

Date Adopted

Date Reviewed-current as at

To be Reviewed

Fully compliant with Victorian
Charter of Human Rights and
Responsibilities Act 2006



PROCEDURE TITLE DEALING WITH PROBLEM BEHAVIOURS PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE NUMBER PRO/CULT705

ENABLING POLICY/DIRECTIVE

Nil

ENABLING LEGISLATION

Nil

PURPOSE

These procedures are provided to assist employees in decision making around problem behaviours in the library. They provide parameters for accepted behaviours in a public space and enable consistency in employee response to behaviour that may warrant further action such as a warning, request to leave the premises, temporary suspension or permanent withdrawal of library privileges.

SCOPE

Swan Hill Regional Library is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that risk of workplace aggression in the form of bullying and occupational violence is eliminated.

This Dealing with Problem Behaviours procedure broadly defines some of the other behaviours deemed unacceptable or a problem in the Swan Hill Regional Library and branches. They do not cover unpredictable, highly specific or complex scenarios and therefore discretion is required from employees when dealing with incidences of problem behaviour in the library.

Problem behaviours are broadly defined as inappropriate, disruptive and/or threatening. These behaviours are distinct from other forms of difficult or emotive behaviour that may be displayed by customers. Library employees are expected to sensitively serve and assist people from a range of backgrounds who we expect will exhibit a variety of acceptable attitudes and behaviours.

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PROCEDURE

RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Incident and Hazard Reporting
- Equal Opportunity
- Charter of Human Rights
- Swan Hill Rural City Council Emergency Evacuation Manual – Library
- Library Customers Code of Conduct
- Swan Hill Regional Library's Internet and Computer Usage policy

DEFINITIONS

Inappropriate behaviour - illegal and/or anti-social activity. This includes, but is not limited to, accessing pornography in the library.

Disruptive behaviour - behaviour causing a nuisance or inconvenience to others.

Threatening behaviour - behaviour that is perceived to endanger the immediate safety of people in the library

1. Authority and Responsibility

1.1 When dealing with problem behaviours in the library it is strongly recommended that support from a supervisor or the Manager is sought. The responsibility for seeking assistance lies with employees rostered to work in the library.

1.2 All library employees have the authority to verbally warn or request that a person behaving in an unacceptable manner leave the library premises.

1.3 All library employees have the authority to telephone police when they believe there is a threat to the safety of themselves or others in the library.

1.4 The Library Manager has the authority to issue a temporary suspension of library privileges.

1.5 The Library Manager has the authority to lift temporary suspensions after the minimum suspension period has been reached.

1.6 The Library Manager has the authority to issue a permanent withdrawal of library privileges.

2. Inappropriate behaviour

2.1 Accessing pornography in the library.

2.1.1 First reported offence: Advise the person that accessing pornography in the Library contravenes the Library's *Internet and Computer Usage* policy. Advise the person that any further report of them accessing pornography in the library will result in a suspension of their library privileges. Place a note on their membership record – if they are a member. [NOTE: *Inappropriate Internet access – pornography. First warning issued, Staff initials, Date.*] Report to a supervisor or Library Manager, who will register the incident on Alfresco (Alfresco / Library supervisors / Customers & Issues).

2.1.2 Second reported offence: Advise the person that it contravenes the Library's *Internet and Computer Usage* policy to access pornography in a public place. Advise the person that this matter will be escalated to Library Management and will likely result in a suspension of their library privileges. Request that the person leave the library. Place a note on their membership record – if they are a member. [NOTE: *Inappropriate internet access – pornography. Second warning issued, Staff initials, Date.*] Report to a supervisor or directly to the Library Manager, who will register the incident on Alfresco.

2.2 Other forms of inappropriate access to information / material. Access to information / material in Swan Hill Regional Library and branches is not censored and our provision of access is guided by the Office of Film & Literature Classification.

2.2.1 Children accessing information / material classified as adult or for people over 15 years should be asked to cease access and warned that a second breach will result in a report of their behaviour to a parent / guardian. Place a note on their membership card – if they have one. [NOTE: *Inappropriate internet access – under age viewing. First warning issued, Staff initials, Date.*] Report the incident to a supervisor or the Library Manager who will decide when to contact the parent / guardian. Supervisor or Library Manager to register the incident on Alfresco.

