

POLICY ON DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE PEOPLE

When a library employee or a person using the library has observed or reported a serious crime in progress, or there is an immediate threat of violence, it is the responsibility of the employee who is in the highest on-duty classification to notify the police immediately and evacuate the building if indicated.

If an emergency situation does not appear to exist, but there is disruptive behavior in the library, the responsible employee should follow these steps:

- Before approaching the person, notify at least one other staff member that you are about to speak with a disruptive person
- Staff on "stand-by" should make their presence known to the disruptive person either by physical proximity or by directly asking if they can be of assistance. Staff should be ready to notify the police if the situation appears to be potentially violent.

When a disturbed or disruptive person violates any of the above rules of library conduct noted in the previous policy, proceed as follows:

- Inform them of what it is, specifically, they are doing that is in violation of existing policies and/ or law.
- Ask them to stop the behavior or leave the building until they are prepared to comply with library regulations.
- Offer them assistance, if indicated, by way of references to community resources, social services, hospital emergency room services, etc. Provide them with appropriate printed hand-out listing these local services.
- Staff should approach disruptive people in a calm, considerate, and impersonal manner. Be consistent, state the rules and stick to them repeating your request, if necessary. Do not argue with outrageous statements, but be specific and explicit. Whenever possible, offer the person a choice of action (i.e. comply with the rules or leave the library).
- When suspicious activity has been observed, but a problem does not yet exist, alert other staff members to the potential problem.

A written incident report should be submitted to the Library Director for each occurrence when the police have been summoned to the library for any cause involving a disturbed or disruptive person.

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