

LIBRARY POLICIES

ELGIN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

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1. Mission and Goal Statements

The mission of the Elgin Community Library (called ECL in remainder of document) is to provide quality materials and services which support lifelong learning, and stimulation of children's interest in reading. By providing educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs for the entire community in an atmosphere that is welcoming, respectful, and businesslike, we foster a literate, informed and culturally aware community.

The general goals of ECL shall be:

- to serve all residents of the community and the surrounding region.
- to facilitate informal self-education of all people in the community.
- to encourage enjoyable leisure reading.
- to acquire the means to provide the most frequently requested material locally and upon demand.
- to strive consistently to discover new methods and improvements for better service for the library's patrons.
- to support educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
- to review regularly these goals of ECL and, if necessary, revise them in the light of new developments.

2. Who May Use the Library

ECL will serve all residents of Comanche County, Cyril and Apache at no charge. All other patrons will be assessed a one-time \$10 fee when a card is issued. Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic, or political status; or because of mental, emotional, or physical condition; age; or sexual orientation.

The use of the library may be denied for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return library materials or to pay penalties, destruction of library property, disturbance of other patrons, or any other illegal, disruptive, or objectionable conduct on library premises.

3. Services of the Library

The Library provides materials and resources for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people of the community. The Library strives to ensure that library patrons consistently receive the highest level of service. The Library endeavors to:

- select, organize and make available necessary books and materials.

- provide computers for use by patrons for internet research. secure information beyond its own resources when requested (using interlibrary loan and other resource sharing methods provided through the system and state).
- provide guidance and assistance to patrons without discrimination.
- sponsor and implement programs, exhibits, displays, book lists, etc., which would appeal to children and adults.
- maintain a balance in its services to various age groups.
- develop and provide services to patrons with special needs.
- cooperate with, but not perform the functions of, school or other institutional libraries.
- cooperate with other community agencies and organizations.
- provide service during the hours which best meets the needs of the community.
- regularly review library services being offered.
- use media and other public relations mechanisms to promote the full range of available library services.
- be knowledgeable about library resources, policies and procedures, and be able to explain policies to patrons upon request.

4. Circulation Policy

Registration: All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid permanent address to check out library materials.

Identification is required. Acceptable forms of identification include OK driver's license, Real ID, OK identification card, US passport, US military identification, and student identification card. Acceptable forms of verification of residence include printed bank checks with current address, utility bills with current address, rental agreements, property tax statements, mortgage papers, automobile registration, or mail with current postmark (less than 2 weeks old.)

Children must be 5 years old or older to have their own library card. The parent/guardian must have a current ECL card and be present at the time of applications for children under 16 years of age. The parent/guardian acknowledges responsibility for library materials checked out to the child. Other than Hotspots and certain items from the Library of Things collection, the library will not restrict any customer, including children, from access to any type or class of materials nor from any information in the library. If a parent/guardian does not wish his/her child to have access to particular materials, the parent/guardian will need to discuss the restrictions with the child in the context of their parent-child relationship.

Materials cannot be checked out until a library card is issued. All patrons, adult and juvenile, are expected to bring their library cards with them if they intend to check out items.

All library cards expire in 2 years. To renew a library card, patrons must produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.

Loan Periods: Generally, reference books do not circulate. Upon request, some reference materials may be checked out overnight.

Patrons may borrow books/materials for 2 weeks. Books may be renewed twice if there is not a reserve for the title, or other valid reasons determined by library staff.

Interlibrary loans are due the date indicated by the lending library. DVD'S may be kept for 2 weeks with no renewal option. There is a limit of 20 items per library account.

Some items only have a one week check out period with no renewal options. This includes, but not limited to, sporting equipment.

Reserves: Reserves may be placed by patrons either in person, over the phone, or by using the library app. Patrons will be notified by text, email or telephone when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a reserve.

Fines and Charges: Our goal is to improve access and opportunity. All circulated materials must be returned on or by the due date. If books, audiobooks, DVDs or miscellaneous items valued under \$100 are not returned by the due date, they will not accrue late fines. If a patron has existing fines on returned items, we will waive those fines. Any electronic device or miscellaneous item valued more than \$100 including, but not limited to, Hotspots, Launchpads, outdoor sports equipment, etc. will be charged a late fine of \$10 per day with no grace period.

A patron will not be allowed to check items out, if they, or other individuals living in the same household or children linked to their account, have items overdue. Patron accounts will be blocked once one or more items are 14 days overdue. The account will be unblocked once these items are returned in useable condition, and late fines are paid. At no time will a patron's fine on an item exceed the cost of the item. The patron will be notified by phone, e-mail, and/or letter regarding overdue/lost items.

Damaged or Lost Materials: Patrons are responsible for any loss or damage to library materials incurred while an item is checked out on their card. Types of damage for which a patron may be charged include, but not limited to, offensive odors such as cigarette smoke or pet smells, water damage, stains, torn or chewed pages/covers, insect damage, scratched/broken discs, or cracked screens. Patrons who damage or

lose one item in a set of materials will be required to pay for the entire set if the library is unable to replace individual parts. Patrons must pay the list price of the item at the time it was added to the collection. The library does not accept substitute materials as replacements. If a lost item was paid for, then subsequently found, the patron has the option to keep that item. The library will not reimburse funds. The library is not responsible for damage to personal audio-visual/computer equipment used with library materials.

