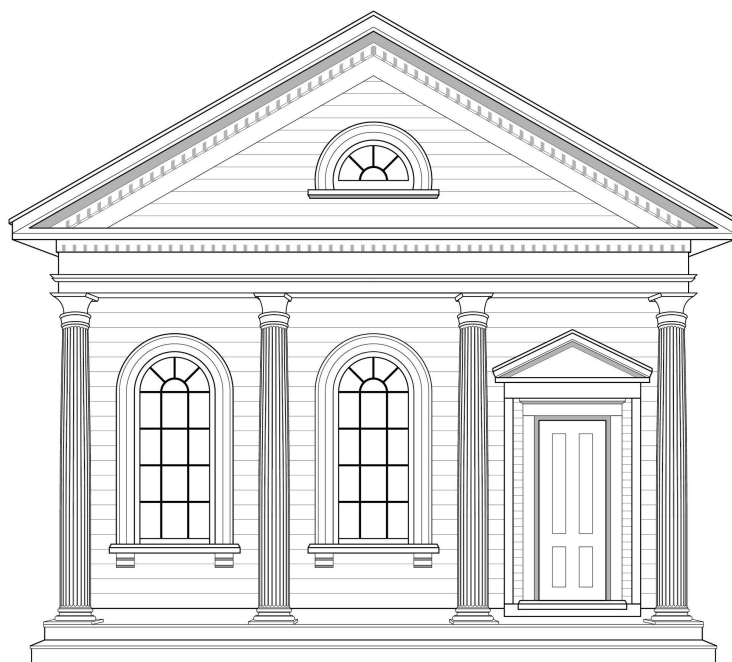


# Brooks Free Library



## Policy Manual

Updated June 2022

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# Public Policies

## Assistive Listening System Policy

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees October 12, 2016*

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) estimates that “approximately one in three people between the ages of 65 and 74 has hearing loss and nearly half of those older than 75 have difficulty hearing. Hearing loss is one of the major disabilities and directly impacts the ability of individuals to participate in and enjoy community life.

As part of the Library’s efforts to be accessible for all members of the community, we are pleased to provide an assistive listening system in the Thornton Room. This system was purchased by the Friends of Brooks Free Library in (2012) and donated to the Library. The assistive listening system uses receivers to bring sound from the microphone(s) directly to the users’ ears, magnifying the sound of the speaker and eliminating interference from background noise such as rustling papers and side conversations.

With very few exceptions, discussed below, the assistive listening system is to be used for all Library-sponsored programs, meetings and workshops that are held in the Thornton Room. This includes all programs, meetings or events organized, coordinated and paid for by the Library Trustees or staff members and the Friends of Brooks Free Library. Third-party performers or program presenters are to be informed of the requirement to use the assistive listening system when scheduling the program and this requirement is to be documented in the written contract between the Library/Friends and the presenter or performer.

Sufficient staffing is to be provided for all Library programs and events to enable the system to be operated and offered to participants. Staff members will follow the procedures outlined in the Brooks Free Library Procedure for Use of the Assistive Listening System, beginning with informing attendees before the program starts that we have an assistive listening system and how it provides more benefits than a traditional microphone system.

All library program publicity shall inform the public of the use of the assistive listening system, either by text or ALS universal symbol. Any mal-functioning of the system that would make it not available should be promptly reported and the Library’s online calendar should updated to indicate the assistive listening system will not be available for a particular program. If for any reason the two supplemental microphones are not available, the staff member will instruct the presenter or performer that he/she is to repeat any questions or comments from the audience before responding.

Non-library groups using the Thornton Room are invited to use the assistive listening system during their programs or activities. This should be arranged in advance so that the equipment can be checked out to the organization’s representative and a time can be scheduled for a staff

member to provide training in the use of the system and Library procedures. Regular Thornton Room users may want to designate several staff members to receive the training, rather than relying on only one member, so that they're able to provide the assistive listening system at every meeting. Please note that at any meeting or program, an attendee can request the assistive listening system be used, so regular users should be prepared to accommodate that request by having several members training in the use of the system and Library procedures.

Use of the Assistive Listening System may not be appropriate when there are multiple speakers, such as a dramatic reading, musical performance or play involving multiple performers. This exemption does not mean that the Assistive Listening System should not be used for book groups, writers groups, and Library-sponsored board meetings just because there will be group discussion. The group coordinator or Chairperson will wear the main (clip-on) microphone and the two supplemental microphones will be placed in other locations around the table. They are to be passed to each speaker. This procedure may seem awkward at first, but it ensures that all attendees are able to hear the discussion. It promotes civility, since only one person is speaking at a time and eliminates side conversations that can be difficult for everyone to hear and prevents everyone from benefiting from the discussion and participating in it.

The other exception from the requirement to use the assistive listening system is for activities where attendees are performing activities individually and not as a group, such as Knit-Lit or Engineering Challenges. Even in these cases, however, there are times when use of the assistive listening system is appropriate and must be used, such as when giving group instruction or an introduction to a topic. In those cases, the system is to be set up and used during the appropriate portion of the program or activity.

## Child/Teen Safety Policy

*Approved by the Board of Trustees April 12, 2017*

Brooks Free Library strives to provide a positive, safe, and welcoming environment for all of our patrons. The Patron Behavior Policy and Internet Use Policy apply to patrons of all ages but since the behavior of unaccompanied children and teens may be disruptive or put them at risk, their welfare is of special concern. The Trustees have approved this Child/Teen Safety Policy to supplement other existing policies for patrons under the age of 18.

For purposes of this policy, an unattended child or teen is one without a parent, guardian or caregiver to monitor their behavior and wellbeing. The term “caregiver” refers to an adult household member or relative, caregiver or guardian charged with the care and supervision of the child. A “child” is defined as birth through 12 years; “teens” are defined as ages 13-17.

Unaccompanied children/teens using the Library are not in our custodial care and the constant supervision typical of school or childcare settings is not provided. Responsibility for the behavior and well-being of children/teens using the Library rests with parents and caregivers, not Library staff. The Library assumes no responsibility for children outside the building.

To assist staff members to contact them in an emergency or when behavioral problems arise, parents and caregivers are encouraged to ensure that children/teens have library cards and that their patron record contains up-to-date contact information for parents and caregivers.

Library staff members are not responsible for the safety of unattended/unsupervised children, although they must intervene if they perceive a threat to any child. Staff members must immediately report a minor of any age that appears at risk or in need of immediate medical or non-medical assistance to the proper authorities. If an unaccompanied child is in distress but the situation does not appear to be urgent, the staff member in charge will first attempt to contact a parent or caregiver before contacting the Police or Fire Departments.

### Children birth through age 6

For their own safety, children age 6 and younger must remain within sight of a parent or caregiver at all times. Caregivers must be at least 13 years old and have emergency contact information for parent or adult caregiver. Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the activities of other library patrons. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

If a child age 6 or under is found without a parent/caregiver, a staff member will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver by performing a thorough search of the building (including bathrooms) while another staff member stays with the child. If a parent or caregiver cannot be located staff will immediately call the Police Dept. to pick up the child.

