



Free Speech Activities Policy

Approved by the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees on 11/25/2024. Next review date: 11/2027

Policy

This policy defines a visitor's free speech rights on the Library campus.

Definitions:

1. "Free speech activities" include, but are not limited to: holding or carrying signs, protesting, using expressive conduct or speech, distributing literature, acting as a public speaker, panhandling, and requesting signatures/donations/contributions.
2. Persons engaging in any free speech activities are referred to in this policy as "speakers."
3. "Sponsors" are a group(s) or individual(s) that reserve space in the library under the Reservable Room Policy and/or Public Event Policy.
4. A "designated partner" is an individual(s) or organization(s) who co-sponsors or is affiliated with a sponsor that reserves space in the library. The sponsor must identify a designated partner on promotion material to exempt their free speech activities from this policy.

Regulations

1. The Library is a limited public forum dedicated to the peaceful study and enjoyment of visitors free from disturbance and unauthorized free speech activities by others.
2. Therefore, the Library will not permit free speech activities inside the Library that would interfere with study and enjoyment of visitors of the Library.
3. This policy does not apply to sponsors and their designated partners who reserve space in the library for programming under the Reservable Room Policy or Public Event Policy.
4. For information on free speech activities at library-sponsored events, please see the Public Event Policy.
5. For information on free speech activities at non-library sponsored events, please see the Reservable Room Policy.

6. For the safety and protection of speakers, library staff, and library patrons, speakers are permitted to engage in free speech activities outside of the Library in the public right-of-way. At no time is a speaker permitted to block or otherwise prevent ingress and egress from the Library.
7. Speakers are not permitted to place or attach to the buildings, walls, columns, lights, or other structural/ornamental features of the Library any posters, pamphlets, or other printed information.
8. Aggressive or harassing behavior in violation of the law is strictly prohibited.

Enforcement

If a speaker is in violation of the Policy, library staff must: (i) provide an oral warning to the speaker identifying the specific Regulations(s) the speaker has violated and ask the speaker to comply with the Regulation(s); (ii) if the speaker has been warned and does not comply, ask the speaker to leave the Library's premises; and (iii) if the speaker has been warned, the speaker has been asked to leave, and the speaker does not leave, notify police that the speaker is trespassing and advise the speaker that police have been notified.

As soon as possible after the violation occurs and no later than the end of the following business day, library staff must document the violation in writing for inclusion in the Library's incident tracking database.