

SERVICE & OPERATIONAL POLICIES

Newton Public Library

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1. Library Circulation, Resources & Services [3/2025]

1.01 Access to Services

The Newton Public Library affirms a person's right to use a Library should not be denied because of origin, age, background, or views. The library actively works to minimize barriers to its services.

1.02 Confidentiality

In accordance with K.S.A. Open Records Act (KORA), 45-215 et seq., the Newton Public Library Board of Trustees in recognizing the Library's position of special trust with members of the public, supports the confidentiality of Library and patron records. Except to the extent disclosure is otherwise required by law, the Library will not disclose Library patron and circulation records that pertain to identifiable individuals, such as:

- A patron's name or whether an individual is a registered borrower or has been a patron
- A patron's address
- A patron's phone number
- A patron's email address
- The Library's circulation records and their contents
- The Library's borrowers' records and their contents
- The number or character of questions asked by patrons
- The frequency or content of a patron's lawful visits to the Library or information supplied to the Library or gathered by it shall not be given, made available or disclosed to any individual, corporation, institution or government agency without valid process, order or subpoena.
- Communication between the Library and a private individual, including print and electronic formats
- Building security information
- Personnel records and performance ratings

The Library will not retain a patron's charge records beyond their use for circulation or control purposes.

Parents or legal guardians of children under 18 years of age may, upon presentation of proper identification, obtain the current status of their child's circulation record or withdraw their authorization for the child's Library card.

Any law enforcement request related to patron records (with or without a warrant) should be handled by the Assistant or Executive Director in consultation with the library's attorney. Other library staff are not authorized to handle such requests.

1.03 Registration of Library Cards [9/2025]

Eligibility

Any resident of the state of Kansas, or any college student attending a college or university in Kansas, can register for a library card. Patrons should present a photo ID upon registration, such as:

- Kansas Driver's License or ID card
- School ID
- College ID
- Military ID

Once an individual reaches the age of majority, their card should be converted to an adult account. The library will issue cards, with a legal guardian or foster parent signature on the application, to wards in a legal guardian or foster parents' care. The guardian or foster parent will remain legally responsible for lost or damaged items checked out on that card. Once the child is no longer in their care, the guardian or foster parent should notify the library so the card can be cancelled.

Library Cards for Minors

Persons under the Kansas age of majority (18) must obtain a parent or legal guardian signature with parent/guardian identification as per above qualifications. In cases where an individual has been conferred the rights of majority by District Court, or is 16 years or over and is or has been legally married, the person is treated by law as having achieved "age of majority."

When a parent/guardian gives permission for a minor to have their own library card, the minor child will have full access to the library's collection, except for items limited to adults-only cards. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to monitor the items their child reads, views, and checks out. Library staff will not enforce limitations on minors' borrowing privileges outside of those established for all minors in library policy. If parents/guardians wish to restrict the ability of their children to independently select materials, the parent/guardian should withdraw their authorization for the child's library card.

Initial Welcome Cards

Welcome Cards are given to new patrons who register for a library card, except Courtesy Cards.

Welcome Cards are applicable for the first 2 months after the initial registration date. Welcome Cards permit the user to check out up to 4 items at a time, with the following restrictions:

- No mobile hotspots
- Limit of 1 Playaway tablet per family
- Limit of 1 board game, STEM kit or learning kit per family
- Limit of 1 video game per family
- Limit of 1 interlibrary loan

Once the patron has been registered for 2 months and the account is in good standing (no fees), the patron can request a full card. To establish a full library card, the patron can either bring in a utility bill with a current address, or library staff will mail a postcard to the address on file that the patron returns as proof of address.

Patrons who accrue more than \$20 but less than \$100 worth of fines will also revert to Welcome Card status until fees are paid below \$20.

Courtesy Cards

A Teacher Card may be issued to a teacher employed by a school, daycare, college, or university, or using items for homeschooling, with the above ID requirements. Teacher Cards extend the checkout of three-week items to eight weeks, and most one-week items to three weeks. The teacher is responsible for materials borrowed on the card.

An Organization Card may be issued to a business, governmental unit, or other organization when requested and when a responsible individual is identified. The business or organization is responsible for materials borrowed on the card.

Mobile hotspots and interlibrary loan items cannot be checked out on courtesy cards.

Lost cards

The patron is responsible for promptly notifying the Library of a lost or stolen Library card. Patrons are responsible for all materials checked out to a lost or stolen card that is not reported as such.

Upon loss or damage beyond usability of a Library card, patrons can request a new card at no cost for an account with no current fees. Multiple losses of a Library card within a year may incur a \$2 card replacement fee.

Restricted Cards

Patrons who have accrued at least \$100 in fees but less than \$200 will be placed on a restricted card and allowed to check out one physical item at a time, with the following restrictions:

- No mobile hotspots
- No Playaway tablets
- No video games
- No interlibrary loan items
- No Library of Things items

Denial or Restriction of Library Use

Any patron with replacement or damage fees of more than \$20 will be reverted to Welcome Card status until the fees are paid under \$20. Any patron with replacement or damage fees of more than \$100 will move to a Restricted Card until the fees are paid under \$100. Any patron with replacement or damage fees of more than \$200 will have borrowing privileges revoked until the fees are paid under \$200.