## Children ages 7-9

For children ages 7 to 9, a parent or caregiver must be in the library but may be out of sight of the child. Caregivers must be at least 13 years old and have emergency contact information for parent/adult caregiver. Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the activities of other library patrons. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

If a child age 7 to 9 is found to be unaccompanied, a staff member will attempt to locate the parent or caregiver by performing a thorough search of the building (including bathrooms) while another staff member stays with the child. If those persons cannot be located staff will immediately call the Police Dept. to pick up the child.

## Children ages 10-12

Children ages 10-12 may use the library without a parent or caregiver present if they are capable of doing so appropriately. Parents and caregivers are responsible for the actions of their children even when they are not present in the building with the child. Disruptive children or those not coping adequately with the library experience may intrude upon the activities of other patrons. Such situations will be resolved on a case-by-case basis. All children should have emergency contact information for parents and caregivers readily available.

If a 10-12 year old child becomes disruptive, the senior staff member will attempt to locate a parent or caregiver within the building or via phone call to pick the child up. If unsuccessful in reaching a parent or caregiver during the course of one hour, or if the building is closing, staff will contact the Police Dept. to pick up the child.

Serious misbehavior that is harmful to themselves or others or that damages library property will result in an immediate call for police assistance to remove the child from the building, without waiting to attempt to contact a parent or caregiver.

## Teens ages 13-17

Teens aged 13-17 are treated as adult library users as far as expectations for appropriate conduct. Parents/caregivers are still legally responsible for the actions of their teen. All young people should have emergency contact information readily available.

## Rides at closing time/unexpected emergencies

Parents or caregivers should make definite arrangements to pick up unaccompanied children prior to closing time. Due to liability concerns, staff members are prohibited from providing rides to patrons. 15 minutes before closing unattended children/teens will be encouraged to use the telephone to ensure a parent or caregiver is on the way.

If the library is closing and a child age 12 or younger has not arranged a ride, staff members will attempt to contact a parent or caregiver. If no contact has been made by 15 minutes after closing the staff will contact the police to pick up the child. Two staff members will remain with the child until transportation or the police arrive.

Young people age 13 or older may be left outside the building if they are waiting for a ride, unless weather conditions are dangerous.

### Early school closings due to bad weather

When the schools close early due to bad weather, or if such a closing seems likely, parents and caregivers are asked to instruct their child NOT to take the bus to the Library, as the Library may also need to close early. The Library will contact the schools and bus company to request they notify children not to take the bus to the Library. Parents and caregivers are advised to check the library web site, Facebook and Twitter accounts for the latest information on closings and to provide their email address to the Youth Services Department for inclusion on an "Early Closing" email notification list.

### Behavior Guidelines for Minors

The parent or caregiver is responsible for ensuring the appropriate behavior of their children in the Library, whether they are present with them or not. Serious or repeated misbehavior will result in loss of the right to use the Library unless accompanied by a parent or caregiver, followed by a temporary ban and then a permanent loss of library privileges. If at any time a staff member feels that a patron's behavior threatens the safety of the child or others, the staff member in charge will call the police immediately.

Disruptive behavior that is unacceptable in the Library includes, but is not limited to:

- Running, chasing, horseplay
- Inappropriate language
- Misuse of library property
- Screaming, shouting, or other noise
- Eating or drinking in the non-designated areas
- Behavior that hinders normal library use
- Physical aggression
- Bullying or bothering other library users
- Disrespectful behavior towards staff or other library users
- Not following library rules



## Use of Library Technology

The Brooks Free Library offers free public technology and access to the Internet with the following provisions:

- The Library has no control over and is not responsible for content available through the Internet. Online information may be outdated, inaccurate or controversial in nature.
- Materials viewed at the Library must be appropriate for a public setting. Individual users are responsible for the selection of sites explored. Parents or caregivers must provide guidance to their own minor children.
- The Library's Internet access is not filtered. Any restriction or monitoring of what a child views on the Internet is the sole responsibility of the parent or caregiver.
- Children under age 8 must be supervised by a parent, guardian or care provider and use the workstations located in the Youth Services Homework Center
- Children age 12 and under (grades 7 and below) must have signed parental permission (attached) to access the Internet and must use the Homework Center workstations.
- Teens age 13 and over (grade 8 and above) do not need signed parental permission to access the Internet. They may use the computers in the Homework Center or in the second floor Reference Department.
- Children/teens using Library technology must comply with sign-up procedures and time limits.
- Library computers cannot be used for illegal or unethical purposes such as attempting to read other users' files or to gain unauthorized access to accounts or systems of others.
- Parents/guardians assume full liability for their child's actions.
- Serious or repeated failure to comply with policies, procedures and staff direction will result in loss of privileges to use Library technology.

See Appendix C Youth Internet Permission Form and Contact Information

## Customer Service Policy

*Approved by the Board of Trustees December 21, 2001*

The Brooks Free Library strives to provide excellent library services, which includes quality and welcoming facility and a collection that is varied and current. Successful customer service connects patrons to what they need, but also leaves them satisfied and happy and eager to return again to the BFL because they feel that the library is the ideal place to fulfill their needs.

The library staff provides friendly, efficient and accurate services to all patrons at all times. It is important to keep in mind that the patron is the customer to whom the staff is ultimately responsible.

The Customer Service Policy of the Brooks Free Library is the foundation for all staff interactions with the general public. All other library policies should be interpreted in light of the principles outlined below:

- The library does not discriminate and offers the same quality of service to all regardless of age, race, sex, nationality, educational background, physical limitations or any other criteria.
- Patrons are to be treated politely, promptly, and with helpful attention.
- Judgment calls are to be made in the patron's favor. If a mistake is made, it should always be to the patron's advantage. Let's trust our patrons unless the individual history of a patron has shown us they are not trustworthy. In that case, refer the matter to the Section head.
- If a staff member is unable to comply with a request the patron will be offered an alternative, such as an interlibrary loan request, etc. Don't say "I don't know", "we don't own that" or "sorry, that's not available and leave it at that. Try not to let anyone leave the library without following through on every possible avenue for answering their request. Requests for materials not in the CLAMS system or which we have difficulty locating are to be referred to the reference Department. If we are unable to satisfy the patron's request, the Children's and Reference Departments will take the patron's name and contact information and follow-up on the request through the resources available to us (further research, Regional Reference Center, Inter-Library Loan, etc.)
- Staff members are familiar with the library policies and services and are able to articulate them to explain the rationale behind them.

### Friendly, Helpful Manner

The manner in which a person looks, speaks, and acts conveys an attitude, just as tone of voice and choice of words affects a message.

It is imperative that every staff/patron interaction be a positive experience one for the patron. A friendly, helpful manner usually ensures a positive experience even when the message conveyed is not a pleasant one and will ensure that the patron will walk away feeling that their

experience with the library has been a positive one. Each staff member, while at work, is a representative of the library. The impression made on the patron profoundly affects the library's image and on-going support.