A patron who returns items with damage from insect infestation or other pests may be charged for the materials if they are beyond treatment. If it is deemed that continued borrowing of materials threatens the health and safety of library facilities and other patrons, library privileges may be revoked until the patron can demonstrate that the situation that caused the loss of privileges has been remediated.

Confidentiality: As specified in Oklahoma State Statute 65 O.S. 1-105 “records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of a public library system, indicating the identity of any individual who borrows or uses the library’s documents or other materials, resources or services may not be disclosed to anyone except:

- people acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library
- people authorized to inspect such records, in writing, by the individual or group
- by order of a court of law”.

Confidentiality extends to information sought or received; circulation records; database search records; reference interviews; interlibrary loan records; and computer uses.

All employees and volunteers of ECL must comply with this policy.

5. Library Materials Borrowing Agreement

This agreement will be at the circulation desk for all patrons to read. A notation will be made on the patron’s account that they have read the following statement:

- I agree to accept full responsibility and financial liability for any library materials while it is checked out to me including, but not limited to books, audiobooks, DVDs, electronics and miscellaneous items. This includes paying all costs associated with damage to, loss of or theft of the library material and/or accessories up to full replacement cost plus any other accrued fees.

- I understand that my account will be blocked if one or more items are 7 days overdue.
- I understand that failure to return any electronic device or miscellaneous item on time more than twice will result in losing my privilege to borrow said device or item.

6. Technology Circulation Policy

This policy includes, but is not limited to, Hotspot, Chromebook, Launchpad and WhaZoodle devices.

These devices are available so that library patrons will have access to technology. The patron shall not attempt to upgrade, install any software, open or make hardware modifications to the devices.

ECL is not responsible for any liability, damages or expense resulting from use or misuse of the device, connection of the device to other electronic devices, or data loss resulting from use of device. Wireless security is not implied. The user acknowledges and accepts all risks associated with the use of the wireless data device. There is no warranty, express or otherwise. ECL is not responsible for downloaded content on the device. Any use of the device for illegal purposes, unauthorized copying of copyright protected material in any format, or transmission of threatening, harassing, defamatory or obscene materials is strictly prohibited. Patrons acknowledge that they do not have any expectation of privacy in the use of any library technology.

Checking Out:

- Only current ECL cardholders in good standing may borrow a device. Good standing is defined as a patron who has returned items on time and without damage for the past six months. A new cardholder will have the opportunity to check out devices after a two-month trial. The borrower must be at least 18 years old.
- Library staff will verify that the device is in good working order at the time of checkout.
- The checkout limit is one Chromebook, one Hotspot, two Launchpads or two WhaZoodles per household at any given time for a two-week period and is NOT renewable.
- After 7 days overdue, the patron account will be blocked until the device is returned.
- ECL reserves the right to refuse service to anyone who abuses equipment or returns a device late more than twice.

- Once a device is checked out, it becomes the financial responsibility of the patron until it is returned to library staff.

Checking In:

Library staff will verify the device is in operating condition and do a visual check to ensure that all components are returned in good condition:

Fees and Liabilities:

- Late fines are assessed at the rate of \$10 per day. There is no grace period for devices.
- Patron is responsible for the full replacement cost of the device in the event of damage, lost, stolen, or otherwise not returned.
- If any technical problems are encountered, the device should be returned to ECL as soon as possible.

7. Miscellaneous Circulation Policy

This policy includes, but is not limited to, outdoor sports equipment, tools, bakeware, craft kits, etc. They are cataloged under “Library of Things” at the circulation desk.

These items are available so that library patrons will have access to unique things not typically borrowed from a library. The patron shall not attempt to make any modifications to the items.

ECL is not responsible for any liability, damage or expense resulting from the use or misuse of these items. The user acknowledges and accepts all risks associated with the use of these items. There is no warranty, express or otherwise

Checking Out:

- Only current ECL cardholders in good standing may borrow these items. Good standing is defined as a patron who has returned items on time and without damage for the past six months. A new cardholder will have the opportunity to check out items after a two-month trial. The borrower must be at least 18 years old.
- Library staff will verify that these items are in good working order at the time of checkout.
- The checkout limit is for a one-week period and is NOT renewable.
- After 7 days overdue, the patron account will be blocked until the item(s) is returned.

- ECL reserves the right to refuse service to anyone who abuses equipment or returns an item late more than twice.
- Once an item is checked out, it becomes the financial responsibility of the patron until it is returned to library staff.

Checking In:

Library staff will verify the item is in operating condition and do a visual check to ensure that all components are returned in good condition. Any item too large for the drop box must be returned during regular business hours.

Fees and Liabilities:

- Late fines will be assessed at the rate of \$10 per day on anything valued at \$100 or more. There is no grace period for these items.
- Patron is responsible for the full replacement cost of the item in the event of damage, lost, stolen, or otherwise not returned.

