



Policy: USE OF LIBRARY OUTDOOR PREMISES; PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Adopted: 16 July 2008

Reviewed/Re-approved: June 21, 2021

The library premises – courtyard and terrace – are open daily from dawn to dusk (or library closing, whichever is later) and are closed from dusk (or library closing, whichever is later) to dawn. No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the courtyard or terrace. Per Borough of West Chester Ordinance No. 10, Chpt 76, smoking is prohibited on in the courtyard or on the terrace; this includes e-cigarettes (vaping). All trash must be disposed of in trash cans.

Individuals may demonstrate, picket, hand out informational literature, or seek signatures for petitions outside the building on Library grounds (terrace and courtyard) provided they are quiet, orderly and do not block entrances (to the courtyard or the building), sidewalks, parking places, or otherwise interfere with access to or use or operation of the library; and provided they do not disturb or harass those entering or leaving the library, or insistently attempt to engage them in conversation.

It is not necessary for demonstrator(s) to request or receive the permission of the Library. However, as the Library occasionally uses the courtyard for scheduled Library programs, Library staff may request demonstrators move to the sidewalk so as not to interfere with library activities.

The presence of demonstrator(s) does not constitute an endorsement by the West Chester Public Library of the opinions or points of view expressed or espoused by the demonstrator(s).

Any person or group who violate these rules and regulations may be asked by a staff member to leave the premises. Library employees (staff) may ask for assistance from the Borough of West Chester Police Department.

General Information and Background

The West Chester Public Library Board of Trustees and staff have used the following guidelines, based upon constitutional principles, in developing and approving this Policy. These guidelines are taken from the American Library Association's Guidelines for the Development of Policies Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage (adopted 1993, revised 2000)

§ Regulation of user behavior must be approached within the framework of the ALA Code of Ethics, the Library Bill of Rights and the law, including state and local statutes, constitutional standards under the First and Fourteenth Amendments, due process and equal treatment under the law.

§ Publicly supported library service is based upon the First Amendment right of free expression. Publicly supported libraries are recognized as limited public forums for access to information. At least one federal court of appeals has recognized a First Amendment right to receive information in a public library. Library policies and procedures that could impinge upon such rights are subject to a higher standard of review than may be required in the policies of other public services and facilities.