



1.0 | Policies & Procedures- Administration

Mission Statement

McAllen Public Library is a dynamic civic resource that promotes the open exchange of ideas through free access to information and connects a culturally diverse population with the global community.

Policies are current and accurate as of the dates indicated. McAllen Public Library is a continuously changing and growing organization. The Library reserves the right to modify, change, or delete policies and procedures when necessary. The Library Director is responsible for the administration of McAllen Public Library policies and procedures.

1.1 | General

- **McAllen Public Library Advisory Board Meeting**
 - McAllen Public Library Advisory Board meetings are held the second Thursday of every month except December and January. Meetings are held at 4:30 p.m. in the Library Board Room.
 - The agenda will be published on the City of McAllen Website.
 - The public is welcome to attend.

- **Changes in Policy or Procedure**
 - Changes of policy and procedure must be submitted in writing and be approved by the Library Director.

- **Unscheduled closings**
 - McAllen Public Library may experience unscheduled closings during adverse weather conditions. Adverse weather conditions which may make it advisable to close library buildings include severe weather conditions or power failure. Decisions to suspend or maintain library services during periods of adverse conditions will be made by the Library Director, under the direction of City Management.

1.2 | Safety and Security

The safety and security of the Library is the responsibility of all staff. Staff are encouraged to make a supervisor aware of any problems and address it as soon as possible.

- The Library Director may close McAllen Public Library when, in his or her best judgment and under the direction of city management, conditions are such that they pose a safety risk or danger to staff and patrons. Library staff will take reasonable steps to ensure that children under the age of 16 years have safe passage home or will contact police or other safety officers. Simple first aid supplies and flashlights will be maintained at all locations.
- In the absence of the Library Director, the following persons are responsible for the building:
 - At Main Library: Assistant Directors, Department Supervisors, Librarian in charge.
 - At Lark and Palm View Branch: Branch Manager, Circulation Supervisor, Librarian in charge.
- Fire extinguishers will be serviced annually according to the date on each tag.
- Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building or within 10 feet of any entrance.

1.3 | Public Behavior

The Library has adopted this Public Behavior in the Library Policy for the safety and comfort of all who use the Library. For the purpose of this policy, the Library is defined as the building, the parking lot, and the

grounds at all McAllen Public Library branches. Library users who violate the Public Behavior Policy may be subject to suspension of their library privileges, exclusion from the Library, and/or legal action.

For the most effective use of the Library, patrons are expected to observe the rules of common courtesy. Those using and working in the Library have the right to expect a safe, comfortable environment that supports library services. Patrons who violate the Public Behavior Policy will be issued a verbal warning or may be asked to leave the Library. Appeals relating to suspension of library service privileges shall be made in writing to the Library Director.

Visitors are welcome to plug their phone or computer devices into an outlet in the interior public area. To avoid trip hazards, patrons should not sit on the floor while their device is charging. Patrons are responsible for the safety of their personal electronic devices. The Library is not responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged on Library premises. Items left unattended may be removed by staff.

Visitors may not obstruct aisles, entrances, or reading areas with personal belongings, including when charging personal devices. This includes actions and items that block access or exits to Library premises or create safety hazards. Visitors may not bring shopping carts or pushcarts inside the Library unless it is to set up for Meeting Center Room Rental. Visitors are responsible for securing bicycles and skateboards outside on the bike rack.

The Lobby Gallery Area at Main Library is designed to showcase national and international artists. The benches provided are for pausing to admire the artwork. Café tables are provided for dining only. The Lobby Gallery Area is not designed for all day guests. Visitors who intend to spend more than a few minutes in the Lobby Gallery Area are invited to come into the interior space of the Library to take advantage of our many resources, including a Computer Lab, outlets to charge phones, and public reading areas.

- **Expected Behaviors**
 - The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left on library premises. All personal belongings must remain with the patron for the duration of their visit. Library property includes both interior and exterior areas, including the parking lot, Dewey Trail, sidewalks, and all driveways.
 - For public health reasons, patrons are expected to wear shoes and appropriate clothing while on library premises.
 - Patrons are not permitted to access non-public areas such as offices or workrooms.
 - Patrons are expected to maintain acceptable bodily hygiene while on library premises.

- **Prohibited conduct includes**
 - Engaging in conduct that interferes with other library users.
 - Abusive or threatening language.
 - Unhygienic behavior and activities that disturb other patrons.
 - Odor must not be so offensive that it disturbs others.
 - Patrons are expected to refrain from sleeping or lying down on the furniture. Instead, they should remain seated in an upright position and engaged in library-related activities.
 - Using public restrooms for bathing, shaving, washing hair, or other personal hygiene.
 - Creating excessive noise such as loud, boisterous talking or using personal electronic equipment at a volume that is audible to others, including using the phone on speaker.