Outdoor Sporting Equipment:

In addition to the above statements

- Patron accepts full responsibility for care of the outdoor sporting equipment during check-out and agrees not to alter the equipment in any manner.
- Patron must obey traffic and bicycle path rules and courtesies, as well as follow City of Elgin and State of Oklahoma bicycle regulations.
- Use of a helmet is strongly encouraged and will be provided with every bicycle check-out.
- A bicycle lock will be provided with each bicycle checkout. When left unattended, the bicycle must be locked and secured.
- Patron agrees to treat bicycles in a safe and proper manner. Serious off-road terrain, “trick” riding, jumping of the bicycle, pulling or carrying any other person while using the bicycle is prohibited.
- Patron must obey all lake regulations and courtesies if using a kayak. Life jackets must be worn while kayaking. We have three (3) sizes available that will fit most. If the ones we provide don’t fit, the patron must supply their own.
- Patron will not use the paddle to push off the bottom, as it breaks the ends of the paddles.
- Patron will not drag the kayak across gravel, pavement, or concrete, as it causes holes.
- When left unattended, the kayak must be secured.

- All borrowers must sign a Liability Waiver each time they check out any outdoor sporting equipment

8. Patron Responsibilities and Conduct

It is a patron's responsibility to maintain necessary and proper standards of behavior to protect his/her individual rights and the rights and privileges of other patrons and library staff. Library patrons who violate this policy may be subject to the suspension of their library privileges, be excluded from the library and/or face legal action.

The following behaviors are prohibited on library property, including but not limited to:

- acts in violation of any local, state or federal law
- use of controlled substances or drinking alcoholic beverages
- engaging in sexual conduct or lewd behavior
- vandalism or the deliberate destruction or defacement of library property
- theft of library materials, equipment or the personal possessions of other patrons or staff
- behavior that endangers the safety or health of the patron and/or other patrons or staff
- deliberate disruption of library procedures
- use of abusive or threatening language or gestures, or any other language deemed inappropriate for a library setting by the library staff
- creation of unreasonable noise
- bringing animals other than registered service animals inside library buildings without the prior permission of library staff: library programs with animals are excluded
- use of restrooms for bathing or other personal grooming, or damage to bathroom fixtures
- failure to wear appropriate attire: patrons and staff must be fully clothed at all times (for patrons over the age of 4 years)

Young children: ECL encourages visits by young children, and it is our desire to make this important visit both memorable and enjoyable for the child. Library staff are not able to provide short- or long-term childcare or assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children. The library is not responsible if children leave the library property unattended.

Therefore, it is library policy that all children under age six must be accompanied by a parent or designated responsible person while in the library. Also, if the young child is

attending a library program, we require the parent/responsible person to remain in the library throughout the program.

Disruptive children: Children of all ages are encouraged to use the library for homework, recreational reading, and program attendance. Library staff realize that the library will be noisier at busy times and that children by nature can cause more commotion. However, children (whether with parents or not) who are being continually disruptive will be given a warning that he/she must settle down or will be asked to leave the library. If after a second warning the child continues to be disruptive, he/she will be asked to leave the library. If the child needs to contact a parent, they may do so and then wait with a staff person until the parent arrives.

Closing time: Library staff will not take children home nor will staff wait for any length of time with a child for a ride to come at closing time. Staff will wait only long enough for the police to take custody of any children still at the Library at closing time.

9. Responsibilities and Authorities of the Library Board

The authority of a municipal library board is given to it by the City Council through the ordinance that establishes the library. Such a board is advisory and does not govern the library. Responsibilities of the board are:

- Establish a regular schedule for meetings. Board meetings will be held at least four times per year. In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, the time and place of these meetings are provided to the city government and are posted in a public place.
- Establish the policies of the library. Because the board represents the public, it will establish policies for the library that suit the citizens of its community.
- Engage in short- and long-range planning for the library. Board members learn about libraries and library issues and keep themselves informed on trends, changes, problems and opportunities.
- Serve as library advocates. Board members promote the library at all times through daily activities.
- Be active in the state library organization and its efforts to inform the governor and legislature of the benefits and needs of public libraries.
- Serve as a contact point for citizens who want to offer suggestions for the operation of their library.

10. Personnel Policy

- For all employee policies, refer to the City Employee Handbook.

Management Policy: The appointed Library Board shall have all management rights, authorities, and responsibilities as stated in the Oklahoma Code Annotated.

- The Elgin City Council, with assistance from the Library Board shall select, hire, and when necessary for valid reasons, dismiss the library staff.
- The Library Board shall provide an effective orientation for new library staff to assure that they understand the policies and processes related to the daily operation of the library, reporting and budgetary requirements that assure accountability and compliance with the law, the expectations of the board in regard to administrative processes and protocol, particularly as they relate to conducting effective and efficient board meetings, and rules and requirements for state certification and any assistance which is provided by the Library to acquire and maintain appropriate certification.

Administrative Policy: The person hired as director shall be charged with the sole administration of the library, with direction as provided by the Library Board.

- The director will be responsible to the Library Board and the Elgin City Council in matters pertaining to and concerning the library; be present at board meetings and prepare and present such reports and meeting documents as requested.
- The director will have a speaking voice, but not a vote at board meetings.
- The director will maintain financial records in an efficient manner; present periodic reports to the Library Board and to the municipal governing body; and assist the board with the presentation of the adopted request for appropriation to the municipal governing body.
- The director will attend continuing education courses offered by Oklahoma Department of Libraries.
- The director will have the responsibility for collection development for all materials in the library; this includes selection, ordering, processing, weeding, and inventory of the collections according to the guidelines in the policy.
- The director will recommend changes in or additions to library policies as needed. All additions/changes must be approved by the Library Board and City Council.
- The director will perform preparatory work to assist the Board and City Council with regular library planning.
- The director will have the responsibility of setting daily hours for the library. Hours must be approved by the Board and City Council, and open in accordance with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

- The director will have summer programs as mandated by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.
- The Library will observe the following holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous People Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. During these holidays the library will be closed.