In situations where patrons have fees that would normally restrict or revoke their borrowing fees, but the patron is borrowing items on another person's card (child's card, spouse's card, parent's card, etc.), the library may continue to place borrowing restrictions on that individual even on a different library card.

Because of the high demand and high cost of mobile hotspots, patrons who return a mobile hotspot more than two business days late will receive a verbal warning. A second offense will result in a 3-month ban on hotspot borrowing. Returning a hotspot more than 10 days late will result in a 3-month ban with no warning. Repeat offenses after the 3-month ban may result in a permanent ban on borrowing hotspots.

The Library may restrict a user's ability to borrow materials when such use may jeopardize the health and cleanliness of collections. These restrictions may be enforced even if all fines for lost or damaged items are paid in full, if the issue occurs repeatedly or is severe in nature. Examples of situations where borrowing of materials may be limited or suspended include, but are not limited to: presence of odors on materials, including from cigarette smoke; stains; rips and tears; presence of unknown substances on materials; and evidence of insect activity, such as bedbugs.

1.04 Fines & Fees

The library expects the timely return of materials to ensure they are available to the community. No overdue fines are charged for late items.

In general, items that are 30 days overdue are considered lost. Mobile hotspots are considered lost after 14 days. A replacement fee will be charged to the patron's account to cover the lost item, and the patron will receive a bill. If the patron returns the material in good condition prior to the library purchasing a replacement for the lost item, the lost fee may be waived by a library supervisor.

Patrons will be charged damage for items that are returned in damaged or unusable condition, up to the replacement cost of the item. Factors considered in damage and replacement fee amounts include age of the book, demand for the book, and condition the book is returned in. Fees will be determined by the collection development staff.

Patrons are not to purchase their own replacement items from outside sources as a substitute for paying replacement fees. Whether the library chooses to replace a lost item is at the discretion of the collection development staff.

1.05 Interlibrary Loan [4/2025]

The library participates in interlibrary loan, which makes items available to our patrons from other libraries, and loans our materials out to other libraries, as well.

Patrons who wish to request an interlibrary loan item should contact library staff. Patrons are limited to four ILL requests at one time. If the lending library charges a fee, the patron will be consulted and if they agree, will be responsible for the charges. The loan period is determined by the lending library.

Patrons who damage or lose ILL items are responsible for the costs, which are typically determined by the lending library. Patrons who repeatedly damage or lose ILL items may have their ILL privileges suspended or revoked.

Patrons who repeatedly fail to pick up requested ILL items or return ILL items significantly past their due dates may have their ILL privileges suspended or revoked.

All communication regarding ILLs borrowed through NPL should go through NPL. Borrowers should not contact the lending library with any questions or disputes about damages, lending periods, etc.

NPL will not request materials on ILL that have been released within the past 6 months. NPL will also not request materials that are in the NPL collection unless it is for a book club or situation where multiple copies are needed, or the NPL copy is more than 3 weeks overdue.

See Collection Development Policy 1.05 for more information about ILL and what NPL will and will not lend to other libraries.

1.06 Printing, Copying & Faxing

The library makes available basic printing, copying, faxing, & scanning services to the public. In general, staff can assist patrons with small jobs and demonstrate how to use the self-serve copy machine. Library staff will not be responsible for extensive scanning, printing, or copying jobs on behalf of patrons. Staff may refer patrons to a commercial print shop as appropriate.

Staff reserve the right to refuse to copy or scan materials if they believe doing so would be a violation of copyright laws. Patrons should abide by all copyright laws while using library equipment.

Faxing is available to U.S. numbers at the rate of \$1.00/page, up to a \$5 maximum. A cover sheet is required but billed as a page. Faxes sent to the library for patrons will come to the public copy machine; as such, the library cannot guarantee confidentiality of materials received.

Printing is 10 cents/page for black and white, and 25 cents/page for color, for 8.5x11 copies. Larger sizes will be subject to additional posted costs.

Scanning is free.

1.07 Office Supplies

Patrons are responsible for bringing their own office supplies for personal projects. Library office supplies are for staff and program use. The library does make available a paper cutter and scratch paper for incidental use.

1.08 Reference & Technology Services

The library serves to meet the general reference and technology needs of our community. Staff will answer general reference questions, assist with library catalog/resource access, assist with basic internet searches and functions, provide reader's advisory services, and help with basic printing. Staff can often direct patrons to more in-depth resources as needed.

Staff are not trained in and therefore not authorized to provide legal guidance, tax assistance, or medical advice.

1.09 Community Bulletin Board

The Library makes available a community bulletin board inside the main entrance to the library. This board is for flyers related to community events, governmental information, non-profits, and library events.

Flyers should be brought to the desk to be posted. Staff may limit postings, or duration of postings, due to space limitations. If space is limited, preference may be given to entities in Newton.

The display of commercial and/or political advertising is prohibited. Notices of public events related to the political process, such as meetings of local party groups or town halls for political candidates, are allowed.

Distribution or posting of materials by the Library does not indicate the Library's endorsement of the issues or events promoted by those materials.

1.10 Patron Use of Library Phone [4/2025]

Phones are for library business and are not public phones. Staff may allow patrons to use the phones for short (less than a minute) calls if the phones are not in use and will not disrupt library operations.

