

# POLICY

**SUBJECT:** Supervision of Minors and At-Risk Patrons<sup>1</sup>  
**APPROVED BY:** Board of Library Trustees  
**APPROVAL DATE:** August 24, 2023  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 25, 2023

**NEW ( )**                      **REVISED ( X )**

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Allen County Public Library ("ACPL" or "Library") strives to maintain a safe environment for its staff and patrons. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable youth and adults. Staff members are available to help and support these groups; however, employees do not function as caregivers or babysitters. It is not the Library's role to provide long- or short-term childcare or supervision, and staff cannot accept responsibility for the safety and supervision of individuals or groups.

Children ages eight (8) and younger, along with at-risk minors and adults, must be in the immediate presence of a parent, guardian, or caregiver at all times when visiting ACPL. The parent, guardian, or caregiver is responsible for monitoring the activities and regulating the behavior of children or other persons requiring supervision during their visit. Library staff are not trained or expected to provide care and supervision for children or other persons in need of constant attention. ACPL is not responsible for any consequences of parents, guardians, or caregivers not fulfilling their responsibilities.

The Library acknowledges children mature at different ages. These rules are subject to the discretion of ACPL staff and situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

ACPL staff will attempt to locate and speak with the parent or caregiver of the minor or at-risk patron if the individual:

- Is left unattended or under-attended/ignored;
- Has violated the ACPL *Patron Behavior Policy*;
- Appears to be ill, upset, in danger, or involved in a situation potentially harmful to their health or the safety of others;
- Has not been met by a parent, guardian, or caregiver at ACPL closing time.

If the responsible party cannot be found in the Library building or contacted by phone, the authorities will be notified and asked to assist in the resolution of the situation. In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911.

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<sup>1</sup> An at-risk patron is a minor or an adult who cannot care for themselves independently without the supervision of a caregiver.

Children must have arrangements to be picked up at the Library by closing time. If a child is left at the Library after closing hours, the Library has the right, in its discretion, to contact the authorities.

With the exception of an ACPL sponsored program with formal advanced parental approval, ACPL staff are prohibited from transporting ACPL patrons in their personal vehicles or a Library vehicle. If, in the course of fulfilling the Library's Strategic Plan, it is necessary to transport patrons for an event or program, buses or other appropriate vehicles must be rented from a reputable transportation firm with adequate insurance coverage. Prior approval of ACPL Administration is required.

Enforcement of the policy will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner, with ACPL staff seeking additional guidance from management and/or security staff when needed. Library staff members have the responsibility to apply this policy in determining behavior that does not comply with the policy. This includes conformance with the objectives of the policy, as defined above, even when a specific scenario is not specifically listed in the examples.