11. Volunteers and Friends

The Library Board encourages individuals and groups to volunteer their time and efforts in the service of ECL. A volunteer shall be any person who performs tasks for the Library without wages, benefits or compensation of any kind. Selection of volunteers is the responsibility of the director. In appreciation of volunteer services, the Library acknowledges the need to organize volunteer activities and provides appropriate recognition of the benefit to the library and the communities it serves.

The Library does not accept volunteer work for mandated hours to meet disciplinary requirements.

Rights of Volunteers

- to be respected and valued and to know what their rights and responsibilities are
- to be provided with necessary information to carry out their role as volunteers and to know what is expected of them
- to be provided with orientation and training appropriate to their tasks
- to be given support and supervision
- to be provided with a safe working environment
- to be free from harassment or discrimination

Volunteer Responsibilities

- to carry out the agreed upon duties to the best of their abilities
- to work with the aims, objectives, values and goals of the Library
- to work under the Library rules, regulations and policies, and follow staff directions
- to be honest and reliable
- to be capable of interacting with the public and staff in a positive manner
- remain drug and alcohol free while on the premises

Responsibilities of Library Supervisors Who Utilize Volunteers

- to provide orientation, training, personal protective equipment, and assistance to enable volunteers to meet the expectations of their volunteer positions
- to provide ongoing support and supervision
- to treat the volunteer as an equal partner in achieving the goals of the Library
- to ensure compliance with all aspects of this policy

A library friends' group is a formal association of people who unite to plan and execute, in conjunction with library goals and the needs of the library staff, programs and events to benefit the library. A Friends group is often heavily involved in fund-raising for the library and often oversees periodic book sales.

- All "Friends of the Library" projects should be undertaken only with the full knowledge of the director and the Library Board.
- The Library Board is to receive information about "Friends" meetings, officers, plans, and purposes. This should be done through the director.
- "Friends of the Library" are distinct and separate from the Library Board and cannot assume the duties of the established board.
- Since "Friends" are volunteers, distinct and separate from the Library Board, the director may act only in an advisory capacity for "Friends" activities.
- "Friends" monies cannot be integrated except through direct gifts and donations for specific intents and purposes.
- All public relations work by the "Friends" on behalf of the Library should be coordinated with the director, who may share ideas, offer suggestions, and assist in an advisory capacity throughout the duration of the PR program.

12. Materials Selection/Collection Development Policy

Objectives: The purpose of ECL is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs.

The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The *Library Bill of Rights* and *The Freedom to Read Statement* have been endorsed by the ECL Board and are integral parts of the policy. An effort to provide a balance between differing views will be made, insofar as the availability of items and funds.

The materials selection/collection development policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

Responsibility for Selection: The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the ECL Board. The director is responsible for the purchase, retention, and withdrawal of library materials. The public may request items for purchase, but it is the director who will apply the standards and selection criteria established in this policy to all patron requests.

Criteria for Selection: ECL attempts to provide a comprehensive, well-balanced collection to meet the needs of the community. The main points considered in the selection of materials are community interest, local, state or regional historical significance, contemporary significance or permanent value, accuracy of content, reputation and/or authority of the author, relationship to works in the existing collection in order to achieve an even balance, scarcity of information in that subject area, price, availability, and demand, and favorable reviews from the media or review sources.

Reviews are a major source of information about new materials. The primary sources of reviews are Library Journal and Booklist, however Amazon and Goodreads may also be used.

The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests from library patrons and books discussed in public media. Materials are judged based on the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

Since it is the library's function to make materials available to all users, ECL does not collect rare or unusual materials that require special handling.

Interlibrary Loan: Because of the limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loans are used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

Gifts and Donations: The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are applied to gifts. If donated books/materials are not needed because of duplication, condition, or

dated information, they will be given to the Friends for their book sales. ECL encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.

Any checks or cash received by the Library and not designated for a specific item, or for the Friends of the Library, will be deposited at City Hall weekly. When money designated for the Friends of the Library is received, the treasurer of the Friends will be notified, and the money will be kept safe until the treasurer comes to collect the funds.

By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

Weeding: An up-to-date, attractive and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the director and is authorized by the Board. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authority as donated materials.

Potential Problems or Challenges: ECL recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

Challenged Materials: Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a “Statement of Concern About Library Resources” form which is available in the library. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the ECL Board.

13. Interlibrary Loan Policy

Interlibrary Loan is the process by which a library requests materials from, or supplies materials to, another library.

The patron must hold a valid library card, with no fines or overdue materials. There will be a limit of 5 requests per patron at one time. One way postage fees will be assessed, in addition to any fees assessed by the lending library.

Length of loan is determined by the lending library. Renewal will be determined by the lending library. If a renewal is desired, please contact us 4 days prior to the due date of the material. Materials kept past the due date can jeopardize our borrowing privileges with the lending libraries. If items are requested but not picked up, postage fees will be charged to the patron's card.

