or assaulting staff, volunteers, or patrons.
- Possessing weapons or hazardous materials, except as permitted by law.
- Engaging in unwanted, lewd, or inappropriate physical conduct, including indecent exposure, physical harassment, or excessive public displays of affection.
- Engaging in any illegal or criminal activity on library property.

Substances and Smoking

- Being under the influence of, selling, or using controlled or illegal substances.
- Smoking or vaping on library grounds or within 20 feet of entrances.
- Consuming alcoholic beverages without prior written authorization from the Library Director.

Property and Materials

- Damaging, stealing, misusing, or rearranging library property, materials, or personal belongings.
- Fraudulent use of another's library card or credentials.

Access and Personal Items

- Eating or drinking except in designated areas; all beverages must have secure lids.
- Bringing animals into the library, except ADA-defined service animals.
- Leaving belongings unattended or blocking pathways.
- Bringing bicycles, scooters, shopping carts, or other large wheeled items inside the library.
- Using wheelchairs, strollers, or mobility aids for purposes other than personal transportation.
- Riding or using skates, skateboards, collapsible scooters, hover boards, or similar devices on library property (these must be carried).
- Storing bicycles anywhere other than designated bicycle racks.

Personal Conduct and Hygiene

- Wearing insufficient clothing or shoes.
- Emitting strong, pervasive odors, including odors caused by perfume or inappropriate personal hygiene.
- Misusing restrooms or water fountains for bathing, shaving, or laundering.

Use of Library Facilities and Resources

- Soliciting, selling, or distributing materials without written approval.
- Recording, photographing, or filming persons in the library or on library property for commercial use or presentations without prior written authorization from the Library Director.
- Violating others' privacy or confidentiality.
- Refusing staff instructions or monopolizing staff time unreasonably.
- Tampering with, altering, or attempting to bypass library computer systems, hardware, software, or network security controls.

Children in the Library

The library encourages children of all ages to use its resources. Parents or guardians are responsible for their children's safety, supervision, and behavior while on library property.

When signing a child's library card application, the parent or guardian acknowledges that the child may access the entire collection, including materials representing diverse viewpoints and maturity levels.

Guidelines for a positive experience:

- Visit the library together regularly.
- Help children select materials consistent with your family standards.
- Meet the Children's Librarian for personalized recommendations.
- Familiarize yourself with library policies on collection development and internet use.

Unattended Children and Supervision

While the Blanchard Community Library strives to foster a safe environment for everyone, parents and guardians are solely responsible for ensuring the safety of their children and for monitoring and regulating their behavior while on library premises.

Library staff duties make it impossible for them to be alert to dangers like a child wandering out of the library or "stranger danger." Library staff and volunteers are not responsible for the supervision of children left unattended by their parents or guardians.

- Children under 10 years old must be accompanied and directly supervised by a parent, guardian, or caregiver age 16 or older, who must remain in visual and physical proximity to the child at all times.
- Children 10 and older may use the library independently but are expected to follow all library rules.
- If a child's behavior becomes disruptive or unsafe, staff may ask the caregiver to intervene or remove the child from the area until the behavior improves.
- Continued disruptive behavior may result in the caregiver being asked to remove the child from the library for the remainder of the day.
- If a child under 10 is left unattended and a parent or guardian cannot be reached within 15 minutes, law enforcement will be contacted.
- Library staff may also contact the appropriate authorities if there is reason to suspect possible abuse or neglect.

Progressive Discipline and Enforcement

Actions that violate this Code of Conduct will be dealt with in a fair, reasonable, and progressive manner. The severity of the offense and the patron's history of violations will determine the level of action taken.

The following outlines potential levels of violation and corresponding consequences:

Severity Level	Example	Consequence
Level One: Minor or First Violation	Minor, non-violent disruptive behavior such as noise or food policy violations.	Initial warning and given a copy of the library Code of Conduct.
Level Two: Moderate or Second Violation	Continuation of disruptive behavior after an initial warning, or a repeat of a minor infraction.	Library privileges suspended for one day.
Level Three: Serious or Third Violation	Further continuation of disruptive behavior or actions that interfere substantially with library operations	Library privileges suspended for seven days.
Level Four: Major or Fourth Violation	Repeated or deliberate misconduct that shows willful disregard for library policies or causes significant disruption or property damage.	Library privileges suspended for up to one year.
Level Five: Severe or any violent, dangerous, or illegal conduct	Dangerous, destructive, or illegal conduct (e.g., physical abuse, violence, threats, illegal activities, drugs, or weapon possession).	Immediate removal from the library and privileges suspended for up to one year (based on severity), with possible arrest and legal action.

In the event of a suspension of library privileges, the Library Director or their designee shall issue a notice to the patron informing them of the grounds for the suspension.

In the case of a minor (under the age of 18), staff will attempt to notify the parent or guardian and provide the parent or guardian with a copy of the suspension notice.

A suspension of privileges restricts access to all buildings, grounds, and in-person library services. During this period, the individual's library card will be temporarily blocked.

An individual whose library privileges have been suspended may not enter or remain on library property during the suspension period. Attempting to enter library grounds or facilities while under suspension constitutes trespassing. Staff may contact law enforcement to document and enforce the trespass as necessary.

Appeal Process

A patron who has been suspended from the library for an extended period may appeal the decision in writing.

Submitting an Appeal

The patron must submit a written request to the Library Director within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the notice of suspension. The request must describe the circumstances surrounding the incident and explain why the patron believes the suspension is unwarranted.

The suspension of privileges will remain in force during the appeal review period.

Review and Decision

For a suspension of library privileges for ninety (90) days or less, the Library Director will review the appeal and make a decision within thirty (30) days. The Library Director's decision will be final.

For suspensions of longer than ninety (90) days, the patron's appeal will be reviewed by the Library Director, and then presented to the Board of Trustees for a formal review at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board's decision will be final.