

Petitioning & Campaigning on Library Property Policy

Introduction

The Walter E. Olson Memorial Library (“OML” or “The Library”) offers a limited public forum for free speech activities such as petitioning, leafleting and/or campaigning. In order to ensure normal operations of the Library, the OML Board of Trustees are authorized to make reasonable rules regarding the time, place, and manner of free speech activities that are universally applicable and content-neutral concerning use of its property for these purposes.

Policy

To ensure that individuals may make use of the appropriate space and understand their rights under this policy, the Library encourages individuals to inform OML staff of their intended use of the Library as a limited public forum.

The Library has designated the areas of sidewalk at least 25 feet from building entrances for the exercise of free speech activities such as petitioning, leafleting, and campaigning. This space is available only during daylight hours on a first-come, first-served basis. Individuals are responsible for providing their own materials/supplies.

Activities prohibited under this policy include:

- Engaging in behavior that endangers the health, safety, and welfare of others or that creates disruption of Library operations.
- Affixing materials/signage to the library building/grounds or leaving such materials at the Library property.
- Hindering, impeding, or blocking the passage of library patrons, employees, or visitors.
- Continuing to impose upon, follow, shout at or against, mark for approach by others, or otherwise press an issue after having been advised of the individual’s lack of interest or opposing viewpoint and desire to be left alone.
- Surrounding or making serial approaches to a patron, employee, or visitor.
- Engaging, arguing with or otherwise opposing or inciting others exercising their rights under this policy.
- Inciting or promoting imminent acts of violence.
- Presenting, imposing, or otherwise impressing upon patrons, employees, or visitors materials that would be considered generally offensive or obscene to the community.
- Causing damage to Library property.
- Solicitation of funds or sale/promotion of goods and services, exclusive of initiatives by the Library and its support groups (i.e. the Foundation and Walter Olson Library Friends).
- Blocking parking spaces or leaving materials on vehicles.

Political Programs/Debates

The Library or other organizations/individuals may schedule political programs or debates to help inform voters about issues or candidates in an election. Appropriate campaign literature may be distributed to participants as part of the program.

Violation of this Policy

Individuals who act in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate consequences by staff. This may include a verbal warning, being asked to leave Library property, or intervention by law enforcement.

If the behavior of any person threatens the safety of library patrons, staff, or property, or the patron is breaking a law, Library staff should contact emergency law enforcement by dialing 911, and the responding officer(s) will determine the appropriate response.

The Library staff will fill out a written incident report documenting violations of this policy. A copy of this report will be submitted to the Library Director immediately following an incident for determination of additional actions.

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