2. Library Programs [3/2025]

2.01 Purpose of Programs

Newton Public Library defines a program as an activity or event, intended to meet the educational, social, recreational, cultural or informational needs of an anticipated audience in the community. NPL offers a wide range of programs to encourage connection and lifelong learning. NPL staff members work to accommodate a variety of ages and interests when planning programs.

The library actively engages in partnerships with community organizations for programs, but reserves the right to limit programming to those topics and formats that staff believe will best align with library needs and goals.

In general, library programs shall be open to the public, offered free of charge. The Newton Public Library Foundation may charge for events as part of its fundraising efforts to support the library.

Groups that wish to plan their own programs in library meeting rooms should consult the Meeting Room Policy for more information.

2.02 Program Development

Responsibility for developing Library programs is assigned to a variety of staff members, based on their job responsibilities and expertise, who do so under the direction of the Library Director and Assistant Director. Staff are guided by this policy and utilize professional skills, collections, equipment, and facilities in planning and delivering Library programs.

Programs may include, but will not be limited to: lectures, community forums, visual and performance art, interactive classes or workshops, continuing education, fairs, discussion groups, technology programs, story times, class visits, library tours, community outreach, exhibits, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes.

Programs may take place on-site at the Library, offsite in other locations, or online, and may be delivered by Library staff or Library partners. Programs may be live-streamed or recorded by staff for later playback, either in person or via web-enabled technologies. Anyone interested in presenting a program may submit a proposal that will be reviewed according to this policy's criteria. The Library reserves the right to decline a program for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, staffing and budgetary constraints, space issues, or conflicts with the date, time, or location. The Library reserves the right to select or refuse proposed programs or events from outside individuals.

2.03 Program Guidelines

Library programs are non-commercial in nature. Programs are not used for the solicitation of business. Presenters and performers, whether individual or organizational, shall not use a Library program to petition, advertise, or recruit members or patrons. While the Library welcomes professional experts to present at its events, Library programs cannot be used to directly further commercial, religious, political, or partisan purposes. Presenters are permitted to have business-related brochures, flyers, or other information available for attendees to pick up if interested. Presenters cannot distribute such materials as part of the event.

Programs that support or oppose any political candidate or ballot measure will not be approved or offered by the Library. However, educational programs, such as candidate forums that include invitations to all recognized candidates, may be offered.

Programs will not be offered or approved that endorse or oppose a specific religion. Library programs may address religious themes to educate or inform, but not to promote, observe or proselytize a particular religious conviction. Holiday programs may be offered for the entertainment of library patrons.

2.04 Intellectual Freedom

The Library offers a wide variety of programs to support its mission of providing cultural and learning opportunities to all. The Library respects patrons' right to freedom of information and adheres to the principles expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, and Freedom to Read

and Freedom to View statements. With the goal to offer a diversity of ideas and opinions, the Library opposes any attempts by individuals or groups to censor its programs, events, and content offered to the community. The Library is committed to providing inclusive and welcoming programs, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other class protected by local, state, and federal law.

The Library's agreement to host a program or event is not an endorsement of the program or views expressed by presenters.

2.05 Attendance

All Library programs are open to the public, but some meetings and programs may be designed with specific audiences in mind, such as programs intended for children and teens that are geared to their interests and developmental needs. Adults who wish to attend a program specifically designed for minors must be accompanied by a child. Tween and teen programs are limited to tweens and teens only, except when they require an adult assistant or companion. Some programs may be limited to adults (18+). Programs targeted toward specific audiences will be publicized as such.

Patrons attending programs must abide by the Library Code of Conduct and not be a distraction to others in the program.

The Library will not act in the role of censor for any age level, program type, or subject matter. Program selection will not be restricted by the possibility that they may be viewed by an unintended audience. Parents and guardians are responsible for their own minor children's use of the Library at all times.

2.06 Access

Every attempt will be made to accommodate all who wish to attend a program either in person or virtually. However, when safety, cost, or the success of a program requires it, attendance may be limited. Admittance will be determined on a first come, first served basis, either through advance registration, or at the door. In no case will attendance at a program be limited because the content of the program may be controversial. The Library reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone becoming disruptive to audience members or the program facilitator, and to anyone in violation of the Library's Code of Conduct

The Library makes every effort to comply with all applicable laws, including the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and any state or local disability accessibility guidelines. If a program is held in a location not controlled by the Library, the Library will ensure that the space is accessible to ensure equal access for library programs.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for those requiring services at Library-initiated programs when needed or requested by patrons. Any individual requiring accommodation to participate in a Library program should contact the Library Director two weeks prior to the program.

Some Library programs may be offered using a Library-approved virtual meeting platform that registered patrons may use to access the virtual program from their own internet-enabled devices. This may include programs that are simultaneously run at the physical Library as well as programs that are offered only virtually. While hosting the virtual program, Library staff, partnering organizations, and program facilitators will follow industry standard best practices for virtual events. Some virtual programs may be pre-recorded and broadcast via the internet or recorded as presented for later viewing. In the event an interactive program is being recorded, attendees will be informed of that fact at the start of the program.

Patrons attending virtual programs are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct, and failure to do so may result in their immediate removal from said program. The Library will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the digital security of virtual events, however attendees must understand that all online activity carries some degree of risk. Patrons are required to provide their own equipment and internet connection to attend virtual programs. The Library will make a good faith effort to utilize platforms that will be compatible with the widest array of hardware and software, but makes no guarantee that every patron will be capable of accessing every Library program successfully. Nor can the Library guarantee the quality of the audio, video, or internet connection of program presenters or attendees.