- Cell phone calls should be brief, answered with a low voice tone, and kept to a minimum in public areas.
 - Using library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures, or the facilities in a manner outside of their intended use.
 - Using skateboards or rollerblades on library grounds.
 - Soliciting, petitioning, distributing materials, or canvassing on library premises.
 - Disregarding the reasonable direction of the Library Director or designee.
 - No shopping carts, luggage, or push carts inside of the Library unless setting up in a Meeting Center Rental space.
 - Bicycles, skateboards, and recreational scooters are prohibited from being brought inside the Library. All bicycles, skateboards, and recreational scooters must be secured at the rack located in front of the Library.
- **Illegal Activities**
 - Committing or attempting to commit any activity that constitutes a violation of any federal, states, or local statute or ordinance.
 - Engaging in sexual conduct or indecent behavior on library premises as defined under Texas Penal Law.
 - Using controlled substances on library premises.
 - Smoking or other use of tobacco inside the Library, or within 10 feet of library facilities.
 - Consuming alcoholic beverages on library grounds unless part of a scheduled event pre-approved by the Library Director.

1.4 | Unattended Vulnerable Adult

The Library strives to provide a warm, welcoming and safe environment for all community members. The Library is particularly concerned for the safety of vulnerable adults in and around the Library.

- A vulnerable adult is an individual over the age of 18 who is mentally or physically challenged to a degree that significantly impairs the individual's ability to provide adequately for his/her own care or manage his/her own behavior without assistance.
- A parent/guardian or caregiver 19 years of age or older must be responsible for monitoring the activities and managing the behavior of vulnerable adults during their Library visits. Staff cannot be expected to monitor or prevent vulnerable adults from leaving the building/grounds or to assume responsibility for monitoring their behavior.

1.5 | Food and Drink

McAllen Public Library strives to create a welcoming, clean, and comfortable environment for all to enjoy. Consistent with this goal, food and drink are allowed in the library on a limited basis (see bullet points below) and should be consumed in a considerate and responsible manner.

- Bottled beverages and covered beverages are permitted in the Library's Lobby and Public Service areas, with the exception of the Computer Lab. However, food is not allowed inside the Library Public Service areas, Study Rooms, or in the Computer Lab. Service areas are defined as spaces beyond the internal entry doors leading away from the lobby and into the carpeted areas.
- At Main Library, food purchased at the Rise & Shine Café or brought from an outside source may be consumed at the café tables in the lobby. If purchased in the café, food may be consumed in the café itself or in the lobby.
- Library patrons are expected to be responsible for food and/or drink consumed in the Library. Trash should be disposed of in the provided receptacles. Spills must be reported immediately to any service desk so arrangements may be made for the appropriate clean up.
- Food and drink may be permitted as part of library programming at the discretion of Library Administration.

Adherence to this policy will help ensure that the Library continues to be a clean and welcoming facility for all to enjoy.

Food-Friendly or Food Free at a Glance Guide

Meeting Center	Lobby	Computer Lab	Study Rooms	Service Areas
Catered food and drink from the Rise & Shine Café is allowed.	Food and drink is allowed.	No food or drink allowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered and bottled beverages allowed. • No food allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered and bottled beverages allowed. • No food allowed.

1.6 | Display, Distribution, & Exhibit of Posters, Flyers, Pamphlets, and Publicity Materials

- It is understood that the Library neither endorses nor sponsors the organization or activity described in the brochures, flyers, pamphlets, and other materials from non-library entities displayed or distributed in the Library.
- The Library does not assume responsibility for keeping non-approved publications which have been removed.
- Materials for display or distribution must be approved by the Assistant Director of Public Services at Main Library and by the Branch Managers at Lark & Palm View Branch.

1.7 | Lost & Found

- All lost and found items will be taken directly to the Welcome Desk at Main Library or the Circulation Desk at Lark & Palm View Branches.

1.8 | Social Media

The Library maintains a presence on several social media platforms such as X (Twitter), Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. These sites allow users to interact with the Library's profile. Although comments and posts are welcome on the Library's social media sites, postings containing any of the following will be removed:

- Obscene comments and hate speech
- Personal attacks, harassment or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Political directives
- Plagiarized or copyrighted material
- Commercial messages or spam
- Material that is deemed off-topic or inappropriate
- Private or personal information
- Falsification of identity
- Any illegal activity
- Solicitation for donations, or memberships or services requiring a fee
- Photos or other images that may fall in any of the above categories

The Library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third-party site in any way other than to communicate with users on that site. Users should be aware that third-party websites may have their own privacy policies. By posting any comments, the user agrees to indemnify McAllen Public Library and its representatives from and against all liabilities, damages, and costs incurred which arise out of or are related to the posted content.

1.9 | Internet and Wi-Fi Access

The Library recognizes computers and the Internet address the research, educational and recreational needs of the public. The Library offers a public computer lab with print capability, a copy machine, and a fax machine, a Children's Computer Lab, a Teen Computer Lab, and free Wi-Fi service throughout all McAllen Public Library locations.

- All users with a library card from any Hidalgo County Library are allowed up to three hours of Internet use per day. Users who do not have the documents required to register for a full-access library card may register for an e-access library card with a valid photo identification (U.S., Canada, Mexico). At the discretion of library staff, a 1-hour extension may be granted for educational or employment purposes.
- The user is responsible at all times for using the Internet appropriately. The Library encourages parents/guardians to supervise their child's Internet sessions to ensure appropriate and safe access. Use of the Internet for unlawful purposes including, but not limited to, the production or distribution of threatening material; expressions of bigotry, racism or hate; obscene or sexually

explicit material; and material protected by trade secret is prohibited. The harassment of others is also prohibited.

