

Free Speech Rights of Citizens

JPAB Policy # 601

Adopted: 10/2010

Revised: 6/2018

Five-year Review Schedule: 2023

Santa Cruz Public Libraries (the Library) supports the free speech rights of citizens while respecting and balancing the need to maintain an inclusive, safe, enjoyable library experience for all. Accordingly, the Library permits exercise of free speech rights subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions consistent with the nature of the library as a limited public forum.

The public library, central to a community's civic life, celebrates and reflects local and national diversity. A place of exploration, learning, and entertainment, the public library creates an environment where people engage with each other respectfully, learning about human experiences other than their own. As such, the Library does not tolerate obscenity, abusive conduct, or disruptive activities directly or indirectly focused at patrons, staff, or the community at large. The Library applies the Code of Conduct Policy to maintain an equitable library experience for all, and does not tolerate discrimination or abuse of individuals based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

In all cases, the exercise of free speech rights on Library property remains subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions to ensure such exercise does not impede Library operations or patronage. Library sidewalks, pathways of ingress and egress, and parking areas on Library property may not be blocked at any time. No petitioning or collections may be taken on Library premises, and no funds or business solicited or direct sales made except by the Library or the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries or their agent.

Members of the public with questions about this policy should contact the Director of Libraries.