2.07 Cancellations

Programs may be canceled for a number of reasons, including severe weather, absence of the presenter, or low registration. Canceled programs are not automatically rescheduled. When possible, advanced notification of program cancellations will be made on the Library's Facebook page.

3. Patron Conduct [5/2025]

3.01 Code of Conduct

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a welcoming and safe environment for patrons and employees, and to be good stewards of the community's investment in the library building itself. To that end:

1. All persons are welcome in the Library.
2. Parents or guardians are responsible for the conduct and safety of persons under their care. The Library's Child Supervision Policy outlines the ages and situations in which children require supervision in the Library. The Library assumes no responsibility for children left unattended on Library premises.
3. The Library welcomes service animals that are specifically trained to assist a person with a disability, in accordance with ADA regulations. Pets, emotional support animals, and comfort animals are not permitted.
4. Library materials must be properly checked out. The Library may limit certain materials to in-Library use only.
5. Library staff reserves the right to inspect all bags, briefcases, backpacks, containers, books, and similar items.
6. Shoes, shirts, and pants/skirts/bottoms must be worn in the Library.

7. Patrons must promptly leave the Library at closing time.
8. While the collections are accessible to everyone, the children's library space is for children and their caregivers, and the teen library is for teens 10-18. People of other ages should not hang out in these spaces.
9. In addition to abiding by the Code of Conduct, patrons must adhere to all posted instructions and/or instructions given by library staff. Patrons must leave the library when instructed by library staff.

The following is not permissible in the library at any point:

1. Any illegal act or conduct in violation of federal state or local law, ordinance or regulation.
2. Behavior that harms other Library users or staff.
3. Behavior which may result in disturbing other Library users or staff, including, but not limited to: loud talking; obscene, profane or abusive language; running; fighting; throwing things; physical or verbal harassment; sexual harassment; bullying; or threats.
4. Behavior that is willfully annoying, harassing, or threatening to another person, including, but not limited to, staring at another person with the intent to annoy that person, following another person about the building with the intent to annoy that person, or displaying print or non-print materials of an offensive nature to others or by behaving in a manner that can be reasonably expected to disturb others.
5. Abuse or misuse of Library materials, furniture, equipment, or furnishings, including leaving trash and/or messes.
6. Smoking, vaping, using tobacco products, or possessing or consuming illegal substances. (All Newton parks, including Military Park in which the Library is situated, are tobacco- and vape-free parks.)
7. Consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages outside of an approved Library-sponsored event.
8. Openly carrying a firearm or other weapons, including knives.
9. Entering non-public areas such as staff work rooms, offices, and storage areas.
10. Playing music, movies, or other media, or conducting cell phone conversations, at a volume that is heard by others.
11. Soliciting funds, panhandling, campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, or surveying Library patrons or staff.
12. Rollerblading, rollerskating, skateboarding, or using a scooter or other wheeled devices inside the Library or on the Library patio.
13. Unauthorized or unscheduled group meetings that are disruptive.
14. Clothing or belongings that are soiled or bug-infested and may cause soiling or staining of Library furnishings, or that have a disruptively-strong odor.
15. Failing to obtain permissions from persons being filmed or photographed
16. Misusing the restrooms (including, but not limited to, use of the restrooms for changing clothes, graffiti, or bathing)
17. Any behavior or activity which disrupts use of the Library
18. Using fighting words or engaging in noisy conduct tending reasonably to arouse alarm, anger or resentment in others
19. Grossly inappropriate behavior in public such as urinating, defecating, or exposing of genitals
20. Tampering with technology systems or computer hardware, software, or data
21. Failing to comply with Library rules and with instructions or requests made by library staff with regard to Library rules

Patrons who violate the Code of Conduct or are otherwise behaving inappropriately may be asked to leave the Library premises. When a patron has been asked to leave on multiple occasions, or when the conduct is egregious and poses a threat to others or to Library property, the patron may not be permitted to return for a set length of time. A patron who refuses to leave under these circumstances is trespassing, and the police will be contacted if needed.

3.02 Child Supervision

Newton Public Library encourages children to visit and use the library, to encourage a lifelong love of books, reading and libraries.

The library staff works to ensure the safety of children in the library; however, their duties prevent them from being able to supervise individual children left in the library facility. When children are using the library, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians, not the library staff, to supervise their children. Parents may designate a responsible person (age 14 or older) to act as their representative for a child in the library. This representative must carry emergency contact information.

Supervision

“Supervise” means that a parent or responsible parent’s representative is with the child in the library and is ensuring:

1. That children act in accordance with library rules.
2. That children’s behavior does not present a safety hazard to themselves, other users, or library property.
3. That children’s behavior does not interfere with the use of the library by others.

