

## Morton-James Public Library

### Unattended Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

#### Definitions

**Vulnerable adults: an individual 18 or older who has the functional, mental, or physical inability to care for themselves. It can also refer to one who is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.**

Morton-James Public Library welcomes and encourages all to use our facilities and services. We aim to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all patrons, however it is not the responsibility of library staff to monitor those left unattended. The following guidelines must be followed regarding the care and behavior of children and vulnerable adults. These guidelines are for when the health or safety of a child or vulnerable adult is in doubt; a child or vulnerable adult is frightened while alone at the library; the behavior of a child or vulnerable adult disturbs other library patrons and has caused staff to ask the individual to leave the library; or a child or vulnerable adult has not been met by a parent, guardian, or caregiver at closing time. Enforcement of these rules will be conducted by the library staff.

Children under the age of 8 years old, and vulnerable adults, must be attended to and consistently supervised by a responsible person (parent, guardian, caregiver, or mature adolescent of 14 years or older). If children in this age group or vulnerable adults are found unattended, library staff will attempt to contact the person responsible for their supervision. If the caregiver cannot be reached, a member of the staff will contact the police.

Children 8 years and older are able to visit and use our resources without the supervision of a guardian as long as their behavior aligns with our code of conduct.

Those responsible for children or vulnerable adults in the library are to be within sight of their children or vulnerable adults at all times. Caregivers are to remain in the same room and attentive to the actions and behavior of the children or vulnerable adults with them. The library staff are available to assist children and vulnerable adults with accessing our materials and services, however the staff are not to perform the duties of caregivers.

If a child or vulnerable adult is left unattended at closing hour, an attempt will be made to contact their caregiver. If the caregiver cannot be reached, the library staff will remain no longer than 15 minutes after closing. If the child or vulnerable adult still remain after that amount of time, the police will be contacted and the unattended patron will be placed in their care.

Repeated violation of the unattended children and vulnerable adults policy is grounds for suspension of the library privileges for the entire family. The suspension may be addressed by writing a letter or email to the Library Director.

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