



GENERAL POLICY

Approved by the Library Advisory Board June 7, 2023

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General Policy

Bentonville Public Library Policies

1. General Policy
2. Patron Responsibility and Customer Conduct
3. Registration and Circulation
4. Collection Development
5. Programs and Services
6. Internet and Computer Use
7. Meeting Room Policy
8. Emergency Preparedness

About the Library Policy

- A. The policy manual for the Bentonville Public Library (BPL) is prepared by the Library Director and professional Librarians. It is approved by the Library Advisory Board and City Administration.
- B. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the City's Legal Department.
- C. Policies will equally apply to staff and library patrons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, ability, genetic information or socio-economic status.
- D. Throughout the policy manual, library users will be referred to as patrons.

Purpose of the Policy Manual

- A. The purpose of the Bentonville Public Library's Policy Manual is to provide a general course of action for library staff to follow in maintaining daily operations and services as well as equipping staff for extraordinary circumstances.
- B. The policy communicates standard guidelines of expectations for patrons regarding library usage.
- C. Procedures are included in the policy appendices which guide daily operations, reflect current library trends, and communicate the Bentonville Public Library's approach to public service.
- D. The Library Director and designated staff incorporate policy and procedural reviews into new employee orientation, staff meetings, and in-service training to regularly communicate library procedures to all staff.

Policy Review

- A. All policies are reviewed periodically by library staff to ensure that they reflect the library's current role in serving our community's changing needs.
- B. The policy will be reviewed or revised and approved by the Library Advisory Board, as necessary.

Bentonville Public Library Information

Mission Statement

The mission of the Bentonville Public Library is to engage our community, encourage discovery, and promote literacy by offering lifelong learning opportunities.

Role of the Library

The Bentonville Public Library shall actively provide timely, accurate, and useful information; support individuals of all ages pursuing a program of independent learning; provide current, high-demand, high-interest materials, and information in a variety of formats for persons of all ages; serve as an access point for information and materials held by other libraries; and become a central focus point for community activities, meetings, and services.

Library Goal for Public Services

The Bentonville Public Library's goal for public services shall be to develop and implement, through continuous evaluation and adaptation, a program of library services that effectively meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of residents of our community.

Public Service Values

Community
Diversity
Education
Intellectual Freedom

Library Staff Values

Excellent Customer Service
Friendliness
Respect
Teamwork

Measuring Success

Bentonville Public Library maintains statistics and other output measurements, such as feedback from library staff, patrons, and others, to determine the importance, success, and value of facilities, collections, programs, and services, as well as identify opportunities for development or improvement. The library shares statistics and reports with the city, our community, and the Arkansas State Library annually.

Administration of Library Business

Hours of Operation

- A. The Bentonville Public Library will be open a minimum of 60 hours each week. The Library Director, with the approval of the City Administration, will determine the days and daily hours of operation. The library's summer and winter hours are the same.
- B. The library will be closed on those holidays observed by the City of Bentonville and at other times deemed necessary by the Library Director for such things as building repairs and in-house training.
- C. The library will observe inclement weather and emergency closings as directed by the Mayor of Bentonville. Except in cases of emergency, a notice of closing will be posted in the library two weeks in advance and will be reported to the local news media.
- D. Regularly scheduled hours of operation will be established to best meet the needs of the community and may be evaluated by survey and/or public input.

Fees for Service

- A. The Bentonville Public Library is committed to serving the community by providing free and open access to information in a variety of formats.
- B. While the Library strives to meet expanding needs of our community, there are limits to what can be provided with budgeted funds.
- C. Special consideration is given to the community's investment in the library, and good stewardship of tax-payer funding is a high priority.
- D. Certain services will be provided on a cost-recovery basis. Cost-recovery fees are not considered revenue.
- E. Examples of cost-recovery fees may include but are not limited to, the following library services: replacement costs and processing fees for damaged or lost library materials, the administrative fee for collection agency involvement, photocopies, postage, interlibrary loan, and technology use. Special programs or services that require extensive staff involvement may also be subject to a cost-recovery fee.
- F. The library observes [A.C.A. § 13-2-507](#) regarding fees for special library services.

