

The policy highlights from local and national public libraries below specifically address managing patron belongings. Additional related topics were not highlighted, but also included: sleeping, bathing in bathrooms, requirements for shirts/pants/shoes, accompanied animals, and body odor, which are areas that Harrington Library staff also address.

Library: Arlington Public Library (Virginia)

Policy: Library Rules

Link: <https://library.arlingtonva.us/about-us/policies/library-rules/>

The following are prohibited in the Library:

- Leaving personal items unattended**
- *Library may limit size/number of parcels carried into Library to what can be placed securely under chair or table.
- **Library is not responsible for and may dispose of personal belongings left unattended inside or outside facility.

Library: Austin Public Library

Policy: Library Use Rules

Link: <https://library.austintexas.gov/about-library/rules>

Personal belongings.

- A customer may not bring a bedroll, blanket or sleeping bag in the library.
- A customer may not enter the library with a cart or other wheeled device for carrying baggage. This does not apply to a wheelchair or other similar device for a person whose mobility is impaired.
- A customer may not leave a personal belonging unattended in the library.
- The library is not responsible for a lost, stolen, or misplaced personal item, whether the item was attended or unattended by the owner.
- A customer who brings a personal item in the library assumes the risk of loss or theft of the item.

Library: Baltimore County Public Library

Policy: Rules of Conduct

Link: <https://www.bcpl.info/about-us/policies.html>

- Leaving personal items unattended

Library: Boston Public Library

Policy: Appropriate Library Use Policy

Link: <https://www.bpl.org/about-the-bpl/official-policies/appropriate-library-use/>

All bags and other articles are subject to inspection by security and other authorized personnel. The Library reserves the right to limit the size and number of items brought into the Library.

- Leaving packages, backpacks, luggage, or any other personal items unattended. Any unattended items are subject to immediate confiscation and disposal.
- Using wheeled devices inside the Library or on Library grounds, except in designated areas, including use of skateboards, roller skates, bicycles, motorized or non-motorized scooters, and shopping carts. These restrictions do not apply to ADA assistive devices or baby strollers.

Library: Burbank Public Library

Policy: Library Use Rules

Link: <https://burbanklibrary.org/sites/default/files/Library%20Rules%20of%20Conduct%202019.pdf>

Section II: Inappropriate or unsafe uses of space

- Blocking aisles, pathways or entrances or otherwise preventing access to areas of the Library.
- Running cables or cords across walkways or adding power strips or extension cords to an outlet.
- Bringing amounts of personal belongings into the Library beyond what fits under a chair; leaving belongings unattended.

Library: Chicago Public Library

Policy: Library Use Guidelines

Link: <https://www.chipublib.org/library-use-guidelines/>

To ensure a safe and positive library experience for all, please do not:

- Enter the library with hygiene conditions or unsanitary belongings that interfere with the use of the library by other patrons or staff.
- Use bicycles, skates, skateboards or similar items inappropriately on library property.

Library: Dallas Public Library

Policy: Code of Conduct

Link: <https://dallaslibrary2.org/about/docs/LIB-FRM-707DPLCodeofConduct.pdf>

- Leaving personal property unattended

Library: Dekalb County Public Library

Policy: Conduct in Libraries

Link: <https://dekalblibrary.org/about-us/policies>

- The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended. Patrons must keep personal belongings with them at all times. Personal items left unattended are subject to disposal
- Library staff reserves the right to inspect all bags, briefcases, backpacks, containers, books and any similar items.

Library: Detroit Public Library

Policy: Standards for Library Behavior – Line 22

Link: <https://detroitpubliclibrary.org/policies/standards-for-library-behavior>

- Bedrolls, blankets, duffle bags, suitcases, or large plastic bags are not allowed. All parcels, bags, briefcases, backpacks, purses and other personal belongings are subject to inspection. A maximum of two bags of any type is allowed. Each bag should not exceed 12 x 18 x 9 inches.

Library: Fort Worth Public Library

Policy: Rules of Behavior

Link: <https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/files/assets/public/library/documents/policies/fwpl-rules-of-behavior-eng-07222021.pdf>

- Library Users may not bring more than three (3) items per person into the Library at any one time. The following items do not count as an item for the purpose of this limit: items necessary for the care of an accompanying child or for medical purposes, items completely concealed within another item, such as a bag of medication inside of a purse or a person's keys, wallet, cell phone, and eye glasses.

