

WEBSTER PARISH LIBRARIES
SEX OFFENDER POLICY

In accordance with its by-laws, the Webster Parish Library Board of Control has adopted on this 26th day of October, 2012 the following policy for the purpose of:

- Compliance with the statutory mandates set forth in La. R.S. 14:91.2.
- Protecting children from contact with persons who have been convicted of sex offenses where the victim was less than 13 years of age.

Act 693 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature amended and re-enacted R.S. 14:91.2 to add “public library property” to the places where certain sex offenders may not be physically present. The new law also prohibits “loitering” within 1,000 feet of public library property. R.S. 14:91.2 is a criminal statute. If a sex offender violates the statute, the offender is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment at hard labor for up to one year.

Act 693 does not create an obligation on the part of the public library employees, volunteers, or board members to document the presence of sex offenders or report violations of Act 693. Public library employees, volunteers, and board members are immune from all civil and criminal liability as long as they are acting in good faith in carrying out this law.

REGULATIONS

- I. Effective January 1, 2013, persons who have been convicted of sex offenses where the victim was under the age of 13 (referred to as “sex offenders” for purposes of this policy) are restricted in their access to public library property, as follows:
 - a. Children’s Areas – No sex offender shall be physically present in any area of the library designated as a “children’s area” or “young readers’ area” in branches where these areas are separate or set apart.
 - i. Persons wishing to obtain an item from these areas will ask a staff member for help.
 - ii. In branches which do not have separate children’s areas, persons shall stay within view of the Circulation desk or other manned workstation.
 - b. Peak Children’s Hours – No sex offender shall be physically present on public library property during peak hours of children’s use of the library.
 - i. During the school year, peak hours are defined as 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
 - ii. During the summer, peak hours are defined as 9:00 am to 11:00 am and 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

- iii. Peak hours of children’s use also include hours during which children’s programs are scheduled. A schedule of events may be found online.
 - c. Loitering within 1,000 feet – No sex offender shall loiter within 1,000 feet of public library property. (See list of exceptions below.)
 - d. Employment - No sex offender shall apply for, work for, or otherwise provide services to a library branch as an employee, contractor, sub-contractor, or volunteer.
- II. Exceptions to these restrictions are:
- a. Police station/courthouse/polling station – There shall be no violation of this regulation if the sex offender is reporting to a police station, courthouse, or polling station that is within the restricted area.
 - b. With special permission – There shall be no violation of this regulation if the sex offender has a valid reason and has requested and has been granted written one-time permission to be physically present on public library property from the library director and branch manager, and the sex offender complies with any special restrictions contained within the permission.
- III. The Library Director shall be responsible for developing and implementing administrative and management procedures in furtherance of the policies stated herein. Recommended procedures include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. Background checks – Implement procedures to provide that library employees, contractors, sub-contractors, and volunteers who will interact with children or will be required to work in the restricted areas may be subject to criminal background checks.
 - b. Configuration – To the extent possible, each library branch shall be arranged in a manner to ensure that areas devoted to children and young readers may be easily supervised by library staff, and such areas are segregated from other library resources and facilities.
 - c. Notice – Implement procedures to ensure adequate public notice of each library branch’s times and dates of peak children’s hours and children’s programming. Adequate notice may include posting such information in a prominent location near the library’s entrance and/or on the library’s website.
 - d. Surrogate – Implement procedures to allow sex offenders to authorize a surrogate to check out library materials using the sex offender’s library card.
 - e. Enforcement – Implement procedures to update policies, where necessary, and enforce policies regarding unattended children.
- IV. The Library Director and members of the public are invited to make future recommendations to the Library Board to improve this policy or suggest legislative changes that will allow public libraries to more effectively achieve the public

purposes set forth herein. Those recommendations, along with any supporting documentation, should be submitted annually to the Library Board by or before June 30th, Attention:

Library Director
Webster Parish Libraries
521 E and West Street
Minden, LA 71055

AUTHORITY NOTE

Act 693 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature amended and re-enacted R.S. 14.91.2. The effective date of the Act is January 1, 2013.