
Code of Conduct (Library Staff)

Effective Date: August 1, 2014

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Approved by: K. Walker, Director of Library Services

POLICY STATEMENT

Since the Medicine Hat College libraries are public service facilities, the following expectations and guidelines are for library staff to follow in how they present themselves to each other and to library users and how they interact with each other and library users.

CODE OF ETHICS

Library Services values the provision of excellent customer service. Every person is important and has unique individual needs that are treated with respect. The library has adopted the *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*¹ as a guideline for public service and collegial relations:

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

¹ American Library Association. (2008, January 22). *Code of ethics of the American Library Association*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>

PUBLIC SERVICE

Library staff uses judgment, flexibility, and initiative in resolving issues. Wherever possible, resolution of issues should be within library policies, procedures, and practices. Staff seeks guidance or assistance from colleagues, librarians or the library director when needed. Library staff follows the following guidelines to maintain the professional image of the library:

- We greet library users with eye contact and a smile.
- We ensure approachability of staff to library users by limiting our conversations in public areas.
- We appear engaged and ready to provide service by avoiding internet surfing, personal phone calls, reading or answering personal text messages in public areas of the library.
- We dress in a manner suitable to the provision of public service.
- We are identifiable. Name tags or college lanyards are worn by all library staff when serving in public spaces. Alternatively, MHC-logo clothing may be worn. Staff has the option of wearing a name tag with just their first name or a name tag that reads "Library." Ensuring that library staff is easily identifiable leads to the provision of better service to library users.

COLLEGIAL RELATIONS

The library values a work environment that fosters the provision of excellent service, teamwork and co-operation. The library supports the following guidelines and expectations of library staff:

- We treat each other with courtesy and respect.
- We display a positive attitude toward our job.
- We maintain an atmosphere of openness and trust.

Teamwork is characterized by the following behaviours:

- We share information;
- We help each other achieve excellence in the provision of library service;
- We contribute to group projects and committee work in an active and positive way;
- We do not discuss colleagues unless the purpose is to solve procedural or service issues.

We communicate with each other:

- When transferring a patron to other staff members;
- When staff begin or end a shift to ensure that all is kept current regarding activities and events, service concerns, and schedule changes;
- We respond in a timely manner to inquiries or requests from other staff or library users.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The Library recognizes that a positive work atmosphere and public image involve the following guidelines and expectations of library staff:

- We adhere to scheduled hours (arrival, departure, breaks), recognizing that to do otherwise can impact negatively on colleagues and public service. We record absences or changes in schedule on the library electronic calendar.
- We schedule appointments, wherever possible, outside work hours. As much notice as possible should be provided to supervisors for medical appointments that must be scheduled during work hours.
- We keep shared and individual work areas neat.
- We are familiar with library and college policies and procedures, particularly those directly related to our job duties, and know where copies of policies and procedures can be accessed.
- We are knowledgeable about the college's vision and mission statements and the current Strategic Plan and work towards achieving them.
- We keep ourselves informed of changes in library procedures and policies, college news, etc. through regularly reading email, memos, and minutes of meetings. Staff will be given reasonable opportunity to access college email during work time.
- We limit personal internet use, phone calls and text messages to coffee breaks and meal breaks.
- We limit personal conversations between staff or between staff and the public.

Maintaining these expectations and guidelines leads to a positive work environment and quality service to the public. Non-compliance with the expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Adopted by Medicine Hat College Library Services August 2014