- Users should be aware that information on the Internet might be inaccurate, incomplete, dated or offensive to some individuals. The Library strongly recommends users evaluate the validity and appropriateness of information obtained via the Internet.
- Users who download data to the computer's desktop are strongly advised to delete it before signing off the computer. All internet history is erased between user sessions, but downloaded data remains until the close of the operational day.
- Users approve all printing and are responsible for payment of a print job. Payment is required at the time of transaction. Users with library patron accounts that are blocked due to fines must settle their fines before being permitted to use public computers.
- McAllen Public Library staff offers limited assistance to computer users. Users in need of extended assistance are encouraged to enroll in a basic computer class at one of our locations.
- Computer users must keep their belongings with them at all times, and are encourage not to leave the area when charging cell phones or other devices.
- The Library reserves the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or involves user behavior that violates library policies. Violations include, but are not limited to:
 - Any material deemed "harmful to minor" as defined by CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act).
 - Engaging in defamation.
 - Knowingly uploading a harmful program or file.
 - Uses that jeopardize the security of the Library's network.
 - Disclosing or sharing the user's library card information with others, or impersonating another user.
- Users whose Internet sessions are terminated are entitled to an appeals process by stating their explanation in writing to the Library Director; including their name, address, and phone number.

1.10 | ADA Compliance

The Library strives to provide equal access to all library facilities, activities, and programs in adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The library provides a fleet of modern mobility scooters for patrons to use at will. Individuals with service animals are welcome. Questions about ADA compliance, concerns, or suggestions about accessibility of library facilities, activities, and programs should be addressed to the Library Director.

1.11 | Restroom Policy

McAllen Public Library strives to provide safe and accessible restrooms in all three locations.

Main Library restrooms are:

- Single-gender (male or female) multi-stall restrooms for patrons of any age, in the Lobby and Adult Department. There is one handicap-accessible stall in each restroom.

- One all-gender / handicap-accessible / family restroom with a diaper-changing station off the Lobby. Only one adult may use this restroom at a time.
- Four children's restrooms in the Children's Department are only for children, or for parents/caregivers accompanying a young child. Each includes a diaper changing station.

Lark and Palm View Branches are:

- One all-gender / handicap-accessible / family restroom with a diaper-changing station in the Library. Only one adult may use this restroom at a time.
- Single-gender (male or female) multi-stall restrooms in the Community Center. There is one handicap-accessible stall in each restroom.

1.12 | Data Privacy

The Library is committed to protecting the privacy of our patrons. We limit requests for personal information to that which is necessary to conduct standard library business.

- Personal information gathered, such as name, address, telephone number, cell phone number, email address, photograph, and driver's license number will be used only for the purposes of identification and accountability for library materials, such as the collection of fines and fees owed to the library.
- Non- personal information about visits to the library's website or use of electronic resources may be collected to calculate usage statistics. No personal information collected is connected to user information.

1.13 | Library Volunteers

The mission of the McAllen Public Library Advocates is to promote literacy, support and strengthen the Library and its branches, provide a means for the public to repurpose their books, and promote fellowship among its members. The Library welcomes new members who wish to support the Library's goals.

- McAllen Public Library provides opportunities for volunteers to participate in the operation of the Library's Bookstore, special programs, and projects. All interested persons 16 years and older must apply to be a volunteer by filling out an application with the City of McAllen Human Resources Office at McAllen City Hall (956)681-1045. The application process includes permission for the City of McAllen to conduct a background check and may include a short interview. The Library reserves the right to decline the services of any volunteer.
- Volunteers are expected to act in accordance with all McAllen Public Library directives and policies, follow all directions and instructions by the supervising staff member, and reflect positive customer service attitudes to all Library patrons and staff.
- The Library does not compensate volunteers through wages, benefits, reimbursement of expenses, or any other form of compensation. Library volunteers are not considered employees of the Library.

- The Library reserves the right to discontinue volunteer opportunities or terminate the services of any individual volunteer or volunteer group without prior notice at the discretion of the Library Director or designee.
- All donations received by volunteers or library staff shall become property of City of McAllen.

1.14 | Bookstore Donations

McAllen Public Library encourages and welcomes donation of materials (books and audiovisual materials) unconditionally and without restrictions.

- At the request of the Library Director or designee, a donation may be considered for the Library's collection. In that case, the Library applies the same criteria for evaluating gift items as it does to purchased materials. Library staff will evaluate donated materials to determine whether it will be added to the Library's collection or routed to the Library Bookstore for sale.
- Donated materials will be received on a cart placed in front of the Library Bookstore. Any donations more than a few boxes must be received through the loading dock. Check our website for changes in donation days and times.
- If the donor wishes, bookstore volunteers will provide a receipt. Neither library volunteers nor library staff can assign a value to any materials donated.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age: reaffirmed January 23, 1996.