



Sachse Public Library

Unattended Children Policy 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

This Unattended Children Policy defines the Library's policies and procedures regarding when children may be permitted to remain in the Library without a parent, guardian, or caregiver present, as well as procedures for dealing with unattended children left in the Library.

The Library Manager and his/her designated staff are responsible for interpreting these rules in accordance with applicable law and for ensuring appropriate behavior in the Library.

2. GENERAL POLICIES

- a. The Sachse Public Library is dedicated to providing a warm, welcoming, exciting, and safe environment for people of all ages. The Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections, and programs.
- b. The Library is not able to provide childcare services. Library staff cannot supervise children at the Library or prevent children from interacting with or leaving the Library with persons who are not their parents, guardians, or appropriate caregivers. Furthermore, the Library cannot prevent unattended children from coming and going from the Library.
- c. Responsibility for the welfare, safety, and behavior of children using the Library rests with the child's parent, guardian, or caregiver. Though Library staff will respond with care and concern, they cannot assume responsibility for children's safety and comfort when they are unattended.
- d. All children under 12 years of age must be attended and adequately supervised by a parent, guardian, or caregiver who is a responsible person of at least 12 years of age at all times. Children who are 12 years of age and older may use the Library unsupervised, provided that they are able to behave in an appropriate manner.

3. UNATTENDED CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE DURING OPEN HOURS

- a. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for being aware of the Library's policies regarding unattended children.
- b. If Library staff becomes aware that an unattended child under 12 years of age is present in the Library during open hours, staff will assist the child in calling their parent or guardian.

- c. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver is unable to be reached within fifteen (15) minutes, or if a parent, guardian, or caregiver does not arrive within fifteen (15) minutes of being notified, the Sachse Police Department or Child Protective Services will be contacted. The child will be allowed to remain at the Library until a parent, guardian, or caregiver arrives to monitor or pick up the child, or until the Sachse Police Department or Child Protective Services arrives. Library staff will not attempt to prevent the child from leaving the Library.
- d. A follow-up letter will be sent to the parent or guardian explaining the Library's policies on unattended children and the parent or guardian's responsibility for the child's safety.

4. UNATTENDED CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE AFTER HOURS

- a. Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for being aware of the hours of operation of the Library and the Library's policies regarding unattended children.
- b. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver has not arrived to pick up an unattended child under 12 years of age at closing and the child has no means of transportation, Library staff will assist the child in calling a parent or guardian. Library staff cannot transport any children after the Library has closed for any reason.
- c. After the Library closes, two (2) staff members will remain with the unattended child for a period of fifteen (15) minutes.
- d. If a parent, guardian, or caregiver has not arrived to pick up the child within fifteen (15) minutes after closing time, the Sachse Police Department or Child Protective Services will be contacted. The child will be allowed to remain at the Library until a parent, guardian, or caregiver arrives to pick up the child, or until the Sachse Police Department or Child Protective Services arrives. Library staff will not attempt to prevent the child from leaving the Library.
- e. A follow-up letter will be sent to the parent or guardian explaining the Library's hours of operation, the Library's policies on unattended children, and the parent or guardian's responsibility for the child's safety.

5. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN

- a. All children under 18 years of age must keep noise levels down to avoid disturbing others and behave in a manner that does not interfere with another person's ability to use and enjoy the Library, or prohibit staff from providing services.
- b. Library staff will verbally warn any child causing a disturbance. If the disruptive behavior continues after a warning is given, the child's parents or guardians will be contacted. Any child who has caused a disturbance (based on the judgment of Library staff) must be picked up immediately or be immediately and directly supervised by a parent or guardian while in the Library.

6. CONSEQUENCES / FAILURE TO FOLLOW POLICIES

- a. Violation of this policy may result in the patron's library privileges being limited or revoked, removal of the patron from the Library building, or criminal prosecution if the conduct constitutes a violation of Federal law, State law, or the Code of Ordinances. Library privileges may be revoked for a period of up to one year.
- b. Actions to limit or revoke a patron's library privileges may be taken by the Library Manager or his/her designated staff. The Library Manager or his/her designee will send a determination letter within ten (10) days regarding limitation or revocation of the patron's library privileges.
- c. A Library patron whose library privileges have been revoked may appeal this action to the City Manager by submitting a written appeal to the Library Manager or his/her designated staff within ten (10) days from the date of the determination letter. The City Manager shall render a written decision within five (5) days after receiving the information submitted by the Library patron. The decision of the City Manager is final.