Age guidelines

The following age guidelines have been established to ensure that children are safe and cared for while in the library:

- Children 5 and younger: A parent or representative must remain with them at all times, in the same room or area of the library, including during library-sponsored programs supervised by library staff.
- Children 6-8: A parent or representative must remain in the building for the duration of the child’s visit, except while the child is attending a library-sponsored program supervised by library staff.
- Children 9-13: Children of these ages can use the library unattended only if they have a current library card with parent/guardian contact information and a photo on file. Unsupervised children must have their library card on them each and every time they are in the library and must check in at the front desk. If a child loses their library card, he/she will need to purchase a new card for \$2 before being allowed to stay. Children should not be left alone for more than three hours, even with a library card.

Staff interventions

- Children are required to adhere to the full Patron Code of Conduct, which bars such conduct as running, throwing things, abusive or loud language, and misuse or damage of library furnishings or materials. All patrons must listen to and follow all staff directives.

- Staff who observe behaviors that violate the Code of Conduct will remind children of library rules. Children may be asked to leave the library for the day if they are not following library rules.
- Egregious conduct or repeatedly not following rules may result children not being allowed in the library for a longer period of time. In such cases, a phone call with the child's parents will be required before the child is allowed back unsupervised.
- Parents are responsible for any damage their child does to library property, whether the parent is or is not present at the library.
- Library staff will make a reasonable attempt to notify parents, guardians, or caregivers in the event that a child is disruptive, becomes ill or injured, or is deemed to be at risk of harm (i.e.: is left at the library when it closes), or if an emergency occurs at the library (i.e.: fire). However, it may be necessary to notify law enforcement or emergency medical personnel for assistance in such situations.
- Since staff members are unable to authenticate the relationship between a caller and a child, for the protection of the child, staff cannot answer phone inquiries about whether a child is in the building. In the case of an emergency, staff members are authorized to take the name of the caller and a phone number and will attempt to locate the child (or adult) and deliver the message.

3.03 Service Animals

Newton Public Library welcomes service dogs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In situations where it is not obvious that the dog is a service animal, staff may ask only two specific questions: (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform? Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.

A person with a disability can be asked to remove his service animal from the premises if: (1) the dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it or (2) the dog is not housebroken. When there is a legitimate reason to ask that a service animal be removed, staff must offer the person with the disability the opportunity to obtain goods or services without the animal's presence.

The ADA does not require that service dogs in training be allowed in the library. Therapy dogs, emotional support animals, companion animals, pets and other animals are not permitted in the library outside of library-sponsored programs.

A service animal must be under the control of its handler. Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual's disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

The handler is responsible for caring for and supervising the service animal. Library staff will not supervise or otherwise care for a service animal.

3.04 Filming & Photography Policy

Patrons' Consent for Library-Sponsored Photography/Filming

In order to document and publicize programs and services of the Library, staff members or their designees may take photographs and video footage of patrons of all ages at the Library and Library-sponsored events. Patrons who do not want to be photographed or filmed may "opt out" by notifying the photographer or videographer documenting the event or service. Patrons may choose to give or not give consent; their choices will have no bearing on receiving services from the Library. Names of patrons will not be used in publicity without written consent.

Filming by Others

Filming and photography are allowed as described below only to the extent that it does not interfere with the delivery of library services and is consistent with the Library's mission. All parties involved in filming and photography are expected to follow the Library Code of Conduct.

For the safety and privacy of patrons using the library, the person(s) filming or taking photos inside the library have sole responsibility for obtaining all necessary releases and permissions from persons who are filmed or photographed.

The Library undertakes no responsibility for obtaining these releases.

Failure to obtain releases and permissions from persons being filmed or photographed will be deemed unacceptable behavior regarding the Library Code of Conduct.

Library staff may temporarily or permanently dismiss any photo session that goes against the Code of Conduct, Library policies or appears to compromise public safety or security.

The Library is a limited, or designated public forum, and reasonable time, place and manner regulations are permissible.

News Media Photography and Videography

The Library has an open-door policy for news media photographers and reporters who are doing stories or projects that directly involve the Library and its programs, resources and services. Advance authorization for such coverage must be obtained from the Library Executive or Assistant Director.

The Library may grant permission for news media to use its facilities for stories or projects that do not relate to the Library itself with prior approval from the Library Executive or Assistant Director. It disallows access to library patrons for opinion polls or interviews within its facilities.

Amateur Photography and Videography

Casual amateur photography and videotaping is permitted in lobby, study and program areas of library facilities for patrons and visitors wanting a remembrance of their visit. The use of additional equipment such as lighting is not permitted. Amateur photographers have explicit responsibility for gaining all necessary releases and permissions from persons who are filmed or photographed.

4. Library Facilities & Spaces [3/2025]

4.01 General Guidelines

Newton Public Library public spaces are freely available to all in accordance with the library's Patron Conduct policies. This includes the Library Commons, Children's Library, Teen Library, patio area, and public restrooms.

The library's meeting rooms, study rooms, and digital access lab are available to patrons with reservations in accordance with the respective policies guiding usage of those spaces. Patrons are not allowed in these spaces without reservations unless attending a library event that is open to the public.

Staff areas in the library are not available to non-employees without explicit permission and supervision from library staff. This includes offices, work areas, storage rooms, break room, staff restroom, IT room, and mechanical rooms. Staff Only signs are posted in these areas.

Large groups (such as school groups and tours) should coordinate visits ahead of time with library staff to ensure availability of space.

4.02 Hours of Operation

The Library Hours of Operation will be set by the Executive Director in consultation with the Library Board of Trustees. Hours will be posted on the main door and website.

