

Community Access and Shared Spaces Policy

Purpose

The East Greenbush Community Library (“the Library”) is a welcoming public space for all members of the community. The Library is committed to equitable, inclusive, and lawful access to services, resources, programs, and facilities.

As a shared public resource, the Library strives to foster an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness while balancing the needs of all users to support a safe, welcoming, and positive environment for learning, discovery, and community engagement.

Guiding Principles

Library services are provided in accordance with the following principles:

- Providing equitable access to Library services, resources, spaces, and opportunities
- Welcoming people of all backgrounds, identities, abilities, experiences, and perspectives
- Applying Library policies fairly, consistently, and without discrimination
- Reducing barriers to participation whenever reasonably possible
- Supporting intellectual freedom, inclusion, and respectful engagement

Shared Use of Library Spaces

The Library’s public spaces, seating areas, technology, collections, meeting areas, and staff assistance are intended for shared community use.

To preserve equitable access for all patrons, the Library may reasonably manage use of shared spaces and resources based on factors including:

- Building occupancy and safety
- Staffing capacity
- Availability of seating, technology, and public spaces
- Scheduled Library programs, events, or meetings
- Facility maintenance and operational needs

The Library may establish reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, coordinate use of public spaces, or limit activities that substantially interfere with library operations or another person’s use of Library services. Any restrictions will be applied in a content-neutral, viewpoint-neutral, and nondiscriminatory manner.

Schools, camps, community organizations, agencies, and other groups planning to visit the Library are encouraged to contact the Library in advance whenever possible. Advance notice allows staff to prepare for the visit, coordinate space, and help ensure a positive experience for both the visiting group and other library users.

Expectations for Use

All patrons are expected to comply with the Library's Code of Conduct and all other applicable Library policies. The Library recognizes that individuals use shared public spaces in different ways and will provide reasonable accommodations whenever practicable.

Failure to comply with Library policies may result in temporary or longer-term restrictions on Library use as provided in the Library's Code of Conduct and related policies.

Staff Role

Library staff will:

- Enforce policies fairly, consistently, and respectfully
- Maintain a safe, welcoming, and functional environment
- Protect patron confidentiality as required by law
- Provide information about Library services and publicly available community resources upon request
- Seek supervisory or emergency assistance when health or safety concerns arise

Library staff will not:

- Provide medical care, counseling, legal, or financial advice
- Assume responsibility for unattended minors or dependent adults

Accommodations & Accessibility

The Library provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local law. Individuals/caregivers requesting accommodations are encouraged to contact the Library Director as early as practicable so that the Library can work with them to support access whenever possible.

Relationship to Other Policies

This policy establishes the Library's commitment to equitable access and shared use of its facilities. It should be read together with the Library's Code of Conduct and other Board-approved policies. Nothing in this policy limits the Library's authority to enforce those policies when necessary to protect the safety of patrons and staff or to ensure equitable access to Library services.