

Overview

The Freeport Public Library strives to provide a welcoming and safe environment for community members of all ages and abilities. The Library is particularly concerned for the safety of children and vulnerable adults on the Library premises. Illinois law (705 ILCS 405/2-3) states that parents/caregivers must not leave minors under the age of 14 years without supervision for an unreasonable period of time. With that goal in mind, and in accordance with state law, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following policy.

Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult, sometimes called an incapacitated adult, is an adult who, due to mental or bodily disability, cannot take care of themselves without help from others. This includes adults who need staff help beyond assistance with normal Library services. These individuals should not be in the Library without appropriate supervision/assistance, including at programs.

Children Visiting the Library

While the Library is concerned for the safety of children or vulnerable adults on Library grounds, the Library does not act in loco parentis (in place of parents). A parent, legal guardian, teacher, or caregiver is responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of children or vulnerable adults during their Library visits.

Children 10 years of age and younger must be accompanied and directly supervised at all times by a parent or other responsible caregiver 14 years of age or older.

Children ages 11 and older are welcome to use the Library independently, however, responsibility for minors using the Library rests with the parent/guardian.

No matter their age, all patrons are subject to Library rules and policies concerning behavior, conduct, and demeanor, and may be banned from the Library as a result of violating these rules and policies.

Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults Safety

During Library hours, when the safety of an unattended child or vulnerable adult is in doubt, Library staff will attempt to contact the caregiver before calling local police. In the case of an immediate safety concern, staff will contact local police right away and then attempt to contact the caregiver. Staff will stay with the person until help arrives.

Unattended Children & Vulnerable Adults after Hours

In the event a child under the age of 14 or a vulnerable adult is still at the Library after the Library closes to the public, the manager on duty will wait 15 minutes, then the local police will be called to take charge of the situation. Attempts will be made during that 15 minutes to reach a caregiver or parent, but in no instance will staff provide a ride. If at any time staff are concerned for the safety of the child or vulnerable adult, they may contact local police immediately.