The Executive Director has the authority to close the library for pre-approved staff training days. The Executive & Assistant Director have the authority to close the library in the event of inclement weather or staff illness that would result in insufficient staffing levels. Closures will be posted on the library's Facebook page and website.

4.03 Meeting Rooms [07/2025]

Purpose

Newton Public Library welcomes the use of its meeting rooms by organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, advocacy, civic, religious, or political activities. Meeting rooms are

available so that people may gather to exchange ideas, access and share information, and participate in community activities. Meetings and activities held in the library should be in accordance with the library's mission and goals.

Regulations

Rooms are available with the following exceptions:

- Groups or individuals whose conduct would interfere with the proper functioning of library business, is incompatible with the library environment, or would interfere with the library's operation. This includes conventions and trade shows, concerts, events of a strictly social nature (weddings, parties, funerals, reunions, dances, etc.), and events that would create excessive noise. Events that conflict with the library's Code of Conduct policy are not permitted.
- Groups or individuals whose intent is to use the room for retail sales or monetary gain. This includes the receipt or solicitation of fees, contributions, or donations; distribution of materials or promotion of commercial information except for passive availability of basic business information; political fundraising; or collection of attendees' personal information for future sales or solicitations. Money may only be collected for the actual cost of food provided to attendees. The director may make exceptions for library-related events. This does not preclude for-profit entities from using library meeting rooms for employee trainings or similar events. Events related to staff recruitment or retention for for-profit entities are subject to the room rental fee, even if the event is technically open to the public.
- Groups or individuals whose purpose is illegal.

All meetings and events must be free of charge for those attending.

Public use of rooms may not interfere with the library's operation. Attendees must abide by the library's Code of Conduct. This includes ensuring the proper supervision of children according to NPL policy. Violation of conduct policies should be reported to staff, and further use of meeting rooms may be denied to individuals or groups who disregard library regulations.

Programs or gatherings which present a danger to the welfare of the participants, attendees, library staff, patrons and /or the community are prohibited. Programs not in keeping with the library's goals and objectives, that impede library staff or endanger the library building or collection or otherwise interfere with the proper functions of the library by causing excessive noise, safety hazards, security risk, etc., are prohibited.

The library reserves the right to cancel any reservation. This may be for reasons such as: failure to follow library policy to preserve a safe environment, failure to provide follow-up information about planned use of the room, any emergency that may arise, or for other reasons determined by library staff.

Library staff reserve the right to attend events at any time.

Any damage, loss, theft, or misuse of library equipment or facilities is the responsibility of the group or individual reserving the room.

All publicity concerning meetings should make clear that the library is not the sponsor, and should include the statement: ***“Not a program of Newton Public Library.”***

No alcoholic beverages may be served in library meeting rooms. Smoking, vaping and tobacco usage are prohibited inside of NPL and in the entirety of Military Park, including the patio and parking lots

Children 5 and younger must be supervised at all times; they cannot be left unattended while their grownup is in an event in the library meeting room.

If the event involves minors, adult supervision and presence is required at all times.

Fees

Meeting rooms are available without charge to meetings that are open to the public and fit within the mission of the Library. Donations are gladly accepted. Closed meetings by private and for-profit groups are subject to fees of \$25/hour.

	Government, Community, and Non-Profit Groups	Private Groups	For-Profit Groups Engaged in Educational Activities
Open Meeting	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee
Closed Meeting	No Fee	Fee	Fee

Fees are for the entire time the room is reserved, including setup and tear down. Fees are not refundable if the event ends earlier than the reserved time. Fees will be refunded if the library needs to cancel an event for any reason.

Scheduling

Library related activities will be given priority in scheduling. All other scheduling for the meeting rooms must be reserved by the users on a first come, first serve basis. No standing reservations may be made. The meeting rooms may be booked no more than three months in advance. Exceptions to scheduling rules may be made for meetings and events of community partner organizations of which Newton Public Library is a member.

The INTRUST Room is available during library hours when library programs are not scheduled. The Helen Claassen Room is designed to support the library’s high volume of youth programming and is not generally open to outside groups because of these programs.

A designated contact person, at least 18 years of age, must fill out the meeting room reservation form. Library staff must confirm or deny all reservations. Approval or rejection of requests for meeting rooms

will be determined using this policy. When questions arise as to eligibility for requesting use of meeting rooms, library staff may seek more information from the group or individual.

Meetings and programs, including set up and tear down time, must be during the library's hours of operation. Meetings may not be scheduled to begin before 9:30 a.m. and must conclude 30 minutes prior to closing.

If a meeting, program, or class is canceled, the group's contact person/coordinator should notify library staff in advance in person or by phone.

If the library closes because of a weather-related or other emergency, efforts will be made to notify the contact person of groups scheduled to use a meeting room. During adverse weather conditions, group contact persons are urged to check Newton Public Library's Facebook page or call the library for closing information.

NPL reserves the right to cancel any reservation at any time. If NPL cancels a reservation, it is not required to provide a rationale or show cause for doing so.

Use of Rooms

Set up and arrangements of chairs and tables are the responsibility of the patron. No signs, tables or set up are allowed outside the meeting room.

Groups needing additional technology (projector, laptop, microphone, etc.) must provide at least one day's notice. Equipment availability varies by room and whether other meetings are concurrently scheduled. The Library does not provide staff to operate any technology equipment during meetings, including livestreaming equipment.