### Confidentiality

All interactions and transactions between a library patron or group of patrons and the library will be considered confidential and will be discussed only in a professional context. (Such matters include but are not limited to, registration, information, materials selection, loan transaction records, reference questions, patron card status, etc.). Staff should remember that discussion of confidential patron issues should be limited to non-public areas.

### Staff Procedures and Instruction

1. Be punctual. Service commences at the advertised hour we open and full service is available until the hour the library closes. Phones should be answered and workstations manned when the library opens for the public.
2. Wear your nametag when you are on desk,
3. Answer the phone in a pleasant manner, using a greeting, identifying the library and yourself and offering help. "Good morning" and "May I help you?" goes a long way.
4. Smile.
5. Greet the patron. If you know the patron's name, use it when greeting the patron. Acknowledge a patron's presence by looking up and making eye contact. If you are busy with another patron, acknowledge the patron who is waiting and explain that you will help the new patron as soon as you can.
6. Maintain friendly contact with library users without engaging in lengthy conversations. If it is hard to break away, explain that you enjoy talking but need to get back to work.
7. If the patron is a new borrower, make them feel welcome. Take time to answer questions about the library.
8. Keep your voice low so it doesn't disturb library users.
9. Keep conversation with other staff members to a minimum. If you need to discuss something in depth, do it where you are both off desk and out of public areas. If it can't wait, get coverage for the desk and go to a staff area to have your discussion. Even though you may be discussing library business the public will think you are socializing and are too busy to help them.
10. Avoid extended phone calls while you are on the desk. Either tell the caller you will call back when you are off desk or ask someone to cover for you and go to a non-public area to have your call.
11. Take personal phone calls away from the desk. Either tell the caller you will call back when you are off desk or ask someone to cover for you and go to a non-public area to have your call.
12. Look up and around periodically. If you are on the Reference Desk or Children's Desk, walk around and notice if there are people in the stacks or at the terminals who might need help. Being helpful to patrons takes precedence over desk work. People aren't an interruption of our work, they are our work.

13. Never point. If you are at the Reference or Children's Desk, escort the patron to the appropriate area. If you are at the Circulation Desk, direct the patron to the Children's Desk for help with Children's or Young Adult material, or Reference Desk for Reference and non-fiction materials. You may ask a volunteer to show the patron or ask for coverage if needed to escort the patron to an area in the Fiction Room.
14. Conduct transactions in a helpful, pleasant tone of voice. Keep any impatience, annoyance or implication of ignorance from your voice. It's always better to presume that the patron is unfamiliar with the library, the Dewey Decimal system or catalog.
15. Do not reprimand or scold patrons. Difficulties with a particular patron are to be referred to a section head.
16. Use plain language when speaking to patrons.
17. When there is an incident of unacceptable patron behavior document it in writing with all pertinent information. The Director maintains a file for all "Incident Reports".
18. When a patron complains, refer the patron to the appropriate Section head or Library Director if he/she is available. If the neither (sic) is available, you may suggest that they put their complaint in writing or take a message and give it to the Section Head/Director to contact the patron.
19. If there will be a lapse of time before you can obtain information from a patron, tell the patron you will call them. Don't tell the patron to call you.
20. Try to park in the staff parking lot whenever possible to leave parking spaces in the small parking lot for patron use.

## Distribution and Posting of Non-Library Materials Policy

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on March 12, 2014*

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the types of non-Library materials that will be accepted for the public bulletin board and display area. Posting or distribution of non-Library materials does not indicate endorsement of the content, ideas, issues, events or activities promoted by those materials. This type of information differs from the Library's formal collection of print and non-print holdings, which are reviewed and selected by Library staff members using professional collection development standards and tools. Staff members may create display and distribution areas in other locations using materials from the Library's collection and selected non-Library sources.

Passive distribution of non-Library flyers, brochures and other print materials concerning local events, activities, programs and organizations will be allowed in the designated public bulletin board and display area. Priority will be given to:

1. Library flyers, brochures and materials
2. Materials from Town departments and other government agencies
3. Brochures and flyers for dated local events and publications containing calendars of community events
4. All other publications

Materials will not be accepted from commercial or for-profit organizations or from individuals offering fee for services, for example, home repair services, paid tutors or tutoring services, babysitting, etc. Postings by individuals offering services for a fee, such as home repair, tutoring or babysitting, or that result in the financial gain of an individual, such as auto sales or yard sales, will not be allowed. Materials advertising fund raising activities of local educational, civic and non-profit organizations will be allowed. The Town reserves the right to select items to be displayed or distributed and may not approve otherwise qualified items due to limitations of space or general interest. The Town does not guarantee permanent space to any single publication.

Patrons have the right to enjoy undisturbed use of the Library. Non-passive distribution of non-Library materials, such as handing out materials or engaging or attempting to engage patrons in discussions of the non-Library event, activity, organization or issue will not be allowed. Because it is not consistent with passive distribution, petitions and materials that contain active solicitations such as content advocating letter writing or email campaigns will not be accepted. The Library may periodically distribute our own surveys or those provided by other Town departments, boards and committees. Surveys from other organizations or entities will not be accepted.

Materials for display or passive distribution for non-Library events or organizations will be limited to the public bulletin board and adjacent brochure display holder. Library staff members may

select materials about activities for children and youth, parenting and child development for display or distribution in the Youth Services area.

Floor and counter-top displays from Town departments, boards and committees and other government organizations will be accepted if space is available to accommodate the materials. Floor or counter-top displays from non-government organizations will not be accepted. Non-Library flyers, signs, displays or postings are prohibited from being attached to the doors, windows, or exterior of the building or displayed on the Library grounds or on the sidewalks adjacent to the Library.

Library personnel must authorize all posting and distribution before it occurs. Authorization to display materials will be based on the provisions of this policy and will not be based upon the viewpoint or beliefs expressed in the materials.

The following items will not be accepted for display or distribution:

- Materials that promote or oppose any political candidate, ballot measure or that espouse partisan politics.
- Materials that support or oppose a specific religious conviction.
- Materials that demean others or promote hostility towards any person or groups.

Display and distribution area space is limited and the following rules apply:

- Bulletin Board – Announcements may be posted one month prior to an event and will be displayed on a space available basis. Flyers will be limited to 8 ½” by 11”.
- 
- Distribution Area – Non-profit organizations may provide dated materials for passive distribution in the designated area. A limited number of copies of free publications of local interest may accepted for distribution if they contain local event listings and meet the other criteria established in this policy. The Library cannot provide storage space for non-Library materials and will not accept more than 25 copies of a brochure, pamphlet or other publication at one time. Materials may be rotated for display in accordance with community interest, demand and available space.
- Materials remaining after posting or distribution will be discarded, as will materials left at the Library without authorization.

Appeal: Any individual or organization denied use of the display and distribution area may appeal the decision of Library staff to the Library Director. Further appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

## Gift and Donation Policy

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on Oct. 10, 2018. (Replaces Gift Policy adopted by Board of Trustees on Feb. 15, 2007)*

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines on the acceptance and use of monetary gifts and other donations to Brooks Free Library, a department of the Town of Harwich. All gifts to the Library must be accepted by the Library's Board of Trustees, a seven member elected body responsible for the administration and operation of Brooks Free Library.