14. Reference Service Policy

ECL:

- will provide information in the form of short answers to specific questions and guidance in locating material for patrons who appear in person, call on the telephone, or request information through correspondence
- will assist patrons in the use of the Library and teach basic research methodology, when appropriate (this includes providing help in developing a research strategy and advice on whether a trip to the Library would be worthwhile for individuals who telephone)
- will provide bibliographic verification of items both in the Library and not owned by the Library and will assist patrons in obtaining materials through interlibrary loan, when appropriate
- may refer library users to other agencies and libraries in pursuit of needed information
- may use not only the Library's resources in printed form but consult appropriate digital resources as well as the regional resource library and other agencies by telephone in pursuit of "ready reference" information.

15. Programming Policy

A "program" is a planned interaction between the library staff and the program participants for the purpose of promoting library materials, facilities, or services, as well as offering the community an informational, entertaining, or cultural experience.

Programming includes but is not limited to such activities as story time, activities on non-school days, summer library programs for children, speakers for young adults, and book or author discussion groups for adults.

The Board, in conjunction with the director, will establish a budget and goals for programming to facilitate the effective implementation of this service.

16. Internet Use Policy

ECL provides access to the Internet to enhance the information and learning opportunities for the citizens of the library's service area. While it enables access to a wealth of information that is personally, professionally and educationally enriching, it also opens doors to materials that may be offensive, disturbing, false, and/or illegal. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. As the Internet is an unregulated medium, users need to be good information consumers and question the validity of the information found on the Internet. ECL does not monitor and has no control over information accessed through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. The library neither censors' access to materials nor protects users from information they find offensive. Library users access the Internet at their own discretion, and they are solely responsible for any access points they reach. Parents and guardians of minor children, not the library or staff, are responsible for their child's use of the Internet through the library's connection.

Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

Minors are defined in this policy as children and young people under the age of 16 years.

Disclaimer: The Library having installed and enforced the operation of filtering software in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, will have no liability for damages related to the operation of, or failure of, the filtering software, or for its circumvention by users.

Technology Protection Measures: The Library, either by itself or in combination with its Internet access provider, will install filtering software or other technologies on all library computers with Internet access, and will enforce the operation of same during any use of those computers, to prevent minors from accessing visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors (as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act.) Filtering software is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive but do not eliminate that possibility. Technology protection measures may be disabled by a library staff member, as necessary, for bona fide research or other lawful purposes by people aged 17 and older.

Rules of Conduct

- Only those with a valid ECL card may use the library's internet computers. The Library has two guest passes for those needing temporary usage.
- Internet access will be denied if patrons have overdue books or unpaid fines, until books are returned, or fines are paid.

- Parents of minor children must assume responsibility for their children's use of the Internet through the library's connection. Children under the age of 12 must have a parent or guardian with them when using the library's Internet connection.
- Two persons may share one access session if their behavior or conversation does not disturb other users or Library staff.
- Library patrons are expected to comply with all local, state, and federal laws while using the Internet including but not limited to those concerning copyright, fraud, privacy or obscenity.
- Patrons shall not create and/or distribute computer viruses over the Internet
- Installation, downloading, or modification of software is prohibited.
- Patrons agree not to make any changes to the setup or configuration of the software or the hardware.
- Patrons will respect the privacy of other internet users and will refrain from attempting to view or read material being used by others. Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information regarding library users, including minors, is prohibited.
- Patrons may use the Internet for the receipt and transmission of electronic mail (e-mail) if they use a free e-mail service which will establish and maintain an account for them; the library is unable to manage e-mail accounts for any organizations or individuals.
- Patrons are responsible for all printing charges incurred.
- Patrons agree not to incur any costs for the library through their use of the Internet service.
- Patrons may save Internet material to a USB data key (flash drive). The patron is responsible for bringing their own USB data key.
- Use of an Internet workstation is limited to an hour. The patron may request to extend their session if no other people are waiting for a computer.
- Internet users accompanied by children will be asked to terminate their session if the children create disturbance in the library.
- Computers must be shut down at least 15 minutes before library closing time.
- Library staff are authorized to take prompt and appropriate actions to enforce the Rules of Conduct, and/or prohibit use by people who fail to comply with the Internet Use Policy as stated or implied herein

17. Internet Use Agreement

- I understand and will abide by ECL's Internet Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of the regulations is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense.

Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked, and appropriate legal action may be taken.

- As the parent or guardian of a child under the age of 12, I accept full responsibility for my child's use of ECL's Internet service and agree to oversee my child's use of this service. I understand that the library's access to the Internet is intended and designed for educational and informational purposes. I will not hold the library responsible for materials or information acquired by my child with the library's Internet service. I hereby give permission for my child to use the library's network for Internet access.

18. Equipment Use Policy

- A photocopy machine is available to patrons who wish to copy materials. The current rate is \$0.25 per page, unless the patron has valid student identification. The student rate is \$0.10 per page.
- A printer is available. Printer paper will cost \$0.25 per page, unless the patron has valid student identification. The student rate is \$0.10 per page.
- Color copies/print are \$0.75 per page, unless the patron has valid student identification. The student rate is \$0.50 per page. The printing fee must be paid at the end of the session.
- Copy machine users are advised that there are restrictions on copyrighted materials. Any violation of copyright is the responsibility of the copy machine user.
- A poster printer is available and will cost \$2.50/linear foot.
- Faxing is \$2 for the first page and \$0.50 for each additional page.
- There is no charge to scan to a USB from the photocopy machine.
- Notary service is \$2 for each document notarized.