Decorations or displays must be freestanding or limited to tabletops.

Groups and individuals are responsible for leaving the meeting rooms in good order after use. This includes:

1. Returning all tables & chairs to the original setup
2. Placing all trash in receptacles provided by the library
3. Reporting any spills, damage, or other issues to staff at the service desk
4. Removal of all personal items.

Special cleaning required due to damage caused to library property or equipment will be charged to the group or person reserving the room and/or result in denial of future room requests.

Refreshments (except alcoholic beverages) may be served in the meeting rooms if they are kept inside the meeting rooms. Counter-height fridges are available in the meeting rooms. Food and supplies can only be kept in the rooms for the duration of the meeting time. The group or individual must provide all serving supplies.

Safety & Security

Exits and egress routes may not be obstructed.

Groups must adhere to the maximum capacity set by the library at its discretion for safety and operational purposes, which are lower than the maximum capacity allowed by law. Occupants may not exceed the following capacity for the meeting rooms: INTRUST Room = 225; Helen Claassen Room = 50. These numbers assume no tables, chairs or furnishings are in the room. Use of chairs, tables, and/or other furnishings or displays will reduce the allowed capacity, and library staff have the discretion to adjust the occupancy limits at the time of the meeting based on room setup.

The party booking the room is responsible for compliance with these limit, including turning away individuals if capacity is reached. No overflow space is available, and attendees cannot congregate outside of the meeting spaces or in the library in a way that hinders library operations.

Storage is not available. The library is not responsible for items lost or stolen.

No flame-producing or hazardous devices may be used in the library. Use of electric skillets, griddles, or other similar cooking devices is not allowed. Crockpots, electric warming trays, and electric coffee urns are allowed if plugged in directly to an outlet, not an extension cord.

Exceptions

The following are exempt from the provisions of this policy:

- Library-sponsored programs and events;
- Meetings and events of the Library Board of Trustees or Newton Public Library Foundation

Liability

- Newton Public Library is not liable for injuries to individuals or for damages to (or the loss of) personal property of individuals or groups using a meeting room.
- The library is not responsible for the content of programs presented by outside groups.

Policy Amendment & Appeals

The Newton Public Library Board of Trustees will review the meeting room policy periodically and may amend policies and procedures at any time.

Any appeals for changes or exceptions to any portion of the meeting room policy will be considered. An individual or organization wishing to file an appeal shall submit a written appeal to the director. The appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at the next regularly-scheduled board meeting for a final decision.

4.04 Study Rooms [05/2025]

Purpose

Newton Public Library welcomes the use of its study rooms by individuals and small groups for study, community-building, and collaboration. Meetings and activities held in the library should be in accordance with the library's mission and goals.

General Use

The library makes its study rooms available at no charge to members of the public, high-school age and above, for private study and small-group collaboration. Younger users may be in the room with an adult present. A library card is not required for use, but users must make a booking either in advance or at the service desk

Study room occupancy is limited to the following. No additional chairs may be brought in to rooms beyond those provided.

Study Room A: 8 people

Study Rooms B, C, D, E: 2 people

Newton Room: 6 people

Copyrighted media (feature films, television shows, etc.) should not be shown on the study room TVs except during library-sponsored events and in consideration of the library's movie license requirements.

Any damage, loss, theft, or misuse of library equipment or facilities is the responsibility of the individual reserving the room.

Users of study rooms may not interfere with the library's operation. Attendees must abide by the library's Code of Conduct. This includes ensuring the proper supervision of children according to NPL policy. Violation of conduct policies should be reported to staff, and further use of study rooms may be denied to individuals or groups who disregard library regulations.

Scheduling

Rooms may be reserved up to one month in advance, with no more than 6 hours reserved per person/group per week in advance. Reservations can be made online, by calling or emailing the library, or by service desk staff.

Rooms not previously reserved are available on a first-come, first-serve basis by checking in at the front desk.

If the library closes because of weather or other reasons, efforts will be made to notify those who have made study room reservations. During adverse weather conditions, persons are urged to check Newton Public Library's Facebook page or call the library for closing information.

Specific room choice is not guaranteed, and library staff may reassign users to a different study room than the one reserved if it accommodates the group size and needs. In general, groups of 1-2 people will not be assigned to the larger meeting rooms unless smaller rooms are full or the group has reserved the larger room for technology needs.

NPL reserves the right to cancel any study room reservation at any time. If NPL cancels a reservation, it is not required to provide a rationale or show cause for doing so.

4.05 Digital Access Lab

Purpose

The purpose of Digital Access Lab is for patrons to produce audio and video materials. Using the equipment and software available in the lab, patrons can record and edit video and audio, teleconference using video communication software, and edit photos and videos.

Scheduling

The Digital Access Lab can be reserved for up to four hours per party each day. Longer reservations can be made on a case-by-case basis, if there are no other reservations for the room during that time. Reservations can be made through the library's online booking platform or by contacting the library.

Patrons are encouraged to schedule an orientation with library staff to learn how to use the equipment in the Digital Access Lab. Patrons that need help to use the equipment are expected to make arrangements with library staff in advance. Unless an appointment has been made, there is no guarantee that staff will be available to assist with the equipment in the Digital Access Lab.