### Monetary donations

Monetary gifts are frequently made to the Library and are gratefully accepted. The donor need not specify a specific purpose for the gift. Monetary donations given without restriction will be utilized at the discretion of the Board of Trustees to purchase materials, support Library programs or in other ways the Board deems appropriate.

Donors may choose to specify the purpose for which donated funds are to be used, for example, to purchase particular types of materials for the collection, to enhance a particular library service or to purchase furniture, equipment, technology or other tangible assets. Monetary gifts offered with specific restrictions, including bequests and endowments, require Board of Trustees approval of such restrictions before the gifts are accepted. Restricted donations will be accepted on the condition that the specific use requested is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Library.

Many people choose to donate money for books in memory of, or in honor of, an individual. These gifts are also welcomed. The donor is free to suggest the subject matter, particularly as it relates to the individual being honored, and the Library staff will take those suggestions into careful consideration when they select and purchase the materials for the collection. A memorial bookplate will be placed in these items.

Monetary donations and will be placed in the Library Gift Account specifically and solely for the use of the Library. Checks for monetary gifts should be made out to the "Town of Harwich" with the words "Brooks Free Library Gift Account" written on the memo line.

Larger bequests and endowments may be used to establish trust funds for the Library. Those wishing to establish bequests or endowments should contact the Board of Trustees for additional information and to discuss any restrictions that may accompany the bequest or endowment.

Donations to the Library Gift Account and trust funds do not take the place of Town funding for the Library's operation, but they enable the Library to enhance the services, collections, and facilities in ways not financially possible within the municipal operating budget. The use of gift

and trust funds remain under the control of Brooks Free Library's Board of Trustees, who must direct and approve all expenditures from these funds.

#### Donations to purchase library materials

Librarians select materials for the Library's collection in accordance with professional collection development standards. While every effort will be made to purchase materials in accordance with the donor's wishes, there is no guarantee that a particular title will be purchased as it may be unavailable, the content may be outdated or it may already be available in the collection.

Family members and friends wishing to direct memorial donations to the Library are asked to contact the Library so that the correct information can be included in the obituary and to provide the contact information of a family member or friend who will serve as the point of contact. The Library will acknowledge donations with a thank you letter to each donor and will inform the designated family member or friend of the names of those who donate to the Library in a loved one's memory.

At the request of the donor a book plate will be added to the inside cover of items purchased with donated funds. The Library is generally unable to provide special treatment for materials purchased with donated funds such as creating a separate collection apart from other similar items in the collection.

#### Donations to begin or enhance a library service

The Library may accept donations to begin or enhance library services, such as donations to pay for performers for children's programs or to support VITAL, our assistive technology program for people with vision loss. Announcements naming the donor may be included in publicity advertising programs provided with donated funds.

#### Donations to purchase tangible assets

Donations may be accepted to purchase tangible assets such as furniture, technology or equipment. Every effort will be made to honor the intended purpose of the donation but the Library will have the sole authority to select the items to be purchased.

Plaques and other physical notices recognizing the donor will not be affixed to or placed near tangible assets purchased with the donated funds. The Trustees must approve any request for naming rights for any portion of the facility or any other permanent physical recognition that accompanies a bequest or large donations.



## Donations of Materials

### Donations of Materials for the Library collection

Gifts of library materials such as books, audiobooks and DVDs will be reviewed by Library staff members to determine if they will be added to the collection. We cannot accept materials that are not in good condition or that have been exposed to mold, mildew, pests or other contaminants or harmful materials. Materials that contain outdated information, textbooks, condensed books, encyclopedias and magazines cannot be accepted. The Library cannot appraise donated materials. A receipt for the number of items donated will be provided upon request.

Donated materials will be added to the collection based on the same criteria as purchased materials. The cost of processing, availability of other copies of the title or other similar works, the physical condition of the item and space limitations are also factors in the selection process. Items not added to the collection will be offered to the Friends of the Brooks Free Library for their book sale. Proceeds from the Friends' book sale are used to support Library programs and services. If the Friends are unable to accept the donations, the materials may be offered to another library or discarded.

The Library receives many donations of old, outdated materials and materials in poor condition that cannot be added to the collection or sold in the Friends of the Brooks Free Library book sale. This places a burden on Town staff and volunteers to transport these materials to the Transfer Station and for the Town to pay for its disposal, so we ask that donors review the donation guidelines prior to dropping off materials as we may not be able to accept all offered donations.

Individuals or organizations interested in donating large quantities of materials are asked to contact the Library in advance for information on what materials are accepted and to coordinate an agreeable time for the donation when sufficient staff members and volunteers will be available to review and process the donations.

### Donations of Special Collections

Due to space considerations the Library is generally unable to accept offers to donate special collections, such as collections of a particular author's works or on a particular subject. Exceptions may be made by the Trustees for collections of works by Harwich authors or related to the people and history of Harwich. Once accepted by the Trustees the donation is permanent and becomes the property of the Brooks Free Library. Decisions about how the collection will be stored, cataloged, displayed or disposed of will be made by the Library.

## Donations of Art, Artifacts and Other Tangible Assets

All donations of art, artifacts and other tangible assets are unconditional and transfer ownership and all the rights of ownership to the Library. The donor or his/her lawful agent must complete a Deed of Gift form before a gift can be accepted. The Library will provide a letter acknowledging the gift and describing the object donated but cannot provide an appraisal or estimate of value. Donors wishing to have an appraisal of their gift for income tax purposes should have that done prior to the donation.

All gifts of art, artifacts or other tangible assets are permanent donations. Following acceptance of the gift the art, artifact or other tangible asset becomes the property of Brooks Free Library, a department of the Town of Harwich. It cannot be returned to the donor or their family members or heirs if they are unhappy with the donation, do not approve of where and how the art or artifact is displayed, or the frequency with which it is displayed, or how the asset is being used. Donors should be aware that the Library does not have the legal authority to return the item to the donor or donor's family or heirs once the gift has been accepted by the Board of Trustees.

Donations are accepted only with the understanding that the Library has the right to determine retention and other considerations relating to the use, method or manner of display or disposition of the gift. The Library cannot guarantee that any donated art, artifact or other tangible asset will be kept permanently. Items to be withdrawn or removed from the Library may be transferred to the custody of another Town entity or disposed of without notification to the donor. The Trustees will follow the applicable Mass. General Law regarding the disposition of property if they determine a piece of art, artifact or other tangible asset will no longer be kept by the Library.

### Art and Artifacts

As space for display and storage is limited and the acquisition and display of art and artifacts is not the primary purpose of the Library, the Library must limit what offers of donated art and artifacts it can accept. In general, gifts of art and artifacts must be related to Harwich or produced by a Harwich artist or artisan and must be well-executed, of professional quality, and in good condition. As with all other gifts, art and artifacts will be accepted only with the donor's full understanding that the donation is permanent and that donated art and artifacts may be displayed in a public location of the Library's choosing, kept in non-public storage areas during periods when it is not on public display, or disposed of as described above.

