

Library Use and Behavior Policy

Approved March 1996

Revised August 2003, July 2007, August 2010, April 2014, May 2016, March 2018, Sept 2019, Sept 2021

Reviewed 2004, July 2009

Library Use & Borrowing

The Groton Public Library serves all, but focuses on serving the residents of Groton, taxpayers of the community, and students at local schools, including home schools and/or programs in Groton. *For more information, refer to borrowing details on gpl.org.*

Any Groton Public Library or Massachusetts library card holder in good standing may borrow items. Any individual may use all library services in accordance with Chapter 78 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (605 CMR 4.01). The only exception is programs where space may be limited, in which case preference will be given to Groton residents.

Balancing the Needs of All Users

The Library will endeavor to maintain a balance in its services to all members of the community. The Library will cooperate with, but cannot perform the functions of, school or other institutional libraries that are designed to meet curricular needs. When excessive demands of groups or individuals tend to curtail service to the general public, the use of the Library or its services by that group or individuals shall be limited.

Acceptable Use

The use of the Groton Public Library or its services may be denied by Library Staff for due cause. Such cause may include but is not limited to theft, destruction of library property, disturbance of staff, volunteers, or other library users, or any other objectionable conduct on library premises. Library Staff is not responsible for the behavior or supervision of individuals on library grounds and in the building.

Public Health

The Groton Public Library is a social and public facility. While the Library Staff strive to maintain a clean environment, public places carry the risk of germs. If you or your child has a cough, cold, or other communicable ailment, please consider postponing your library visit as a matter of public health.

The Groton Public Library's building and grounds are smoke-free environments per MGL Chapter 270 section 22.

No one may possess an open container of any alcoholic beverage while on, in, or upon any public areas or facilities in the Town of Groton (except the Country Club) [Bylaws of the Town of Groton, Chapter 105, Section 1].

Library Use and Behavior Policy

Approved March 1996

Revised August 2003, July 2007, August 2010, April 2014, May 2016, March 2018, Sept 2019, Sept 2021

Reviewed 2004, July 2009

Public Accommodation for Service Animals*

Persons with disabilities have the right to be accompanied by a service animal wherever the person is allowed to go. Only dogs meet the definition of service animal under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with the exception of miniature horses. A service animal is a dog or miniature horse that has been individually trained to perform a task or service to assist a person with a disability.

The ADA and the Massachusetts Service Animal Law obligate state and local governments and any places that are open to the public to permit service animals to accompany people with disabilities anywhere members of the public are allowed to go.

People are not required to possess any certification or identification for a service animal. Service animals are not required to wear a vest or badge. In Massachusetts, service animals in training have the same status as fully trained service animals.

An individual with a disability accompanied by a service animal may not be asked to provide documentation of a disability, to answer questions regarding his or her disability, or to have the service animal demonstrate its work.

However, animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support are not service animals.

Rights & Responsibilities

Service animals in the Library:

- Are permitted to go wherever their handler is permitted to go.
- Are allowed even if others have fears of or allergies to dogs.
- Must be under the handler's control at all times. In most cases this means on a harness or leash.
- Must be housebroken.
- May not pose a legitimate, direct threat to health or safety.
- Do not have to be allowed to sit on furniture meant for patrons.

The only exception to this policy on animals is for special library-booked events.

**Information taken from The Massachusetts Office on Disability, accessed Sept. 2019:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/about-service-and-assistance-animals>*

Library Use and Behavior Policy

Approved March 1996

Revised August 2003, July 2007, August 2010, April 2014, May 2016, March 2018, Sept 2019, Sept 2021

Reviewed 2004, July 2009

Library Behavior

The Groton Public Library is a very active center of information, cultural activities, recreation, and learning. Rules have been established regarding proper library behavior necessary to maintain both an atmosphere which promotes the use and enjoyment of the resources and services of the library, and which protects the safety of the general public, the library staff, and the equipment and materials of the library. It is expected that persons using the library will conduct themselves in an orderly and respectable manner. The Library reserves the right to require anyone who violates these rules of conduct to leave the premises. The Library may deny permission for a person to enter its facilities for a specified time. Patrons are expected to comply with the reasonable requests of any member of the library staff. Staff will handle occasional misbehavior informally.

Sanctions

The Library Director or Board of Trustees may impose sanctions against any person who has engaged in prohibited conduct or activity within the Library or upon its grounds. Sanctions may include restrictions or suspensions of the individual's library privileges and/or prohibiting the individual from entering or being present in the Library or on its grounds. Notice of such sanction or proposed sanction shall be given in writing and delivered in person or by certified mail. In the case of a minor a copy of such notice shall be delivered either in person or by certified mail to the child's parent or guardian. Such notice shall inform the person of the specific conduct or activity which is the basis for the sanction, the date of its occurrence, and the right of the individual to a hearing on the sanction. Any person who enters the Library or its grounds, after receiving notice of a sanction prohibiting such entry, shall be reported to the Groton Police Department.

Appeals

Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by the action of the Board of Trustees or Library Director in imposing a sanction may appeal such decision to the Board of Trustees. The appeal shall be in writing and presented to the Board of Trustees within ten (10) days of the date upon which notice of the sanction was served upon the person. In addition, the Board of Trustees or the Director has the right to provide written notice of a hearing prior to imposing any sanctions under this policy.

All hearings under this policy will be conducted pursuant to Mass. General Laws, Ch.39, S. 23B, the Open Meeting Law. A person will be entitled to a minimum of five (5) days advance written notice of the scheduling of such hearing and will also be entitled to participate in such hearing either individually or through legal counsel, to cross-examine witnesses, and to present evidence on his/her own behalf. The decision of the Board of Trustees shall be final and binding upon the individual.