Fee and Fine Review

- A. Library Administration and the Bentonville Library Advisory Board review and approve fees and fines periodically.
- B. The library's fee and fine schedule is approved periodically through a city ordinance.
[Appendix A]
- C. Maximum thresholds for suspension of privileges or establishment of minimum costs for certain services are established by the library and approved by the Advisory Board.
- D. The Bentonville Public Library staff will use patrons' library records in the administration of their regular library duties. This includes efforts to collect overdue materials, fees, and fines, and to promote special library activities and services.

- E. These efforts are in compliance with [A.C.A. § 13-2-705](#).

Patron Use of Library Supplies

- A. The library supplies scratch paper recycled from the photocopier and other sources for notetaking but cannot provide other office or school supplies. Office supplies purchased with library budget funds are for use by library staff in the completion of their work.
- B. Because supplies are purchased with public tax funds, they cannot be given away.

Library Personnel

- A. The library adheres to the City of Bentonville's personnel policy manual regarding management, working relationships, standards of conduct, and compensation practices for City employees.
- B. The library may implement personnel procedures specific to the department's needs as necessary. Such procedures will not be less restrictive than, nor in opposition to, any City personnel policy.
- C. Library personnel are provided with new hire orientation, initial and ongoing work-related training, team meetings, and in-service workshops. Emphasis is placed on professionalism, public service, and standards in librarianship.
- D. In staff areas of the facility, the library maintains public display of required personnel and employment information, including, but not limited to: equal opportunity law, non-discrimination statement, family and medical leave (FMLA), safety messages, workers' compensation, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) chemical information, and other Federal, State, and City documentation.
- E. Professional development opportunities are valuable and important, especially for library administration. Library staff is highly encouraged to participate in conferences, workshops, courses, and other library-related training, whenever possible. Professional memberships and training expenses are incorporated into the library's annual budget.
- F. The Bentonville Public Library proudly supports staff in pursuit of graduate degrees in library science. Appropriate administrative procedures allow library staff to receive scholarship funds or grant awards from organizations, such as the Arkansas State Library's Scholarship Assistance program.

Security Cameras at the Library

- A. Several closed-circuit video cameras, recording non-audible motion video, are located throughout the library facility and on the property as a security measure for library patrons, staff, facility, and materials.
- B. Library visits and usage are protected under patrons' right to privacy but may be susceptible to certain provisions for the disclosure of library records, in compliance with [A.C.A. § 13-2-704](#).

- C. The recordings from these cameras are viewable by library staff, but are not continually monitored; therefore, the presence of video cameras should not be considered “security” during emergency situations.
- D. If illegal activity occurs in the library, or on library property, the footage from the cameras may be used as evidence and released to the police department, as required by law.
- E. General incidents documented by library staff may require keeping specific records of video footage, in paper and/or electronic format, with other supporting documentation as necessary. These records may remain on file for an undetermined period.
- F. The recorded footage is retained according to technical storage capacity.

Americans with Disabilities Act

- A. The Bentonville Public Library is a welcoming place for all in our community. As a public entity visited by many patrons of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protocols are followed for everyone’s comfort, health, and safety.
- B. The ADA assures equal access to employment opportunities and access to all library facilities, activities, and programs.
- C. Every attempt will be made to accommodate the needs of patrons with disabilities and the library welcomes input from persons with disabilities about ways the library can more completely serve them.
- D. Questions about ADA compliance, complaints, or suggestions about the accessibility of library facilities, activities, and programs should be addressed to the Library Director.
- E. The City of Bentonville’s ADA Compliance Officer may address patron questions or concerns regarding compliance.
- F. In collaboration with the City of Bentonville’s ADA Compliance Officer, rules concerning service animals at the library are in effect. [Appendix B]

Property Maintenance and Operations

The City of Bentonville owns, maintains, and operates the library facility and grounds with a focus on stewardship of the property as an asset that provides a safe, clean, and welcoming environment for the public.

Affiliate organizations occupy certain spaces for specific purposes with terms as determined by legal documentation (i.e., Friends of the Library, Bentonville Library Foundation, Northwest Genealogical Society, and a private café vendor).