Donors should be aware that Library staff are not trained in the conservation of art or artifacts. Operating funds are not provided for art conservation or restoration, therefore the Library may be unable to accept works in need of this work. No gifts posing a danger or threat to patrons will be accepted (e.g., metal sculpture with sharp, moving parts). Gifts that require extensive, regular special care or conservation are unlikely to be accepted.

## Furnishings, Technology and Equipment

Offers to donate residential furnishings, technology and equipment will generally not be accepted. Residential furnishings are not designed to withstand the wear and tear that occurs in public libraries and are not likely to meet flammability and other standards for public buildings. Donations of computers, printers, equipment and software are generally not accepted because it is in the best interest of the Library to standardize its computer equipment, and because of software licensing restrictions. While unable to accept most offers of donated residential furnishings, technology and equipment, the Library welcomes monetary donations to be used to purchase those items.

## Acceptance of Personal Gifts by Library Personnel

For the purposes of this policy the term "Library personnel" refers to members of the Board of Trustees, paid Library staff, and Library volunteers.

Library services are provided free of charge to all patrons on an equal basis. There can be no perception that some patrons receive preferential treatment based on the gifts they have provided to individual staff members or to the Library staff as a whole. For this reason, while Massachusetts General Law permits public employees to accept gifts valued at less than \$50, it is the policy of the Board of Trustees that Library personnel are prohibited from accepting gifts from Library patrons for his or her personal use, no matter how insignificant the value of the gift.

Because of the community atmosphere at the Library, patrons often offer small gifts to Library personnel. This is particularly true around the holidays, when cookies, breads and candy are given by patrons expressing their appreciation for the services we provide. Gifts valued at less than \$50 may be accepted provided they are shared with all Library personnel. When accepting such a gift Library personnel must make it clear to the giver that the gift will be shared and not used solely by the person accepting the gift. An item that cannot be easily shared, such as tickets to a concert or play, may be raffled off or used for a Library incentive, such as gift basket for the summer reading program. At no time should Library personnel accept cash except as a donation to the Library Gift Account.

## Internet Use Policy

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees 2/14/2001*

The Brooks Free Library offers public access to the Internet free of charge, with the following provisions. The Brooks Free Library has no control over information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. The individual user is responsible for the selection of sites explored. Information obtained may not be current or accurate, and may be controversial in nature. Parents or legal guardians must provide guidance to their own minor children. Children in grades 8 and below must have signed parental permission to a computer with Internet access. Any restriction or monitoring of what a child views on the Internet is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. The staff of the Brooks Free Library will not be supervising a child's use of the Internet. All users assume full liability, legal, financial and otherwise, for their actions. Parents/guardians assume liability for the child's actions. Children under age 8 must be supervised by a parent, guardian or care provider.

Computer use rules and procedures may be adjusted from time to time in accordance with demand and availability of computers. Please do not turn computers on or off. Do not install software or change any settings on the computer. Please close any windows you have opened, and close out of the program you were using before leaving the computer. Do not attempt to read another user's files or gain unauthorized access to another system. Do not use any Brooks Free Library computers for illegal or unethical purposes. Materials viewed must be appropriate for a public setting. Please observe the time limits as posted on the sign up sheet. Violation of these rules will result in suspension of the user's computer privileges.

## Meeting Room Policy

*Modified by the Board of Trustees on August 13, 2003*

The Trustees support the philosophy that facilities provided with public funds for public purposes should be made available to community groups whose activities are educational, cultural, civic or charitable in nature. Therefore, the Trustees shall permit such organizations to use the library facilities for worthwhile purposes when such purposes will not interfere with the library's operations or programs.

The Director or designee is authorized to approve and schedule the use of library facilities in accordance with the above statements and in line with the following conditions and exceptions:

1. Programs are to be approved by the Director and be educational, cultural, civic or charitable in nature and must be open to the public.
  - Use of facilities for library purposes (i.e. Friends of the Library, Board of Trustees) shall take precedence over all other uses.
  - Requests by non-profit groups shall take precedence over requests of other than non-profit groups.
  - Use by Harwich sponsored groups shall take precedence over out of town or Cape-wide groups.
  - Library facilities shall not be used for money-raising events sponsored by non-library-related groups except when proceeds are used for charitable, educational or civic purposes.
  - Facilities may be booked by local religious and political groups on the same basis that they are booked by other groups. No outside group or organization will be permitted to use the facilities as their regular meeting place.
  - The Library's meeting room may not be used by for profit individuals or groups that are using the room to meet potential clients or maintain contact with their clients.

**No use of library facilities shall be permitted for groups who advocate unconstitutional or illegal acts, whose activities are contrary to the best interests of the community and/or to the welfare of its members nor for a function that presents an obvious danger to the safety of persons or property.**

2. All bookings are to be made on a first come, first served basis, by signed application at least two weeks and not more than ninety days in advance. Satisfactory identification is to be supplied by the group's representative. The Library may request verification of an organization's non-profit status. Requests for use of facilities may be subject to reasonable charges to cover supervision, utilities, clean-up, custodial services, police details, etc. Any exceptions will be by a vote of the Trustees. Decision will be made on a case by case basis.

3. The sponsoring organization is responsible for setting up the room and returning it to its proper condition. Limited kitchen facilities are available and refreshments may be served at the discretion of the Director.

**No alcoholic beverages of any kind are allowed in the building or on the grounds at any time. No smoking is permitted in the building or on the grounds at any time.**

4. The sponsoring organization shall be responsible for any damage or misuse of the room and/or its equipment. The sponsoring organization is responsible for adherence to all fire, safety and capacity laws and regulations.

The Town of Harwich, the Brooks Free Library, its Board of Trustees, Director, employees and volunteers assume no responsibility for the injury to or loss, theft or damage of any property of any individual, group or organization using the library facilities.

The Board of Trustees of Brooks Free Library establishes the policy regarding the use of library facilities and is the sole authority in interpreting these regulations. The Director has the supervisory responsibility delegated by the Board of Trustees.

Any and all parts of this policy may be revised, modified or amended by the Board of Trustees at any time. Exceptions to the rules concerning the use of library facilities can be made only by a vote of the Board of Trustees.

## Social Media Policy

*Approved by Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on May 13, 2015*

This policy defines the acceptable use of social software by library patrons, staff, and administrators of Brooks Free Library. The online environment is becoming the meeting place of the future, thus the use of social networking sites compliments the Brooks Free Library mission of providing information services to patrons in a timely fashion, as well as creating a meeting place in our community.

Brooks Free Library offers social software tools for the professional and recreational use of staff members, patrons, and the general public. These social software tools provide a limited (or designated) public forum to facilitate the sharing of ideas and information about library and town-related subjects, events, and issues. The organization's social software is intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where users will find useful and entertaining information and can interact with library staff, patrons and each other. Posts and comments may be moderated by Brooks Free Library staff members, administrators, and trustees. We reserve the right to remove comments that are unlawful or offensive.

