

Harris Memorial Library Unattended Children Policy

- Children, like all Library users, are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the proper use and function of the Library.
- Children age 11 or younger must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver age 16 or older while at the Library, unless in the case of attendance at special Library programs where an Emergency Contact Form has been filled out by a parent or legal guardian in advance **for that event**.
- Library staff cannot **and will not** assume the responsibility for the safety, care, or supervision of unattended children.
- Children age 12 and older who come to the Library without a parent, guardian, or caregiver are welcome for appropriate use of the Library, such as homework, reading, or participation in specially note age-appropriate events. Vandalism or inappropriate/disruptive Library behavior will not be tolerated and may serve as grounds for removal from Library property.
- Parents, guardians, and caregivers should be aware of Library Opening and Closing times and **parents, guardians, and caregivers must** make suitable arrangements to meet and/or transport their children. In the event that a minor child, age 15 or younger, is left after Library hours, the staff will contact the Otsego County Sheriff's Department for assistance.
- A child left habitually unattended is deemed to be at risk. If a parent, **guardian**, or caregiver of such an unattended child, age 11 or younger, cannot be contacted or located within one-half hour of the discovery that the child is unattended, the Library will contact the Otsego County Sheriff's Department to take custody of the child.
- Library staff will not transport children home or to any other destination under any circumstances.
- **Special Health Crisis Clause:** During a period of Health Crisis, such as the COVID-19 period (as determined to be a concern via the Library) ALL children are REQUIRED to wear masks appropriately, covering both nose and mouth at the same time, maintain a social distance of 6 feet from anyone else, whether inside the Library or anywhere on Library property.

The Harris Memorial Library is committed to serving its community during hard times and good.

The year 2020 and 2021 have brought unprecedented challenges to our nation, state, and area of service.

To continue serving our patrons during this difficult time, while placing the health and safety of our community at the forefront, the Library Board of Trustees has adopted the below Temporary Safety Practices Policy.

The Board's authority to adopt these measures is found in our charter, bylaws, New York Education Law Sections 255, 260, 226, 8 NYCRR 90.2, and Article 2 of the Not-for-profit corporation law. We also consider it our duty to develop these measures to keep our services accessible at this time.

Staff at the Harris Memorial Library have the authority to enforce these measures like any other of the Library's Rules. Concerns about this policy should be directed to the Board President or the Library Director. Thank you for honoring these measures, which are designed to keep our community safe, while allowing access to the library.

- Parents, guardians, or caregivers, and their associated children will be given two copies of this document upon initially entering the Library, one for parents and children to read, sign, date, and return to the Library, and one copy to stay at home as a reference.**

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name (Signature)

Date

Children's Printed Name(s) and, if possible, signatures:

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_____	_____
_____	_____

(previously approved 2/20/19)