The City of Bentonville owns and maintains the Train Station property, leased for use by the Bentonville History Museum. The library is the liaison and property manager for the Train Station. Additionally, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism holds a historic preservation easement on the building façade through the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Solicitation

- A. No solicitation of funds for individuals, groups, or organizations, or sale of candies, cookies, or items for any cause is permitted in the library or on library property.
- B. The only exceptions are those activities that are authorized by and on behalf of the Bentonville Public Library, or on behalf of its affiliate organizations such as Friends of the Library, Bentonville Library Foundation, etc.
- C. Political campaigning is not allowed on library premises; this prohibition applies to the distribution of flyers or campaign material as well as in-person campaigning.

Liability Waiver and Consent Statement

Any person visiting the library, participating in activities, or using resources releases and discharges BPL from liability that may be suffered as a result. Consent and full release for video, films, or other media are also granted. [Appendix C]

Governance and Support Groups**City of Bentonville**

- A. City Council Ordinance 95-117 establishes the Bentonville Public Library as a municipal library, governed by the City of Bentonville municipal government. The Library Director reports to the Mayor of Bentonville and the City Council is the library's legislative body. [Appendix 1]
- B. The library is supported by the City of Bentonville tax revenues.
- C. The library pursues grants, sponsorships, volunteerism, and other contributions to support library initiatives. Some library grants or sponsorships may be applied through the Friends of the Bentonville Library or the Bentonville Library Foundation.
- D. The mission of Bentonville City government is to preserve, promote, and sustain an excellent quality of life within our city. In partnership with the community, we pledge to deliver municipal services in a professional, personal, and responsive manner.
- E. The library supports the City of Bentonville's vision and goals

Bentonville Public Library Advisory Board

- A. City Council Ordinances 97-57 and 2016-20 Library Advisory Board shall be composed of seven members, appointed by the mayor, and confirmed by City Council.
- B. The term for each member of the advisory board is five (5) years and shall be served without compensation. The Library Advisory Board meets monthly.
- C. A representative of the City Council also serves on the Library Advisory Board in an ex-officio capacity. As representatives of the local community, the Board members advise, and recommend to, the Library Director all aspects of library activities. [Appendix 2A and 2B]
- D. Other ex-officio members representing the Bentonville Library Foundation and the Friends of the Bentonville Library are also invited to serve on the Library Advisory Board.

- E. Meetings are open to the public with agendas and minutes posted to the City of Bentonville's website (January 2018 to current).
- F. The Library Advisory Board is granted final authority for certain Library Policy appeals from qualifying patrons.
- G. City Council Ordinance 2020-212 grants the Library Advisory Board with final consideration and approval of donor recognitions that are approved and presented by the Bentonville Library Foundation. [Appendix 4]

Bentonville Library Foundation

- A. The Bentonville Library Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization formed in 2003 to raise funds for the construction of the new library facility at 405 S Main Street.
- B. City Council Resolution 8-25-20D recognizes and approves the Bentonville Library Foundation as the primary fundraising entity for the Bentonville Public Library. [Appendix 3]
- C. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that meets regularly and employs staff to facilitate operations and achieve its mission.
- D. The Mission of the Bentonville Library Foundation is to engage our community to provide necessary and sustainable support for the Bentonville Public Library.

Friends of the Bentonville Public Library

- A. The Friends of the Bentonville Public Library is a non-profit organization reorganized in 2002 to support the library's collections, services, and programs.
- B. The Friends group elects officers and appoints a board of directors and committee chairs to run the organization and host activities such as book sales, etc.
- C. The Mission of the Friends of the Bentonville Public Library is to establish closer relationships between the Bentonville Public Library and the people it serves; to enhance Library services through financial support; and to build awareness of the library's resources, services, and needs.
- D. The Friends has a small used bookstore inside the library that is operated by Friends volunteers.

Community Partners

- A. The library actively seeks, develops, and promotes partnerships with other community organizations. These partnerships often benefit our library patrons through the enhanced development of programs and services.
- B. Collaborative sharing of resources provides more opportunities for our community.

Standards and Legislation

Library Users' Rights and Freedoms

- A. Intellectual freedom is the basis for our democratic system. We expect individuals to be self-governors. To do so responsibly, our citizenry must be well-informed. Libraries provide ideas and information, in a variety of formats, allowing people to inform themselves.
- B. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive, and disseminate ideas.
- C. The library exists, not to protect people from diversity, but to empower them to explore it in a positive and meaningful way.
- D. In support of libraries as a forum for information and ideas, the Bentonville Public Library has adopted the [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Code of Ethics](#), [Freedom to Read](#), and [Freedom to View](#) statements prepared by the American Library Association.
- E. Through collections, services, and programs that represent the diversity in our community, the library provides a welcoming and safe space for everyone.