- Library Users may not bring in any items that interfere with library operations, create a safety or health hazard, deny space to other customers, block aisles, or block access to or exits from the building.
- Library Users may not store personal belongings on Library property or leave personal belongings unattended.
- Library Users may not use wheeled devices in the Library including skateboards, roller skates, bicycles, scooters, shopping carts, walkers, or strollers except for items necessary for medical purposes or to take care of an accompanying child.

Library: Houston Public Library

Policy: Library Rules and Policies

Link: https://houstonlibrary.org/ld.php?content_id=67224835

- Bedrolls, blankets, frame backpacks, suitcases, or bags measuring more than three feet in length or height. A maximum of two bags of any type will be allowed, and no items may be left unattended or allowed to impede others.

Library: Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

Policy: Library Rules of Conduct

Link: https://lvccld.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2017/10/rules_of_conduct_en.pdf

- The Library District is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.
- The Library District reserves the right to inspect an individual's personal belongings to prevent unauthorized removal of library materials and equipment or for health or safety reasons.

Library: Lewisville Public Library

Policy: Library Guidelines

Link: <https://library.cityoflewisville.com/using-the-library/library-guidelines>

- Unattended packages, bags or personal belongings will be placed in the library lost and found; owner must provide identification for return of property.

Library: Los Angeles Public Library, San Jose Library

Policy: Rules of Conduct

Link: <https://sfpl.org/pdf/about/commission/rulesofconduct.pdf>

Storage: <https://www.lapl.org/stable-living/resource-centers/bin>

Los Angeles –

- Bicycles, shopping carts, or other large wheeled conveyances are not permitted inside library buildings. Wheelchairs and strollers are only permitted if being used for the transport of an adult or child. Skates, skateboards, and collapsible scooters must be carried while on library premises.
- The Library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen or damaged in or on the grounds of the library.

San Jose Library –

- Bringing bicycles, unicycles, tricycles or other similar conveyances into library facilities, or leaving such conveyances at the entry or exit areas in a manner that blocks ingress or egress. This regulation does not apply to wheelchairs, other medical devices, or strollers, or other similar devices, provided they are utilized and stored in a manner that does not restrict public access.

- Camping in library facilities or on library grounds. "Camping" refers to the use of library property for lying down, sleeping in a reclined position, living or accommodation purposes.
- Leaving personal items unattended in the library is always unwise. Unattended items may be removed

Library: Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library (Washington DC)

Policy: Rules of Behavior Guidelines

Link: https://www.dclibrary.org/sites/default/files/Rules%20of%20Behavior%20Guidelines%20-%20Approved%20July%2022%2C%202020%20-%20FINAL_0.pdf

- Bringing in bags in excess of 9" L x 14" W x 22" H. Customers are permitted to bring in two bags per person, but each bag must be smaller than 9" L x 14" W x 22" H. Items must fit easily into a measuring box of the above dimensions. Infested personal items are also prohibited. If a customer is attending a private event, bag(s) may exceed the size restrictions because host(s) is expected to provide coat and bag check service.
- Placing items or personal belongings on or against buildings, furniture, equipment or fixtures in a manner that interferes with library staff or customer use of the library, or leaving personal belongings unattended.
- Bringing bicycles, or other similar items inside library buildings, including, but not limited to, vestibules or covered doorways. Operating bicycles or other similar items in a reckless or inattentive manner on library premises.
- Operating roller skates, skateboards, hover boards, or other similar items in, or on, library premises.
- Leaving mess, garbage or spills or creating mess, garbage or spills that disrupts or interferes with library use

Library: New York Public Library

Policy: General Policies and Rules

Link: <https://www.nypl.org/help/about-nypl/legal-notice/policies-and-rules>

The following items are not permitted in the Library:

- Carts, large bags, bags on wheels, backpacks, or collections of bags that are in excess of 24" x 16" x 10", excluding strollers.
- Strollers when not intended for use with babies and infants.
- Any personal items that appear to be infested or have a foul odor that disturbs other persons.
- Bicycles or motorized vehicles. Individuals with mobility impairments are permitted to use wheelchairs, walkers, and other appropriate mobility aids on Library premises.
- Non-motorized skates, skateboards, and collapsible scooters (except when carried).
- Weapons of any kind.

Some Library locations may have additional restrictions.

