

<b>Policy Adopted by Board – February 2026</b>	
Policy Name	<b>Responsible Conduct Policy - Public</b>
Version number	6
Policy date	February 2026
Date to be reviewed	February 2029
Responsibility	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with delegation to Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
Related YPRL Policies and Procedures	Employee Code of Conduct Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Standard Operating Policy and Procedures Internet Access Policy Privacy Policy Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Unattended Children Procedure Social Media Policy Incident Management and Reporting Procedure Responsible Conduct Procedures Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy, Standards and Guidelines

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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Responsible Conduct Policy (the Policy) is to contribute to Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Service being:

- a safe place.
- a welcoming place.
- a respectful place, where:
  - needs and interests can be pursued freely.
  - people show due regard to the needs, sensitivities, and rights of others.
- a place where collections, services and programs are inclusive of people where we support the rights of all people regardless of age, gender, ability or background.

The Policy defines the commonplace standards of behaviour expected when engaging with YPRL either in person, via email, telephone, social media and/or any other internet communication platform. YPRL has zero tolerance for persons whose behaviour can be deemed unreasonable, offensive, abusive or threatening to its staff, Board members and/or members of the community

YPRL staff are empowered to determine whether or not behaviour is unacceptable for the purposes of the policy.

YPRL supports its staff to cease interactions with a customer behaving unreasonably where it may be unsafe for the employee, including asking a customer to stop, asking them to leave YPRL's premises and/or terminating a phone call.

## 2. Scope

The Policy applies to the management of unreasonable patron behaviour and those adversely affected by unreasonable and/or unsafe behaviour, as defined in the policy.

The policy is part of a YPRL's safe working environment framework. Where a patron is displaying behaviour that is deemed unreasonable and/or unsafe, YPRL staff will refer to the policy and guidelines outlined in YPRL's Occupational Violence and Aggression framework.

## 3. Related Legislation

The Policy is supported by:

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic);

*Child Safe Standards 2022*; and

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025

## 4. A Risk Management Approach

YPRL will consider appropriate risk controls to address unreasonable, or unsafe behaviour appropriate to the risk arising for YPRL staff, board members and/or members of the community. YPRL will consider the frequency, duration and severity of the unreasonable or unsafe behaviour in measuring the harm or impact that may result from the behaviour.

## 5. Terms and Conditions of Entry:

All persons entering YPRL premises must abide by the Terms and Conditions of Entry to YPRL premises set out in **Schedule 1**.

## 6. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>CEO</b>	Means the person holding the position of Chief Executive Officer of Yarra Plenty Regional Library
<b>Executive Leadership Team (ELT)</b>	Means any one of the following people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Manager Public Participation</li> <li>• Executive Manager Corporate Services</li> <li>• Executive Manager Technology and Assets</li> </ul>
<b>YPRL Staff</b>	This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>
<b>Inconsiderate, unreasonable, or offensive behaviour</b>	Behaving in a way that may cause offence to a reasonable person.
<b>Infringement of security and safety</b>	Events, actions, or behaviours that harm, create risk of harm or threaten harm.
<b>Incident Report</b>	A report that is prepared following an infringement of security or when a person refuses to cooperate with YPRL staff enforcing the Policy.
<b>Senior Officer in Charge</b>	Any YPRL employee who is designated supervisor during that shift.
<b>The Policy</b>	The Responsible Conduct Policy
<b>VIC POL</b>	Victoria Police
<b>Yarra Plenty Regional Library premises</b>	Branch libraries at Greensborough, Eltham, Ivanhoe, Rosanna, Watsonia, Lalor, Mill Park, Thomastown, Mernda and Whittlesea; any transport service operated by the YPRL and any other premises or areas that YPRL has leased, hired, or otherwise contracted to use. Surrounding common areas are subject to the Policy only if the YPRL has contracted the use of those areas.

## 7. Policy

### 7.1. Standards of behaviour

YPRL libraries welcome and are here for everyone in our communities

This Policy reflects YPRL's values of inclusion and acceptance and is underpinned by the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#), notably the role and function of public libraries including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, freedom of expression, taking part in public life and cultural rights. This is applied through the observance of two commonplace standards of behaviour:

- that the security and safety of people or property is not infringed.
- that due regard is shown for the needs, interests and rights of others.

Failure to observe these standards is considered unacceptable.

### 7.2. Inappropriate conduct

#### 7.2.1. Inconsiderate or offensive behaviour:

This is including but not limited to:

- (a) failing to observe all the Terms and Conditions of Entry to YPRL premises as set out in Schedule 1.
- (b) abuse of YPRL property, or behaviour that puts YPRL property at risk, including misuse of furniture and eating or drinking in non-designated areas.
- (c) abuse of YPRL systems and processes (e.g. deliberately misfiling library material, circumventing booking systems).
- (d) advertising, petitions, or protest materials must not be displayed or distributed in the library without prior written approval from management.
- (e) refusal to comply with any government mandated regulations (such as during a state of emergency).
- (f) child abuse or neglect.
- (g) bringing alcohol/illicit drugs into the library, or being in the library while intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol/illicit drugs (consumption of alcohol at an authorised program or event in one of YPRL's spaces is exempted).
- (h) smoking or vaping in the library, or within four metres of the library entrance.

