

Hamburg Public Library Suspension of Library Services Policy

Purpose

The Hamburg Public Library Community Agreement lays out the expectations of behavior for the library community. The library is a shared space for the community to come together, form connections, engage in lifelong learning, and find inspiration. The Suspension of Library Services Policy explains the process of suspending library services for violations of the Community Agreement. The policy may not unreasonably or unfairly restrict access to libraries by any person or group.

Responsibility

Any member of the Hamburg Public Library staff may ask a patron to leave the library for the remainder of the day for minor infractions or violations of Hamburg Public Library's Community Agreement. More serious infractions may be referred to the Library Director.

The Library Director may suspend library services for individuals in response to inappropriate behavior. Library services may be suspended anywhere from 1 day for minor infractions, to permanent suspension, depending upon severity and frequency of behavior.

Documentation

The Library Director will keep a confidential file of information on incidents in which a form has been filed. The purpose of the file is to track any serious problems that are reported by patrons or staff. It will be used to document incidents of inappropriate behavior and to track problems of a recurring nature.

If the decision is made to suspend a patron for more than the remainder of the day, the Library Director will complete a "Notice of Library Suspension" letter. A copy will be made available to the patron and filed with the Hamburg Borough Police. In the case of a minor, the library will attempt to notify the parent or guardian and provide them with a copy of the letter.

Suspension of Library Services

The library may suspend access to the library for persons who fail to follow the library's established behavior guidelines which are detailed in the Hamburg Public Library Community Agreement and the Policy for Internet Access for Berks County Public Libraries. The library reserves the right at all times to immediately discharge a patron who is dangerous or in any way threatening library staff or other patrons. In addition, the library may pursue remedies under Federal, State, or local law where applicable.

If a suspended library patron enters the library before the return date listed on their Notice of Library Suspension letter, the police will be called and charges may be filed for trespassing.

Library staff will consider the following guidelines to determine the length of the suspension:

A. First offense: Library staff will inform the patron of the relevant conduct policy and warn the patron that continued violation of the policy will result in a loss of library privileges. Staff may ask the patron to leave the library property for the remainder of the day if they are uncooperative or argumentative.

B. Second offense: Library staff will ask the patron to leave the library property for up to 30 days and will bar the patron from visiting the Hamburg Public Library during the suspension period.

C. Third offense: The patron will be permanently barred from the Hamburg Public Library.

D. Violent or physically intimidating behavior or any behavior a reasonable person would find to be harassing or threatening in nature to library staff or visitors will result in the offender being permanently barred from visiting the Hamburg Public Library, even if this is the patron's first offense. The Hamburg Borough Police may also be notified.

Appeals

A one-day suspension cannot be appealed. In the case of a minor (under the age of 18) suspended for more than one day, Library staff will attempt to notify the parent or guardian.

Any patron whose services have been revoked may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees via written request to the Library Director within fourteen (14) days of the denial of library services. The notice of appeal must be sent to the library at 35 North Third Street, Hamburg, PA 19526. The Library Board of Trustees will review the suspension at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Library Board. The Library Board of Trustees will read the appeal and will vote to uphold or dismiss the suspension. The patron will be notified by letter of the decision of the Library Board of Trustees. The decision of the Hamburg Library Board of Trustees is final.

The suspension remains in effect during the review process and a patron may only return to the library if/when the above suspension is terminated either through the appeal process or completion of the original terms.

Approved by the Board of Trustees November 8, 2022



Hamburg Public Library Notice of Library Suspension

Name: _____ Date of Library Suspension: _____

Your visitor privileges to the Library are suspended for a period of: _____ day(s)/week(s).

This means you may not enter the Hamburg Public Library from _____ to _____.

Your access to the Hamburg Public Library will be restored on _____.

Reason for suspension:

You are receiving this notice of suspension due to the behavior listed above in violation of the Hamburg Public Library's Community Agreement. A copy of this policy accompanies this notice.

If you enter the library before the return date listed above, the police will be called and charges may be filed for trespassing.

Any patron whose privileges have been revoked may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees via written request to the Library Director within fourteen (14) days of the denial of library services. The notice of appeal must be sent to the library at 35 North Third Street, Hamburg, PA 19526. The Library Board of Trustees will review the suspension at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Library Board. The Library Board of Trustees will read the appeal and will vote to uphold or dismiss the suspension. The patron will be notified by letter of the decision of the Library Board of Trustees. The decision of the Hamburg Library Board of Trustees is final.

The above suspension remains in effect during the review process and you may only return to the library if/when the above suspension is terminated either through the appeal process or completion of the original terms.

Library Director: _____ Date: _____

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Approved by the Board of Trustees November 9, 2022