Library: Northland Public Library

Policy: Unattended Items and Packages Policy

Link: <https://www.northlandlibrary.org/about-northland/general-policies/unattended-belongings-packages-policy/>

- Patrons are advised not to leave belongings unattended on library premises.
- Unattended belongings are subject to removal at the discretion of library staff.

- If patrons must leave belongings for a short period of time, they shall place a note on belongings with their name, location and intended time of return, not to exceed 30 minutes.

Library: Peach Public Library

Policy: Rules of Conduct

Link: <https://peachpubliclibraries.org/about-the-library/library-policies/rules-of-conduct/>

- Bicycles, shopping carts, or other large wheeled conveyances are not permitted inside library buildings. Wheelchairs and strollers are only permitted if being used for the transport of an adult or child. Skates, skateboards, and collapsible scooters must be carried while on library premises.
- The Library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen or damaged in or on the grounds of the library.

Library: Portage County Library – Public

Policy: Unattended Item Policy

Link:

<https://www.pocolibrary.org/sites/www.pocolibrary.org/files/Documents/policies/Unattended%20Items%20Policy.pdf>

- Backpacks, packages, and other items that do not fall under the category of valuable personal items, that are left within the library will be kept in a secure place for 48 hours and then discarded if not claimed.
- Unattended items found outside of the library such as bags, backpacks, etc., will be disposed of immediately by Portage County Facilities Department.

Library: San Diego Public Library

Policy: Rules of Conduct for Library Patrons

Link: https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/rules_of_conduct_2020_-_revised.pdf

Storage: <https://www.sandiego.gov/homelessness-strategies-and-solutions/services/storage-centers>

- Bringing any containers, packages, briefcases, parcels, or bundles into the library which singly or collectively exceed 24"x 18"x 6". All items not prohibited are subject to inspection.
- Bringing shopping carts or wheeled conveyances into the building, with the exception of wheelchairs and baby strollers/ carriages used for the actual transport of a person or child or wheeled backpacks and book carriers not exceeding 24"x15"x12" (excluding handles).
- Bringing sleeping bags, bed-rolls, or blankets into the building (blankets for small children are acceptable).

Library: San Francisco Public Library

Policy: Patron Conduct Policy

Link: <https://sfpl.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/services-patron-code-conduct.pdf>

- People, animals or property must not block aisles, doorways, stairways, elevators or ramps. Large objects such as carts, bicycles and luggage may not be brought into library facilities. Library patrons must keep personal belongings with them at all times.
- Roller skates, scooters, skateboards, bicycles, or other similar devices must not be used on Library property.
- Library entrance areas shall be used exclusively for entering and exiting the library and as temporary waiting areas for library patrons.

Library: Seattle Public Library

Policy: Rules of Conduct

Link: <https://www.spl.org/about-us/policies/rules-of-conduct>

Category A (Library Specific Violation)

- Leaving packages, backpacks, luggage, or any other personal items unattended. These unattended items are subject to immediate confiscation.
- Using wheeled devices inside the Library or on Library grounds, except in designated areas, including use of skateboards, roller skates, bicycles, motorized or non-motorized scooters, and shopping carts that are larger than allowed by the restriction on allowable articles. These restrictions do not apply to ADA assistive devices or baby strollers.
- Bringing in items excluding personal items (purse, laptop, briefcase) that occupy floor space in excess of 14"W x 17"H x 20"L. Items are measured in totality and must be placed and fit easily into a measuring box of the above dimensions.

Storage Solutions

<https://www.registerguard.com/story/news/2018/06/13/day-storage-for-homeless-peoples-items-opens-in-downtown-eugene/11982501007/>

<https://www.startribune.com/storage-containers-in-downtown-mpls-offer-space-for-homeless-to-leave-belongings/568537012/>

<https://myburbank.com/burbank-safe-homeless-storage-and-help-center-to-provide-various-services-for-the-burbank-homeless-community/>

<https://www.kgw.com/article/news/years-later-citys-experiment-to-help-homeless-store-stuff-proves-a-success/283-93db27ac-e6f5-4243-8066-f467fa3fb540>

<https://www.thestranger.com/blogs/2014/02/11/18861201/want-to-help-homeless-people-prosper-provide-lockers>

Storage Misuse

<https://www.cpr.org/2018/09/27/denver-removes-storage-lockers-for-the-homeless-citing-concerns-about-misuse/>