Obscenity Codes

The library adheres to state law pertaining to minors' access to information, obscenity, and internet use as set forth in Arkansas Code.

1. [A.C.A. § 5-27-212](#) Furnishing a harmful item to a minor [Reserved.]
2. [A.C.A. § 5-68-205](#) Public display of obscenity
3. [A.C.A. § 5-68-302](#) Definitions (of obscenity)
4. [A.C.A. § 5-68-308](#) Regulation (of obscenity)
5. [A.C.A. § 5-68-405](#) Possession, sale or distribution (of obscenity)
6. [A.C.A. § 5-68-501](#) Definitions (of harmful to minors)
7. [Arkansas Act 372](#) Amending Laws (of obscenity, etc.)
8. [Act 912 of 2001](#) Internet Use Policy
9. [Act 1533 of 2001](#) Internet filters
10. [Public Law 106-554](#) Children's Internet Protection Act

Copyright

- A. [U.S. Copyright Law \(title 17, U.S. Code\)](#) prohibits the unauthorized reproduction or distribution of copyrighted materials, except as permitted by the principles of "fair use." Users may not copy or distribute electronic materials (including electronic mail, text, images, programs, or data) without the explicit permission of the copyright holder.
- B. U.S. Copyright Law pertains to, but is not limited to, the library's print collections (images and texts), audiovisual materials, electronic, and downloadable resources (databases and eBooks), as well as online content via the internet.
- C. Any responsibility for any consequences of copyright infringement lies with the patron; the library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility resulting from such use.

- D. The library expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.

Confidentiality of Library Patron Records

- A. The Bentonville Public Library respects the patron's freedom to read, listen, view, and gain access to information and materials without public scrutiny.
- B. As members of the library profession, the library staff recognizes their ethical responsibilities to protect the privacy of the library's patrons and supports the patron's right to have their library records remain private.
- C. Minors' library records are made available to their responsible party (i.e., the parent or legal guardian) upon request as it pertains to fines, fees, and access to library resources, but remain private to all others.
- D. The library has endorsed the recommendations of the American Library Association's *Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records* and will follow [A.C.A. § 13-2-701](#) to [A.C.A. § 13-2-706](#) regarding the patron's right to privacy.

"Library records" include, but are not limited to:

1. Patron registration data circulation records
2. Overdue and reserved records
3. Notes added by library staff to borrower records
4. Participation in library-sponsored programs
5. Record library visits
6. Data containing information linking specific patrons to specific materials or services used

"Information requested, used, or obtained" includes, but is not limited to:

1. Circulation of library books or other materials
2. Computer database searches
3. Interlibrary loan transactions
4. Reference queries
5. Photocopies of library materials
6. Title reserve requests
7. Audiovisual materials, films, or recordings

Disclosure of Information

- A. [A.C.A. § 13-2-704](#) allows certain provisions for the disclosure of library records.
- B. The Library may disclose confidential library records to the patron and the parent or legal guardian of a patron who is younger than eighteen (18) years of age.

- C. Each patron has individual control over their borrower's card. Presentation of the card permits access to the patron's library records.
- D. The library may disclose personally identifiable information to any person with the informed, written consent of the patron.
- E. Information will be released to any person, agency, or organization, in response to a valid court order or subpoena, when properly presented to the Library Director.
- F. Computer usage is protected under patrons' right to privacy but may be susceptible to certain provisions for the disclosure of library records.

eCommerce Policies

The Bentonville Public Library's eCommerce and retail technologies, online platforms, and electronic communication protocols are subject to strict Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance rules.

Confidentiality and Privacy Statement

Any personal information requested or gathered for eCommerce transactions will be used only for purposes necessary to conduct library business. It will not be traded, sold, or given to any other party, except as specifically allowed or required by law.

Public Records Subject to Disclosure

Under Arkansas law, information such as names, addresses, and email addresses may be considered public records. If patrons do not want information released in response to a public records request, they are encouraged to contact the library by phone or in writing.

Federal law and state statutes dictate information that is subject to disclosure; the library follows the direction of the City's legal department related to public disclosure or [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA) requests.