### **Definition of Social Software**

Social software is defined as any web application, site, or account that facilitates the sharing of opinions and information about library-related subjects and issues. It can include, but is not limited to, such formats as blogs, websites, wiki, and/or social network pages or posts (e.g. Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.)

### **Responsibilities and Comment Guidelines**

Brooks Free Library social forums are public forums. Users are required to stay on topic and abide by the law. It is expected that all content on Brooks Free Library sponsored social software will be respectfully presented.

Staff members and volunteers may not represent themselves with an on-line presence associated with the Brooks Free Library without the permission of the Library Director. When permission is given, content must be appropriate and professional and not include personal information or opinions that conflict with the official library positions or policies or discredit the Library's public image.

Brooks Free Library welcomes relevant comments but reserves the right to remove postings that are off topic or that violate intellectual property rights of any third party. Brooks Free Library is not responsible or liable for content posted by subscribers in any forum, discussion board, or comment section of any social networking site. Personally identifiable information about library patrons or the general public will not be solicited or published by the Brooks Free Library. Contributors are expected to post information which, in their best judgment, will be of value to community members. Postings will be respectful of Brooks Free Library staff, trustees, patrons, contractor(s), volunteers, partners, competitors, and critics.

The following list (not exhaustive) is grounds for removal of posts or comments from a Brooks Free Library web application:

- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Libelous and/or defamatory statements
- Private and personal information
- Materials that may violate copyright
- Comments unrelated to the content of the forum, and/or hyperlinks to material not directly related to the discussion or deemed inappropriate or offensive
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political activity
- Obscene posts
- Duplicated posts from the same individual



## Standards of Conduct

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on December 11, 2019 and replaces the Patron Behavior Policy.*

Brooks Free Library is a vibrant and active community space providing traditional library services as well as a variety of opportunities for community members to gather, explore and share interests and ideas. Everyone is welcome as long as they respect the rights of other users and treat the facility and Library resources with care. We expect the Library to be a clean, comfortable and safe space for all community members and have established the following standards of conduct to protect the rights and safety of patrons, volunteers and staff and to preserve and protect the Library's materials, equipment, facilities and grounds.

Conversation and small group study are permitted in all areas of the building except in designated Quiet Areas (indicated by signage.) Patrons are requested to turn their cell phone ringers off and to use headphones when listening to audio so as not to disturb other users. Cell phone conversations are permitted except in designated Quiet Areas but should be brief. Extended cell phone conversations may take place in the entrance lobbies.

The Library consists of wide open spaces that allow noise to carry from one area to another. Patrons looking for a quiet experience should be prepared by bringing headphones with them and may also find reading, studying or working in the designated Quiet Areas more enjoyable. In addition, many young people use the Library after school and during the summer, particularly before and after Summer Reading Program activities, so patrons who may be bothered by a lot of activity or the louder volume may wish to plan their visits accordingly.

The Children's Room and Young Adult area are designated spaces for children and young adults and their families or caregivers. Adults who are unaccompanied by minors may use these spaces while retrieving materials from those collections.

Patrons observing violations of this Standard of Conduct are to report this behavior to a staff member. Patrons should not try to correct the behavior of other patrons themselves.

### General Considerations

- **Dress appropriately for a public place.** Clothing should cover the upper and lower torso and shoes must be worn while inside the Library. Obscenities emblazoned on clothing are inappropriate. Personal hygiene should be sufficient as to not offend others and to not leave stains/vermin on public property, e.g. furniture, books, keyboards, etc.
- **Behave appropriately for a public place.** Activities such as sleeping, dining, personal grooming, physical expressions of intimacy, sexual conduct and lewd behavior are inappropriate in the Library. Per our "Policy on Display and Posting of Non-Library Materials" soliciting, petitioning or canvassing is prohibited.

- **Appropriate use of restrooms:** Public bathrooms are not suitable places for time-consuming routines or for socializing. Except for very young children with their guardians and disabled persons with their caregivers, only one person should occupy a single user bathroom or bathroom stall. Restrooms are to be left in good condition for the next user.
- **Use of the Library by minors** is governed by our Child and Teen Safety Policy.
- **Eating and drinking** - Patrons may consume covered drinks and small snacks, except when using the public computers, with the understanding that they will clean up after themselves and deposit trash in the receptacles provided.
- **Personal Property** - Patrons are responsible for keeping their personal property safe. It is recommended that patrons keep their personal property with them or secure it. Personal property must be properly stored out of aisles and travel paths so they do not present tripping hazards. The amount or volume of such items should not exceed what can be stored under a chair.
- **Group Activities** - Community members are welcome to use the Library as a place to meet others and share interests or participate in an activity. When not part of a Library-sponsored program these group activities fall under our Policy on the Use of the Library for Non-Library Sponsored Group Activities.
- **Animals** - Service animals are defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act as being trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. Pets, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals are not considered service animals under the ADA. With the exception of service animals, no animals are allowed in the building unless with a caretaker as part of a Library-approved program. Pet owners should be aware that leaving their pets tied up on the Library grounds or in a parked car may cause other patrons to become concerned and they could call the Police Department/Animal Control Officer if they deem the conditions are inappropriate and/or that the animal is endangered.
- **Wheeled equipment** – Wheeled equipment that is not medically necessary or used in service to young children may not be brought into the Library. Use of wheeled equipment on the Library property must not create hazards for drivers or pedestrians or damage Library property or automobiles. Bike racks are provided at both entrances and should be used when leaving bicycles and scooters unattended so they do not block sidewalks or create tripping hazards. It is recommended that users lock their bicycles when leaving them unattended.
- **Conduct yourself in a manner that does not interfere with other patron's ability to use the library.** Auditory, visual, and olfactory distractions may disturb other patrons.

Cell phones, devices that play audio, cameras, and laser pointers are but a few of the devices that may interfere with other users' ability to use the Library. Smoking, strong odors, and powerful fragrances present health issues for some people. Patrons are asked to refrain from subjecting other patrons to odors.

- **Treat other patrons and staff with courtesy.** However subtle, intruding on the privacy of other patrons is inappropriate. Rude behavior to patrons or staff will not be tolerated.
- **Appropriate Use of the Internet** – is governed by our Acceptable Use Policy
- **Photography, Recording and Filming** is permitted as the Library is a public space, with the following restrictions: The Library may employ security cameras to deter criminal activity and to protect patrons, volunteers and staff members. Mass. General Law and the American Library Code of Ethics stipulate that the intellectual pursuits of patrons are private; therefore patrons are prohibited from recording individual patron's activity, transactions and interactions without their permission. The Library may periodically photograph and record programs and activities it presents for publicity and promotional purposes. If patrons do not wish to be included in Library photographs or recordings they are asked to notify a staff member. Patrons are asked to refrain from the use of flash equipment as this may cause health problems in some people.