## 7.2.2 Unreasonable or Unsafe Behaviour

Unreasonable or unsafe behaviour refers to conduct from members of the public that places an excessive burden on library YPRL staff, resources, or services, or risks the safety and wellbeing of others. Behaviour is considered unreasonable when its frequency, intensity, or impact disrupts operations, causes harm, or is disproportionate to the issue at hand. Such behaviour may occur onsite, online, by phone, or in writing, and can include but is not limited to:

- (i) Unreasonable persistence: continuing to pursue issues that have been resolved or lack merit, repeatedly reframing complaints, or contacting multiple YPRL staff after being asked to stop.
- (j) Unreasonable demands: making requests that are impossible, excessive, or outside the library's capacity, or insisting on access or outcomes without justification.
- (k) Unreasonable lack of cooperation: refusing to engage constructively, ignoring reasonable instructions, or providing disorganised or misleading information that blocks resolution.
- (l) Unreasonable arguments: presenting claims that are illogical, trivial, inflammatory, or without evidence, creating disruption or offence.
- (m) Unsafe or aggressive behaviour: any conduct that harasses, intimidates, threatens, abuses, or endangers YPRL staff or others, including racist, defamatory, or violent actions or language.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Eye rolling or sneering, intended to intimidate or belittle
- Yelling, swearing, name-calling
- Physical intimidation, including standing over YPRL staff or patrons
- Spitting, shoving, tripping, grabbing, hitting, punching
- Threats of violence or with weapons; slamming, kicking, or throwing objects
- Physical or sexual assault
- Unreasonable persistent behaviour or demands, especially after an issue has been addressed
- Argumentative behaviour targeting individuals without respect for their dignity
- Defamatory or personally abusive or insulting statements (including online posts)
- Attempts to intrude into personal life of YPRL staff or other patrons
- Stalking (in person or online)

### 7.2.3 Infringing the security and safety of people or property

Infringing the security and safety of people or property includes:

- (n) events, actions or behaviours that harm, create risk of harm or threaten harm, including intimidation and harassment;
- (o) theft or malicious damage of property, including personal property and the property of YPRL;
- (p) trespass, including unauthorised entry to non-public areas and unauthorised access to YPRL information systems.

### 7.3. Animals

- (q) Animals are not permitted to enter YPRL premises unless they are guide or assistance animals (usually dogs) or express permission has been provided by YPRL in connection with an animal friendly event on site.
- (r) Guide or assistance animals include:
  - (i) mobility support animals that help people with physical disabilities who use wheelchairs or otherwise have unique physical attributes that cause them difficulty moving around, hearing or interpreting their surroundings;
  - (ii) medical alert animals that help people before or during a medical emergency;
  - (iii) psychiatric services animals that help people with mental illness.
- (s) YPRL will require, as a condition of entry to YPRL premises, evidence that the guide or assistance animal is formally trained to help manage a disability and meets minimum standards of hygiene and obedience, e.g., an obedience certificate from an obedience training organisation listed on Animal Welfare Victoria Assistance Dog Registration Scheme website, or registration under the Animal Welfare Victoria Assistance Dog Registration Scheme
- (t) Should persons bring animals on YPRL premises, they must have in possession for production on request, evidence of registration and/or obedience certificate.
- (u) It is the responsibility of the handler of the assistance animal on YPRL premises to ensure at all times that:
  - (iv) the animal is controlled by a fixed lead and under effective control at all times by the handler;
  - (v) the animal behaves in a non-aggressive manner towards YPRL patrons and YPRL staff and other assistance animals on premises;
  - (vi) the animal remains obedient to their handler's commands;
  - (vii) the animal maintains a quiet presence and does not engage in barking;
  - (viii) the animal remains calm within the premises;
  - (ix) the animal does not defecate or urinate on premises;
  - (x) the animal does not sit or lie on library furnishings;

- (xi) the animal does not shed excessive amounts of fur or excessively drool;
- (xii) the handler cleans up and removes any mess made by the animal on YPRL premises;
- (xiii) the animal does not block doors, aisles or other thoroughfares;
- (xiv) the animal is in a clean state so as not to damage or dirty YPRL property.

#### **7.4. Photography and filming in YPRL premises**

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of other library patrons, filming and photography are prohibited in YPRL libraries without prior approval. When permission has been given, filming or photographing another person without their consent is prohibited. Any person who is found to be photographing or filming on library premises without permission will be asked to cease and if this request is refused will be ejected from the premises.

#### **7.5. Incident Report**

An Incident Report will be completed following any of the circumstances described above.

#### **7.6. Enforcement of this Policy**

The initial response to inconsiderate, unacceptable or offensive behaviour is to encourage the person responsible to behave in a more considerate manner. Ejecting a person from YPRL premises or terminating communication with YPRL is a last resort, only ever warranted after conciliatory approaches have failed, or in response to infringements of security.

YPRL staff are empowered to manage, report, and respond promptly to identified inappropriate, unreasonable or unsafe behaviour, to maintain a safe and welcoming library environment for all patrons.