19. 3D Printing Policy

The library's 3D printer is available to the public for educational purposes to make three dimensional objects in plastic using a design that is uploaded from a digital computer file.

- The library's 3D printer may be used only for lawful purposes. The public will not be permitted to use the 3D printer to create material that is
 - *Prohibited by local, state or federal law
 - *Unsafe, harmful, dangerous or poses an immediate threat to the well-being of others
 - *Obscene or otherwise inappropriate for the library environment

*A weapon of any kind, including blades, guns or gun parts

*In violation of another's intellectual property rights. For example, the printer will not be used to reproduce material that is subject to copyright patent or trademark protection

- The library reserves the right to refuse any 3D print request
- Patrons may only use the printer alongside designated staff and volunteers when they are available.
- Only patrons in good standing (no outstanding fines or overdue items) may use the 3D printer.
- Printing is available on a first come, first served basis
- It is the responsibility of the patron to design his/her own creation and prepare it for printing. Prints are handed over AS IS. Patrons are responsible for paying whether print job is accepted or not.
- The colors available may change without notice, and we cannot guarantee that your selected color will be available.
- 3D printing will cost \$5 per job paid as a deposit plus \$0.30 per gram to offset the cost of the filament and maintenance of the 3D printer. The patron must pay for the 3D print before it can be turned over to them.
- Supervision of the use of the 3D printer by library staff or volunteers does not constitute knowledge, or acknowledgement, of any unapparent final use of the 3D product, and the library specifically disclaims any knowledge thereof.

20. Public Relations Policy

Public relations goals of ECL are:

- to promote a good understanding of the Library's objectives and services among governing officials, civic leaders, and the general public
- to promote active participation in the varied services offered by the library to people of all ages
- The Board recognizes that public relations involve every person who has connection with the Library. The board urges its own members to realize that they represent the library in every public contact. Good service supports good public relations.
- The director will be expected to make presentations and to participate in community activities to promote library services. A reasonable amount of library time will be allowed for preparation and speaking. Materials to be used by the press, radio, or television will be approved by the director.

21. Social Media Policy

Social Media is defined as any website or application which allows users to share information.

ECL values civil dialogue. Library patrons are encouraged to communicate with and provide feedback to the library on all Social Media sites and formats. Library Staff will review all comments and postings and delete material that is inconsistent with the content created by the Library. A person who posted inconsistent content may be blocked from further posting.

Examples of inconsistent content include, but are not limited to:

- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Content intended to harass library staff or other social media users
- Libelous statements
- Comments or hyperlinks not directly related to the discussion
- Spam or commercial advertisements
- Advocates illegal activities
- Videos, photos, audio recordings, or other images that fall in any of the above categories

Response times for all social media questions are contingent upon staff availability and internal library activity level.

22. Photograph Policy

The Library uses photographs of patrons in its publications and social media sites to promote the value, and use of library products and services. Taking photographs of patrons is encouraged and puts the Library at no legal liability. For the purpose of this policy, “photographs” applies to any image of a patron, whether moving or still.

- No permission is needed to take photos of crowds using the library or attending programs
- If photographing an individual or small group of 3 or less, ask first if they mind. No written consent is needed.
- No individual identification will be used unless the library has written consent.

23. Meeting Room Policy

Preference for the use of the meeting room will always be given to the library for library sponsored programs such as story time, teen club, STEAM activities, Advisory Board meetings, Friends meetings, etc. Community groups and organizations engaged in educational, cultural, or intellectual activities and for-profit groups may also use the room.

The meeting room may be reserved for non-library-related activities during regular library hours if there is no conflict with regular usage of the groups stated in the above paragraph, with the approval of the director and meeting the following conditions and fees:

- No meeting shall be disruptive to the library or library patrons
- Smoking and alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all times in building and on the grounds
- Meetings should conclude and the room be cleaned 30 minutes before the library closes⁴
- Set-up and clean-up are the responsibility of sponsoring organizations. All items needed by the renting organization are to be furnished by them, including paper products and trash bags. Trash is to be placed outside in the trash receptacle.
- The party signing the reservation form is responsible for any damage to the room, furnishings or equipment. Children must be supervised at all times by adults of renting parties. The library staff is not responsible for unsupervised children.
- The library nor the staff are liable for any loss, accident, or injury to people or property caused by the groups' occupancy of the room or the use of the library facility.

Fees:

No fees will be charged for non-profits. The room must be clean and in good order when leaving or privilege will be withdrawn.

For other individuals/groups the room is available during regular library hours for a \$25 non-refundable deposit plus a \$5 per hour rental fee provided there are no conflicts with regularly sponsored programs and upon approval by the director. Any damage to the furniture, equipment or carpet shall be charged on an individual basis. This applies to everyone using the facilities.

Failure to give a two-day notice in advance of non-use will forfeit the fee.

Failure to comply with the meeting room use policies or the library's "Code of Conduct" may result in denial of future use of the space, financial liability for damages, and/or immediate removal from the room.

Name of contact person:

Number of contact person:

Are you non-profit? YES_____ NO_____ Amount paid:

Date room requested_____

What time do you require the room? FROM_____ TO_____

I have read and do understand the rules and conditions of renting the Library Meeting Room.