## Prohibited Behaviors

- Disruptive behavior such as running, jumping, spitting, throwing items, jostling, roughhousing, playing sound that is audible to others, talking loudly, singing, arguing, fighting, swearing and use of vulgar language, gestures, and pantomimes, or engaging in any other behavior that impacts other patrons adversely or may cause damage
- Physical violence of any kind, such as pushing, slapping, etc., is never allowed in the Library. It is understood that parents and caregivers may occasionally employ minor corrective action to prevent a child from being injured, such as grabbing a child to prevent them from running into the travel lane in the parking lot or quickly moving a hand away from an electrical outlet, but corporal punishment or other physical discipline may not be employed in the Library.
- Verbally or physically threatening or harassing other patrons, volunteers or staff members including stalking, staring, touching or using offensive language.
- Patrons may not bring guns, weapons or harmful chemicals into the Library.
- Defacing or damaging Library property.
- Stealing, vandalism or unauthorized use of another patron's belongings or Library property
- Smoking, chewing and other tobacco use, including use of electronic smoking devices
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Selling, using, possessing illegal drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana

- Sleeping, dining, personal grooming, physical expressions of intimacy, sexual conduct and lewd behavior
- Entering the Library barefooted, without a shirt, with offensive body odor or personal hygiene so as to be disruptive to the Library environment
- Bringing articles into the Library that are too large to fit under one Library chair
- As noted above, cell phone use is prohibited in designated Quiet Areas. In other areas conversations should be brief and not disturb other patrons.
- Please note that anyone whose behavior is inappropriate is subject to having his/her picture taken for purposes of identification. Any property abandoned or associated with disruptive behavior is subject to confiscation and examination.
- While Library staff members will generally issue a warning prior to informing a patron they must leave the building and/or calling for law enforcement assistance, this may not always be the case. This policy serves as notice. The library need not issue further warnings regarding these behaviors before issuing a No Trespass notice. Librarians have the authority to implement library policies and to determine appropriate standards of conduct. Patrons whose behavior is objectionable will be asked to leave. Minors may be asked to leave until a parent/guardian has been consulted. Failure to leave immediately, as requested, is regarded as trespassing.

## Volunteer Policy

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on June 14, 2006*

Volunteers enhance Library services by performing a variety of support functions. Volunteers are expected to act in accordance with Library policies, including confidentiality requirements, and to reflect positive customer service attitudes to all library users. The Brooks Free Library maintains a strong equal opportunity policy. Volunteers are chosen and dismissed on the basis of experience, competence and job performance, without regard to race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, disability or political affiliation.

### Selection of Volunteers

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications in relation to the needs of the Library at any given time, and their ability to commit to a consistent schedule. After completing an application form, the applicant will be interviewed. Most volunteer positions will require satisfactory completion of a short library skills and aptitude test to determine if the applicant possesses the skills necessary for the position. If there isn't a match with an available position, the application will be kept on file for one year. Applicants will be called if a project is identified which matches their interests or qualifications. Prior to beginning work, the applicant must pass a criminal records background check, and provide the Library with emergency contact information. All Volunteers will sign the Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix A). Parents of youngsters below the age of 16 must meet with the Volunteer Coordinator and provide signed permission for his/her child to volunteer (Appendix B).

### Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteers are asked to notify the Library in advance if they're unable to work their scheduled shift. In turn, volunteers will be notified when the Library opens late or closes early. Volunteers are asked to wear a name badge identifying them as a volunteer while working at the Library. All requests for information, other than purely directional questions (e.g. where is the bathroom; where is the Children's room, etc.) are to be referred to Library staff members. From time to time, Volunteers may witness behavior of Library patrons that does not seem in compliance with Library policies. Volunteers should not intervene unless the immediate safety of persons or property is in danger. Concerns about the behavior of Library users should be brought to the attention of Library staff who will evaluate and take action as needed. Volunteers are expected to perform their assigned duties and will not initiate other activity without approval from Library staff. Volunteers will record the hours they work each week in the Volunteer Log.

## Training and Supervision

The Volunteer Coordinator will provide each volunteer with a copy of the Volunteer position description. Specific training in their assigned duties will be provided by the Library staff member who directly supervises their work.

## Work Schedules

Volunteers will be scheduled to work when adequate supervision is available. A volunteer will typically work 2-3 hours a week. Work schedules will be arranged in advance by the volunteer and the Volunteer Coordinator or immediate supervisor.

## Community Service

Persons seeking to volunteer to meet a requirement of an outside agency for the performance of community service shall be subject to the above selection process and all other provisions of this policy. Volunteers from agencies serving people with disabilities will be accepted providing adequate job supervision and oversight is provided by the agency's staff and an appropriate opening exists.

## Volunteers and Employment

Volunteers may apply for paid Library employment, but if selected, he/she may not continue to volunteer at the Library. Paid Library staff members shall not serve as Library Volunteers.

## Friends of the Brooks Free Library

The provisions of this policy apply to Brooks Free Library Volunteers. They do not apply to volunteers working under the auspices of the Friends of the Brooks Free Library, for example, for their Book Sale, Books on Wheels or Vision Impaired Technology Assistance at the Library (VITAL) programs.

## Leaving Volunteer Service

A volunteer selected for work on a special project will discontinue service when the project is completed or terminated, unless he/she is matched with an open volunteer position. In the event that a volunteer is unable to adequately perform the duties assigned to him/her, and no other appropriate positions are available, the volunteer may be removed from service.

See Appendix A for Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

See Appendix B for Parental Consent fro library Volunteers below age 16

# Staff Policies

## Staff Use of Library Technology

*Updated and Approved by Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees May 13, 2015*

The Brooks Free Library provides computers, software, mobile devices, ereaders, and other technology resources to support its public mission. These resources are intended for library-related purposes, including direct and indirect support of the Library's service mission, administrative functions, library activities, and the exchange of ideas within the staff, Town departments and the community as well as the larger library community. This policy applies to the use of Library technology resources in the building itself and from remote locations by staff members and volunteers.

Staff members are expected to be proficient in the use of technology and to maintain appropriate skills in the use of the Integrated Library System, the Library's digital and electronic resources, the assistive listening system, the Internet, wireless access, email, word processing, spreadsheets, and other appropriate software and hardware. Use of this technology constitutes acknowledgement of the Library's right to monitor and inspect such use. Staff members and volunteers should have no expectation of privacy when using Library technology except as described below regarding the confidentiality of patron records. Staff members and volunteers who violate this policy may be denied access to Library technology and may be subject to penalties and disciplinary action, both within and outside the Library. The Library may temporarily suspend, block, or restrict access to an account, device, or workstation, independent of such procedures, when it reasonably appears necessary to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of Library technology or to protect the Library from liability. Suspected violations of law may be referred to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Personal use of Library technology should be incidental and limited, and not interfere with Library operations. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using Library technology for personal or commercial gain, to promote a political or religious point of view, for the business purposes of other organizations, for illegal activities, to access or share sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials, for online gambling sites, for threatening or harassing behavior, to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to any computer, network, email or other online account, to intercept communications intended for others, to misrepresent the Brooks Free Library or a person's role at the library, to libel or otherwise defame any person, or for non-work related game playing during work hours. Staff members and volunteers may not represent themselves with an on-line presence associated with the Brooks Free Library without the permission of the Library Director. When permission is given, content must be appropriate and professional and not include personal information or opinions that conflict with the official library positions or policies or discredit the Library's public image. Please refer to the Brooks Free Library Social Media Policy for guidelines on the use of social media. Staff members and

volunteers may use the Library's public technology resources on their own time under the same conditions as other members of the public.

