

# Policy

TITLE: Unattended Patron  
APPROVED BY: Board of Trustees  
APPROVAL DATE: May 8, 2024  
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 8, 2024  
NEW  REVISED

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Peabody Public Library strives to maintain a safe and comfortable atmosphere for all of our patrons. The intention of this policy is to prevent any issues with safety and/or noise that may occur because of children or other patrons being in the library without appropriate supervision. Library staff are not licensed child caregivers and as such cannot be responsible for the supervision of children left unattended at the library.

The library is not able to provide short- or long-term childcare or to be responsible for patrons with special needs.

- Children 8 years old or younger, along with at-risk minors and adults, must have a parent or adult caregiver in the immediate vicinity of and in visual contact with the child. Adults may not leave their young children unattended in the Children's Department while using other areas of the library.
- Children 9 years of age and older may use the library unattended if they are engaged in activities associated with the use of the public library. In all situations, the adult caregivers who have transported minor children onto the library premises or who have otherwise directed or allowed minor children onto the library premises, shall be responsible for the care and safety of such children while they are on the library property. The library is not responsible for the care and safety of minor children traveling to and from the library.

If a child under the age of 8 is found unattended and/or is causing disruption, library staff will attempt to identify the child and locate the parent or caregiver and inform them of the rules. If the adult caregiver cannot be found in the library or contacted, a staff member shall contact the Columbia City Police Department.

Any minor child, 9 years of age or older, causing disruption in the library may be asked to leave the library property. If a child is not able to leave the library without an adult, then they should not be in the library without a responsible party.

Any unattended children must be picked up from the Peabody Public Library by the time the library closes. After 10 minutes, if library staff are unable to reach a responsible adult, the Columbia City Police Department will be contacted and they will take control of the situation upon their arrival. Under no circumstances will a staff member drive a child home or any other destination. A Peabody Public Library incident report is filed for unattended children.