YPRL supports its employees to cease interactions with a patron behaving unreasonably where it may be unsafe for YPRL staff or patrons. This can include but is not limited to asking the patron to stop, asking them to leave the premises or terminating a phone call.

YPRL may, where appropriate and proportionate, put in place communication protocols to restrict how a customer engages with YPRL employees, volunteers and/or contractors. This may include restricting communications through one email address and/or YPRL contact.

A person on YPRL premises whose behaviour is unacceptable, and who fails to heed initial approaches by YPRL staff to cease the inappropriate conduct, will be informed by the Senior Officer in Charge that under the Policy they will be ejected from the premises.

The authority to initiate the ejection of a person from YPRL premises under the Policy is delegated to the Senior Officer in Charge. The rationale for ejection will be communicated to the person involved prior to ejection.

A patron who is ejected from YPRL premises, will not be permitted to re-enter the premises until the next day it is open to the public.

The above may not necessarily be applied in a specified sequence. For instance, a serious breach may result in a final withdrawal of access or referral to VIC POL for further action without a written warning.

## **7.7. Bans**

### **7.7.1 Grounds**

A person may be banned from entering YPRL premises or communicating with YPRL staff on the following grounds:

- Where there are infringements of security, safety, inappropriate, unreasonable or unsafe behaviour as outlined above in 7.2, Inappropriate Conduct;
- They have been the subject of multiple Incident Reports of any nature.

### **7.7.2 Authority to ban**

An ELT member has the authority to issue a ban for up to six (6) months with endorsement of the YPRL CEO. YPRL will notify the member councils and where required, the YPRL Board of the ban.

Should a ban exceeding 6 (six) months be required, YPRL will seek authorisation from the YPRL Board.

### **7.7.3 Consequences**

A person who has been banned may be issued with a letter on the premises or may be informed by registered letter or email of the ban. The letter will include a summary of incidents leading to the ban, the basis of the ban in policy, the duration of the ban and appeal rights and procedures.

If a person breaches the Responsible Conduct Policy after their ban period has ended, the duration of any subsequent ban may be increased at the discretion of the Executive Leadership Team with endorsement of the YPRL CEO, noting that any ban longer than six (6) months will need to be issued in consultation with the relevant member council and YPRL Board.

Repeated or escalating breaches may result in longer-term or permanent exclusion from YPRL libraries.

The duration of a ban is determined by circumstances leading to the ban and whether the banned person has been previously warned or banned.

A banned person who is seen on YPRL premises will be immediately asked to leave by the Senior Officer in Charge.

Entering or attempting to enter YPRL premises during the term of a ban is grounds for extending the ban and/or may also result in VIC POL intervention.

#### **7.7.4 Appeals**

A person who has been banned may appeal to the CEO to reduce the duration of the ban. The CEO may delegate consideration of the appeal of the ban to an ELT member but not to the ELT member who originally issued the ban.

The determination of the appeal will be made by consideration of the available Incident Reports and records, and any case put forward by the person seeking the review.

The appeal should be settled within one (1) week of its receipt and the individual person informed of the outcome as soon as is practicable.

A person who has been banned may also escalate their case to the [Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#) or contact the Victorian Ombudsman. Information regarding the appeals process will be included in the letter issued to the person who has been banned.

#### **7.7.5 Register of bans**

A register of current bans is maintained and kept at YPRL Library Support Services (LSS) offices to enable and assist YPRL staff to enforce any current ban. The Register may include a copy of the ban notice and other information identifying banned people, including photographs.

### **7.8. Protection of Yarra Plenty Regional Library Property**

YPRL may seek restitution for serious damage to, or theft of YPRL property resulting from apparently intentional or reckless actions.

## **8. Information privacy**

All records relating to inappropriate behaviour and measures proposed or implemented to address the behaviour will be maintained in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*.

## **9. Responsibilities**

The Responsible Conduct Policy and Procedures will be reviewed every three (3) years, to ensure a shared understanding of the policy and procedures and to ensure most effective application of the policy at YPRL.

## Schedule 1

### Terms and Conditions of Entry to YPRL Premises

YPRL is committed to providing a shared, safe place with respect of all.

By entering YPRL premises, you agree to:

- Treat others with respect and courtesy at all times.
- Follow instructions given by YPRL staff.
- Take responsibility for your own belongings. We advise not leaving any item unattended.
- Be mindful of your noise level. Conversation is welcome but we must also be respectful of the needs of others.
- Respect library property and keep library spaces clean.
- Ensure any children that you are responsible for are supervised.
- Only bring animals that are guide or assistance animals.
- Keep guide or assistance animals under appropriate management and control.
- Only take photographs or videos if permission has been sought and granted by YPRL.

Unacceptable behaviour, including not following the directions of library staff, may lead to you being asked to leave the premises. YPRL staff have absolute discretion to request you to leave the premises.

Incidents of unacceptable behaviour, or refusal to follow directions of YPRL staff, may result in you being banned from attending YPRL premises.

Please assist YPRL staff to make your visit enjoyable by cooperating with their requests.

**[END OF RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT POLICY – PUBLIC 2026]**