Signature_____

Date_____

24. Public Notice Bulletin Board Policy

Materials may be submitted by nonprofit organizations to be displayed. Bulletin board materials may be submitted for posting by nonprofit organizations for civic, educational, or cultural purposes. Such organizations may submit literature publicizing a specific event. Limited space generally allows only short-term notices. The library staff must approve all postings and may prohibit postings which do not meet library standards. The library staff will place and remove postings promptly. The library will not be responsible for returning materials.

No for-profit, commercial, or personal notices will be posted.

25. Art Exhibit and Display Policy

ECL welcomes artists to display their artwork on our Art Gallery Wall for a period of one (1) month. Exhibits will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, social, political, or religious views of the artist. Exhibits are intended for the cultural and recreational

enjoyment of our community members and contribute positively to the library's environment.

Goals of Art Exhibits:

- to support the community's cultural and artistic activities
- to nourish educational, intellectual, aesthetic, and creative growth with a wide range of art
- to encourage individuals who may be contributing to the increase of knowledge or extension of the arts
- to reach non-traditional library patrons

General Guidelines:

- All exhibits must be suitable for viewing by all ages.
- The library director reserves final approval over any works to be displayed.
- The presence of a particular display in the library does not indicate that the library either advocates or endorses the viewpoints of exhibits or exhibitors.
- All artworks must be suitably framed and equipped by the exhibitor with hanging hardware (typically screw eyes and wire or hanging brackets). No direct attachment to library walls is allowed. Library staff, with the assistance of the exhibitor, will hang and take down artwork which utilizes the library wall mounted gallery hardware.
- Exhibit materials that are not collected by an exhibitor within two (2) weeks of the end of an exhibition become the property of the library and may be disposed of in any manner the library deems fit.
- No prices should be affixed to items. No exhibited item(s) may be sold through library staff. At the exhibitor's discretion, the library will share their contact information with those who express interest in artwork pricing or purchasing information. Works which are sold must remain on display until the exhibit's end date.
- Exhibitors grant the library the right to photograph any work displayed in the library for publicity purposes. The library may publicize the exhibit via press releases, postings on its website and social media, posting in the library, and other means. The exhibitor is welcome to publicize the event as they see appropriate at their own expense.
- The exhibitor assumes all risks for works of materials which are displayed in the library. The library and its staff shall not be responsible for any damage to the artwork while on display. The library insurance does not cover materials on loan to the library.

- All exhibits are free and open to the public.
- Prior to displaying, all exhibitors must sign an Exhibit Agreement & Release Form that releases the library from any responsibility for loss or damage to items displayed at the library.

Elgin Community Library Exhibit Agreement & Release Form

I understand and agree with the above guidelines and responsibilities:

Name of Exhibitor _____

Address _____ **Phone** _____

Start date of exhibit _____ **End date of exhibit** _____

Date artwork must be removed from the library _____

Exhibitor Signature _____

Library Representative _____

Date _____

26. Disasters Policy

These policies are to anticipate possible emergencies and disasters and implement measures to reduce any indecisions should such conditions occur. The Library wishes to ensure the safety of people first and reduce the amount of damage to the library's facilities and materials as much as possible.

Fire

Do not panic, but do not underestimate the potential danger to patrons or staff represented by a fire. At the first indication of smoke or flame, evacuate all patrons. Investigate the situation to determine location and extent of the fire. If the fire can obviously be contained and extinguished quickly and safely by staff, proceed to do so.

However, if there is any doubt about whether the fire can be controlled immediately call 911 or the fire department and then clear the building.

The time to think about fires is before they happen. Familiarize yourself with the type, location, and application of the fire extinguisher(s) in the building.

Health Emergencies

Staff members should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the safety of the injured individual and the potential liability of the staff member. Without specialized training it is not advisable for staff to undertake more than keeping the sick or injured patron comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help can be obtained. Since each case is unique, staff members should use their own judgement to do what is prudent and reasonable.

Look for “medic alert” type tag to indicate any special problems.

911 should be called immediately in the event of any serious problem.

No medication, including aspirin, should ever be dispensed to the public.

Bomb Threats

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message and try to write down every word spoken by the person.

If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or the time of possible detonation, ASK FOR THIS INFORMATION.

Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music and any other sounds which may indicate where the location from which the call is originating.

Listen closely to the voice (male, female), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.

Immediately after the caller hangs up, call the police. Clear the building. The police will handle the actual bomb search.

Weapons

The ECL Board does not permit weapons of any kind, either concealed or in plain view, on its property or in its buildings, unless the owner of the weapon is a law enforcement officer.

Storms

The Library will follow the recommendation and actions of the city between 8am and 4pm, Monday through Friday. Closing during other days and hours will be at the discretion of the director and the mayor. In the event of an emergency the Library will be closed by the library staff.

There are no tornado shelters in the library. Patrons will be directed to the nearest one.

All computers and equipment will be turned off during thunderstorms. If emergency sirens sound, library staff will close the library.

Security Issues

In case of physical threats, call 911. Incidents, such as stalking, thefts, or vandalism, that do not pose any current threat shall be reported to the mayor, city clerk and local police department. Copies of the police and incident reports will be kept on file.

27. Smoking Policy

It is the goal of this policy to provide a comfortable, healthy environment for the public and library staff. Smoking and the use of tobacco, vapor or marijuana products are not permitted on ECL property.