2.2.2 All other reported incidents of accessing inappropriate information / material should be reported to and discussed with a supervisor or the Library Manager, who will register the incident where appropriate.

3. Disruptive behaviour

- 3.1 First Occurrence: Advise the person that their behaviour is disruptive to others in the library. Request that they modify or stop their behaviour.
- 3.2 Second occurrence: Advise the person that their behaviour is continuing to disrupt others. Advise that failure to stop or modify their behaviour will result in a request for them to leave the library.
- 3.3 Third occurrence: Advise the person that they have been spoken to twice previously and request that they now leave the library. Report to a supervisor or the Library Manager who is to register the incident on Alfresco.

4. Threatening behaviour

It is imperative to seek support from all available employees (in particular supervisors and / or the Library Manager) before approaching someone who is demonstrating threatening behaviour. **If safe to do so**, advise the person that their behaviour is unacceptable and instruct them to leave the library immediately.

- 4.1 If the person leaves: Report the incident to the Library Manager (or in the Library Manager's absence, a supervisor, who will notify the Library Manager and / or Director. Register the incident on Alfresco. An Incident Report Form must be completed.
- 4.2 If the person does not leave or **if it is not safe to approach** them: Call the police. If it is not safe to call the police, use the duress alarm. Report the incident to the Library Manager (or the Director, if Library Manager is unavailable) who will register the incident on Alfresco. An incident report form must be completed. Ask for a copy of the police report.

5. Temporary suspension of library privileges

The decision to temporarily suspend a person's library privileges lies with the Library Manager. The length of suspension may be a minimum of one week to 12 months and library privileges suspended may include some or all of the following: computer access, borrowing items from our collection and entering our library branches. In deciding length and extent of suspension, the following factors will be considered: previous warnings issued, severity of offence, impact of behaviour on others, any safety implications. Written notification of temporary suspension will be sent to the suspended person. In the case of a person under 18 years, written notification of temporary suspension will be sent to the suspended person's parent / guardian. Date of minimum suspension will be noted on membership card and communicated to library staff. A copy of the written notification will also be uploaded on Alfresco.

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The decision to lift a temporary suspension after the minimum suspension period has been reached lies with the Library Manager. Suspended persons who wish to resume use of the Swan Hill Regional Library's branches must arrange a meeting with the Library Manager and agree to the terms and conditions of use and sign the *Completion of library membership suspension period* form. If the Library Manager is satisfied that the person agrees to the terms and conditions of use and will cease problem behaviours, the Library Manager will lift the temporary suspension. All employees at the Library will be notified. The suspension note will be removed from their membership record and replaced with a note that the temporary suspension has been lifted [NOTE: *Temporary suspension lifted, Library Manager Initials, Date*]. Register lifted suspension on Alfresco.

6. Permanent withdrawal of library privileges

The decision to permanently withdraw a person's library privileges lies with the Library Manager. It is reserved for cases where the person is deemed a threat to the safety of others. Written notification of permanent withdrawal of library privileges will be sent to the banned person or delivered by the police and communicated to library staff. In the case of a person under 18 years, written notification of the permanent ban will be sent to the banned person's parent / guardian. It will also be noted on Alfresco.

Determination of suspension length or permanent withdrawal of library privileges

Minimum 1 week – 6 month suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriate behaviour• Disruptive behaviour
Minimum 1 month – 6 month suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriate behaviour continues after first suspension• Disruptive behaviour continues after first suspension
Minimum 12 month suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threatening behaviour• The person poses a safety risk to staff and / or customers• Problem behaviour has typically required police involvement
Permanent suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem behaviour continues after a 6 or 12 month minimum suspension or the problem behaviour has typically required police involvement

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7. Additional support to employees

Problem behaviours in the workplace can result in elevated stress. An Incident Report Form should be completed for all incidences that have resulted in elevated or unusual stress for employees.

All incidences that have resulted in elevated or unusual stress for employees should be followed up with a debriefing session with other library employees and management and the OH&S Rep, where possible.

Council offers an Employee Assistance Program, where counselling can be accessed.

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

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Equal Opportunity

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Signed: _____ **CEO** **Date:** _____