Staff and volunteers are expected to use Library technology in an appropriate manner, in compliance with established policies and procedures, and are prohibited from using their authorized access to perform functions they have not been authorized to perform. Staff members and volunteers are expected to use reasonable judgment in interpreting this policy and in making decisions about the use of technology resources. Questions regarding appropriate use of technology should be directed to the Library Director.

### **Copyright Protection and Software Licensing**

Computer programs and other electronic works are valuable intellectual property. Legal protections exist for information published online, such as text, graphics, pictures, and video and audio recordings. Staff members and volunteers must respect intellectual property rights and obtain permission from the copyright holder before copying, storing, displaying, or distributing copyrighted material. Using protected works in a public setting is prohibited unless public performance rights have been secured. Library staff members and volunteers are prohibited from making or using illegal copies of commercial software, from installing copies of software on multiple computers in violation of licensing agreements, or providing copies of licensed software to patrons in violation of licensing agreements.

### **Email and Open Meeting Law**

Caution must be used when communicating with members of the Board of Trustees by email on issues within their jurisdiction or on matters scheduled before them to avoid unintentionally violating the Open Meeting Law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, Section 23A). All matters resulting in a decision of a public body must be done at a duly posted meeting of that body. Communication via email by members on issues to be voted on has been determined by various county district attorneys' offices as a violation of the Open Meeting Law. Repeated instances place the Board of Trustees at risk of being fined by District Attorney's Office.

### **Public Records Requirements of Electronic Records**

Certain documents, whether in electronic or paper format, depending on the substance and content of the record, may be deemed a public document. The Massachusetts Office of the Secretary of State has ruled (with the concurrence of the Attorney General's Office) that certain email correspondence are public documents in accordance with the definition of a "Public Record" as identified in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 4, Section 7, and Chapter 66, Section 10. In almost every instance, communication involving a matter pending before a deliberative body is a public document that must be produced upon request. Repeated instances of failing to save email or electronic records on substantive matters incur the risk of violating the Public Records Laws of Massachusetts and possible fines by District Attorney's Office.



### **Privacy and Confidentiality:**

In a library, the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. The Library recognizes the confidentiality of patron registration and circulation records in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 78, Section 7, which states "That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record."

Staff members and volunteers will regularly have access to confidential information such as the identity of individuals using the Library, their personal information and intellectual pursuits. Under no circumstances may staff or volunteers disseminate confidential information except when necessary for conducting library business. Procedures for responding to law enforcement inquiries concerning confidential information on the identity of public computer users and their intellectual pursuits is established in the "Brooks Free Library Policy and Procedures in Response to the USA Patriot Act of 2001," approved by the Board of Trustees on July 12, 2006.

### **Management of Technology Resources Provided for the Public:**

The Appropriate Use Policy approved by the Board of Trustees governs use of Library technology resources provided for public use. The Library Director will establish supplemental procedures for managing patrons' use of computers. Staff members are responsible for managing the use of public computers and technology resources and for enforcing compliance with established policies and library procedures.

### **Staff Borrowing Rules**

*Adopted 7/8/16*

- Staff and Trustees are fine-exempt. (Since we offer an annual month-long fine amnesty for all patrons, in practice all patrons have the ability to eliminate accumulated fines with a donation of non-perishable food during the fine amnesty.)
- Being fine-exempt does not relieve staff members or Trustees of the requirement for paying for lost or damaged materials or for not abiding by other loan rules and borrowing procedures.
- Staff members and Trustees cannot use their authorized access to the integrated library system (Sierra) to perform any functions they are not authorized to perform (See Staff Technology Policy).
- All items borrowed must be checked out in the Circulation module.
- Newly acquired items cannot be checked out by staff members/ Trustees/volunteers before being released for circulation.
- Item loan periods are the same for patrons and staff members/ Trustees/volunteers.
- Staff members/Trustees/volunteers cannot extend the check-out period or renew their items if that opportunity is not available to other patrons in the same circumstances.

- Staff may not ignore, alter or modify the holds queue to benefit themselves or to give a patron preferential treatment. Hold queues may only be altered to correct an error.
- While you will periodically become aware of what other staff members/Trustees/volunteers are borrowing as you perform your duties, they are entitled to the same privacy and confidentiality as other patrons. Their check-outs, requests, borrowing preferences, etc. are to be treated with the same degree of confidentiality as every patron has the right to expect.
- If you believe a staff member/Trustees/volunteer is violating these rules, please bring your concerns to your supervisor.



## Appendix A - Brooks Free Library Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to abide by all Brooks Free Library Policies, including the confidentiality of patron information. Circulation and similar records, or observation of patrons' use of the Library shall be confidential and may not be disclosed except to members of the Library staff in the ordinary course of Library business.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B - Parental Consent Form for Library Volunteers below age 16

Volunteer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have meet with the Volunteer Coordinator and give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_ to volunteer at the Brooks Free Library.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Approved by the Brooks Free Library Board of Trustees on June 14, 2006*

## Appendix C: Youth Internet Permission Form and Contact Information

**Brooks Free Library**  
**739 Main St., Harwich MA 02645**  
**508-430-7562, [www.brooksfreelibrary.org](http://www.brooksfreelibrary.org)**

Brooks Free Library policy allows children in grades 5 and above to be at the library without an adult present. These children are not in our custodial care and may leave the library at any time without consulting a staff member. Please review our Child/Teen Safety Policy with your child and discuss what your family's rules will be about leaving to visit Brooks Park, the nearby convenience stores, or other venues. The Library closes at 7 pm on weekdays – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays – and at 4 pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Please make arrangements for your child to be picked up prior to closing.

The Brooks Free Library offers public access to the Internet. The Youth Services computers DO NOT have filtering software, as such software often interferes with legitimate searches while at the same time not being an effective barrier against possibly upsetting material. Please discuss with your student what material or information you are comfortable with your child accessing. All material viewed must be appropriate for a public setting that includes young children, and may not be used for illegal or unethical activity, such as reading other users files or attempting to gain access to another person's online accounts. Violation of these rules can result in suspension of the user's computer privileges.

Printing something written by the student for a school assignment is free. For all other printing the first three pages are free and subsequent printed pages are 15 cents a page.

I give my child \_\_\_\_\_ permission to use the internet at the Brooks Free Library.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 child's birthdate

To join our email list so that we can contact you in the event that the library will be closing early for inclement weather, or other emergencies that may impact our after-school opening hours, please provide your email below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Email (please print)

A surprising number of students do not know the home, work and cell phone numbers of parents, family members or caregivers. If you would like us to keep this information on file as a reference for your child, please provide these phone number(s) below.