

COAL CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER POLICY*

ADOPTED BY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

December 13, 2016

REVIEWED
DECEMBER 8, 2020

*Denotes legal language

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER POLICY*

The Board of Trustees, administration and the staff of the Library acknowledge that registered sex offenders live within the communities that are served.

Public libraries are recognized as a community gathering place and a primary point for information of all kinds. The Library acknowledges that the right to some level of access to a public library is constitutionally protected under the First Amendment right to receive information. To that end, all individuals are welcome in our Library, provided that in so doing they do not violate the law or any Library policies/procedures.

Like many other states, the State of Illinois enacted the "Sex Offender Registration Act" (730 ILCS 150/1, et Seq.) which requires all persons adjudicated sexually dangerous who are later released, or found to be no longer sexually dangerous and discharged, to register with proper local law enforcement authorities so that their whereabouts are known by these authorities. The "Sex Offender Registration Act" also prohibits child sex offenders from residing within 500 feet of a school, park, playground or other facility providing services exclusively to persons under the age of 18. As public libraries do not provide services exclusively to persons under the age of 18, registered sex offenders in Illinois can live within 500 feet of a public library.

AREAS OF ACCESS

Whenever a registered sex offender wishes to enter a Coal City Public Library District facility, they need to be aware of the following limitations with regard to where they can go and what they can take part in while on Library property.

Registered sex offenders **MAY NOT**:

- A. Loiter or linger outdoors on Library property.
- B. Loiter or linger in stairways or the elevator or any other common areas of the Library.
- C. Be present in any areas of a Library facility that are primarily for the use of minors, including but not limited to the Children's or Teen's Departments

as a whole, any story time room or room being used for Children's or Teen's programming and the Teen Area.

- D. Attend Library programming whose audience/participants can be reasonably expected to contain minors.

Registered sex offenders **MAY**:

- A. Visit the Library collection areas intended for adults.
- B. Use a public computer - however, registered sex offenders will not be allowed to utilize the computers in the downstairs adult area as they are also intended for use by teen-aged minors. Rather, registered sex offenders will be allowed to use the computers upstairs in the non-fiction area, as availability permits.
- C. Request and receive quality adult reference service, place holds on Library materials, check out materials with a Library card in good standing, and otherwise receive access to Library information.
- D. Attend Library programming intended exclusively for adults.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

If they are the parent or legal guardian of a minor child (with proper paperwork documenting this), a registered sex offender may accompany that child into areas of the Library facility that are primarily for the use of minors, into programs intended for minors, etc. so long as abuse is not suspected and the minor remains with the registered sex offender the entire time.

STAFF EXPECTATIONS

With regard to staff knowledge of use of public library facilities by registered sex offenders, staff are not expected to regularly review the registered sex offender database. However, Library staff may know that an individual is a registered sex offender because the individual has self-identified, law enforcement has

provided identification or staff may have independent personal knowledge. In such cases, the Charge Person should be notified and should advise the sex offender of the Registered Sex Offender Policy.

If another patron advises staff that a registered sex offender is on the premises, the patron will be allowed to point out the individual and, if possible, provide the name of the alleged sex offender. The Charge Person will then be notified and review the sex offender database to confirm whether the individual is a registered sex offender. If the individual is a registered sex offender, the Charge Person will advise the sex offender of the Registered Sex Offender Policy. If the name of the purported sex offender cannot be obtained or the fact that the individual is a registered sex offender cannot be confirmed, the individual will not be approached.