28. Revision of Library Policies

The preceding statement of ECL's policies shall be subject to review and needed revision at least every five years by the Library Board. Individual policies will be reviewed or added as needed. Disagreements concerning any aspect of these policies may be appealed to the Library Board in writing.

Proposed and adopted in its entirety by the Elgin Community Library Board on February 2, 2021. Approved by the Elgin City Council on February 9, 2021. Amendments approved by the Elgin City Council on January 14, 2025

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 which 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.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>).

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life.

Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the

application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. **We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.**
- II. **We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.**
- III. **We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.**
- IV. **We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.**
- V. **We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.**
- VI. **We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.**
- VII. **We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.**
- VIII. **We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.**

Adopted June 28, 1995, by the ALA Council

Open and Concealed Gun Carry Laws in Oklahoma

Oklahoma allows most people to carry concealed handguns—and to carry all firearms openly—without a license. But a few places are off-limits to guns.

By [E.A. Gjelten](#), Author and Editor

Defend your rights. We've helped 95 clients find attorneys today.

Please answer a few questions to help us match you with attorneys in your area.

Do you have current criminal charges?

--Select an answer--

Oklahoma has long been an "open-carry" state, allowing most adults to carry guns openly, without a permit, as long as they have a legitimate purpose and aren't violating other laws. The state became even more gun friendly in 2019 by eliminating the license requirement for carrying concealed handguns. But not everyone is allowed to carry guns in the state, and firearms are still restricted in some locations. This article summarizes the state's laws on carrying guns in public.

Who May Carry Guns in Oklahoma

Without a license, you may openly carry handguns, rifles, and shotguns in Oklahoma for legitimate purposes—including self-protection on your own property, hunting, and target shooting. You also don't need a license to carry a concealed handgun most places in the state, as long as you have a legitimate reason and aren't violating other [weapons laws in Oklahoma](#). Along with the prohibitions in those laws on mere possession of firearms by certain people, you aren't allowed to carry a firearm if you've been convicted of:

- [assault and battery that is aggravated](#) or that seriously injures the victim
- [domestic abuse](#)
- [stalking](#)
- violation of a [domestic abuse protection order](#), or
- illegal drug possession or use.

It's also illegal for undocumented immigrants to carry handguns and dangerous firearms.

The state still issues handgun licenses, which could allow Oklahomans to carry concealed handguns in states that require the permits and recognize out-of-state licenses. (Okla. Stat. tit. 21, §§ 1272, 1277, 1283, 1287.6, 1290.7, 1290.9 (2019).)

Guns in Cars

In vehicles, legal gun owners may carry concealed handguns—either unloaded or loaded—and unloaded rifles or shotguns. Clip- or magazine-loaded (but not chamber-loaded) rifles or shotguns are allowed in vehicles as long as they're in a locked compartment. If you're stopped by police, you must tell the officer that you have a gun in your car; failing to do so, however, will only get you a \$100 ticket. (Okla. Stat. tit. 21, §§ 1289.7, 1289.13 (2019).)

Restricted Places and Circumstances for Carrying Guns

The Oklahoma Constitution guarantees citizens the right to bear arms to defend themselves or their property. But it's a felony (punishable by up to two years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$5,000) to carry a gun or any other deadly weapon with the intention of hurting someone else illegally (Okla. Const., art. II, § 26; Okla. Stat. tit. 21, § 1278 (2019).) The state also restricts carrying guns under certain circumstances and in certain locations, including schools and bars.

Schools

Even if you're otherwise allowed to have and carry a gun, you may be charged with a [misdemeanor in Oklahoma](#) (punishable only by a fine of up to \$250) for bringing any firearm or other offensive weapon onto the property of K-12 schools, voc-tech schools, or school buses. There are exceptions including guns carried by authorized personnel and weapons properly stored in vehicles when dropping off or picking up students. (Okla. Stat. § 1280.1 (2019).)



Bars and Carrying Guns While Under the Influence

It's a [felony in Oklahoma](#) (punishable by up to two years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$1,000) to bring a gun into a bar or other establishment where alcohol is consumed, unless you're the owner or an on-duty law enforcement officer or private investigator. People with a concealed carry license can bring handguns into restaurants and other establishments where liquor sales aren't the main purpose of the business.

It's also illegal to carry or use guns while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or even prescribed drugs if they affect you enough to cause abnormal behavior. If found guilty of this crime, you may be punished with 10 days to six months in jail and/or a fine of \$50 to \$500. (Okla. Stat. tit. 21, §§ 1272.1, 1272.2, 1289.9 (2019).)

Other Public Places

The state prohibits carrying handguns in certain other places, including:

- courthouses, jails, and prisons
- government buildings or offices used for public business
- colleges, universities, or technology center schools
- publicly owned sports venues during pro games, and
- legal gambling establishments.

None of these restrictions apply in parking lots or wherever guns are specifically permitted. As usual, there are also exceptions for law enforcement and other authorized personnel. Depending on the location, penalties range from simply being denied entrance to a \$250 fine. (Okla. Stat. tit. 21, § 1277 (2019).)

Changes in the Law and Legal Help

Because states can change their laws any time, you may want to check the current Oklahoma statutes using this [search tool](#). Court decisions may also affect how laws are applied and interpreted. That's a good reason to consult a qualified criminal defense lawyer if you have questions about whether and where you're allowed to carry a gun in Oklahoma, or if you're already facing charges for a gun violation.