Use & Conduct

Patrons must adhere to the library's Code of Conduct while using the Digital Access Lab; they are not allowed to produce material that is:

- Prohibited by state, local, or federal law.
- Designed to be intentionally harmful or dangerous.
- Obscene or otherwise inappropriate for the library environment
- In violation of intellectual property rights and the fair use doctrine.
- Otherwise inappropriate or prohibited, as determined by Library staff.

The Digital Access Lab is not a general study room, and is only to be used for its stated purpose.

Only patrons age 14 and up can be in the Digital Access Lab. Maximum occupancy of the room is 2 people.

The Digital Access Lab is free to use. Fees will be charged for printing (3D or paper), and for any items damaged or lost during the patron's use of the room.

Patrons must get staff approval before bringing their own audio-visual equipment to the Digital Access Lab. Items such as musical instruments and amplifiers are not allowed. The Newton Public Library will assess equipment based on size, compatibility with existing equipment, and potential disruption to other patrons.

Food is not allowed in the Digital Access Lab, and drinks must have a lid.

Patrons are responsible for saving their own work to storage devices or solutions that they have access to independently of the Digital Access Lab. No in-progress or finished work will be preserved across

sessions, and all personal files will be removed from the computer after a patron logs out of their account.

5. Library Technology [3/2025]

5.01 Internet Safety Policy

Introduction

Public access to the Internet and online services have become an integral part of Newton Public Library's programs and services. The intent of this policy is to meet the provisions of the Kansas Children's Internet Protection Act, as well as provide guidelines for patrons and staff regarding online computer use of Internet accessible computers.

The purpose of the Internet Safety Policy of Newton Public Library is to implement and enforce technology protection measures to: ensure that no minor has access to visual depictions that are child pornography, harmful to minors, or obscene; and ensure that no person has access to visual depictions that are child pornography or obscene while using a public access computer.

Developed under the direction of the Board of Newton Public Library, this Internet Safety Policy was discussed and adopted during an open meeting of the Library Board on January 10, 2022. This policy supersedes all previous Internet Safety Policy statements of Newton Public Library and is effective on February 10, 2025.

This policy document will be reviewed by the Newton Public Library Board at least every three years.

Legal Requirements

The Newton Public Library Internet Safety Policy complies with the applicable requirements of subsection (b) and L. 2013, ch. 98, sec. 1, and amendments thereto, commonly known as the Kansas Children's Internet Protection Act.

Newton Public Library has in place a policy of Internet safety for minors, including the operation of a commercially-purchased internet filtering software that blocks or filters online access to visual depictions that are child pornography, harmful to minors or obscene as defined in L. 2013, ch. 98, sec.1.

Supervision and Monitoring [9/2025]

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled only for bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Newton Public Library staff to supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Kansas Children's Internet Protection Act. No technology protection measure is 100% reliable and the library cannot be held responsible for prohibited information that might be displayed. Parents or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the information selected or accessed by their children or wards. Therefore, parents and guardians are advised to supervise children's Internet use.

Library computers utilize a check-in software requiring library card number. Parents/guardians select whether to allow their minor to have internet access when the minor's card is created. That preference can be updated by the parent/guardian at any point by coming to the library, presenting photo ID, and requesting a change.

No guest passes will be given to minors. Library staff reserve the right to request ID for persons appearing to be younger than 18, and may deny a guest pass if ID is not available.

Patrons who encounter web sites which they believe should be blocked but which are not, or who are prevented from accessing web sites which they believe should not be blocked may submit a complaint. This should be given in writing to the Library Director or Supervisor in Charge and include the URL of the site in question and whether the request is to block or unblock it. Staff shall examine the site and determine whether it should be blocked or unblocked.

Complaints about enforcement of this policy or observed patron behavior which violate this policy shall also be submitted in writing to the Library Director or Supervisor in Charge, providing as much detail as possible.

The library shall inform patrons of the provisions of this policy, including the standards used and procedures for complaint, by making the policy available in print at the circulation desk.

5.02 Security Cameras

The library utilizes security cameras in its public areas, both interior and exterior. These cameras record video online (no sound). Footage is maintained for approximately 1 week, but may vary, as length is determined by file space capacity limits and not time.

Library staff may record and save footage if the Executive or Assistant Director determines that the footage may be part of a criminal incident, personal insurance claim (such as a patron falling), or property damage incident (intentional or accidental). Staff will save as little footage as possible to effectively capture the situation. If footage is retained, it will be deleted after 1 year or resolution of the incident (closure of insurance claim, etc), whichever is longer.

The library will generally provide such footage to law enforcement in an exigent situation, or in a situation regarding property damage as needed to file a police report. The library will generally provide footage to the City of Newton and/or insurance entities as needed for claims.

In the absence of the Executive & Assistant Director, a librarian may allow law enforcement to look at footage in an exigent situation but must notify the Assistant or Executive Director immediately. Any warrants or non-emergency requests for footage should be handled by the Assistant or Executive Director in consultation with the library's attorney.

Footage from security cameras is not available to members of the general public. In the event that a patron believes an item has been stolen, he/she should file a police report and then request law enforcement request the footage via a warrant. If a person is involved in a potential criminal matter at the library, they will have an opportunity to request the footage through law enforcement as part of the proceedings.