

TITLE: Customer Suspensions – Short and Long Term **POLICY:** A-1012

AUTHORITY: Chief Executive Officer

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POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy and accompanying procedures support Policy A-1009: [Customer Conduct - Management of.](#)

When a customer’s behaviour threatens the safety of staff or other library customers and/or violates the acceptable use of library spaces, equipment or services, their access to and use of library services and/or library facilities may be suspended.

Through the “Agent Status” agreement in place for all EPL service points, Edmonton Police Services (EPS) may suspend individuals from library facilities.

Authority and Suspension Lengths for Various Offenses

Below are minimum suspension lengths for various offenses and their authority levels. Repeated offenses or offenses deemed to be more serious in nature, may result in longer-term suspensions. Where the suggested minimum length states “up to”, Managers may use their discretion in recommending a suspension length for their Director’s consideration. Note that some infractions may require consultation to determine suspension length as they relate to repeat behaviour and/or illegal activities.

Infraction	Minimum Suspension Lengths	Authority to Initiate and Communicate Suspension	Authority to formally Issue Suspension
Minor Disturbance including Computer Violations	Up to one month local	Library Staff	Service Point Manager, Library Services Coordinator
Intoxication (alcohol or drugs) - first infraction	One day local <i>(Repeat offenses will be three months or more system wide)</i>		All Staff Milner Security
Intoxication (alcohol or drugs) - repeated infraction	Three months system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Service Point Manager
Possession of open** alcohol or drugs - repeated infraction	Up to six months system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services

Consumption of and/ or selling controlled substances, drugs or alcohol in the library	One year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Property damage	Up to one year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Harassment (verbal abuse or threatening statements)	Up to six months system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Sexual Harassment or Sexual Misbehavior	Up to one year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Physical Altercation or physically threatening behaviour with no contact	One year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Weapons (display or use)	One year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Other illegal activities	One year system wide	Service Point Manager Milner Security	Director, Branch Services
Significantly severe cases of offenses above	Up to three years	Director, Branch Services	Executive Director, Customer Experience
Physical Assault causing bodily harm or extensive damage to Library property	Up to Five Years	Director, Branch Services,	CEO

**** Open alcohol means the seal on the bottle is broken, the alcohol is in a cup or other container, or the can/bottle is uncapped.**

Discretion needs to be applied when considering the duration of a suspension for juveniles, and those with cognitive disabilities. For suspensions where conditions of use are attached, Managers should discuss options with their Director prior to proceeding with a suspension, as conditional usage such as attending the library with a case worker, parent or guardian present may be considered.

Library staff have the authority to issue one day suspensions. Staff will apprise their managers of the suspension and complete an incident report.

Managers and Library Services Coordinators approve local suspensions in length of up to one month. Managers may also approve system wide suspensions for up to three months for repeated intoxication or intoxication along with other inappropriate behaviours e.g., verbal abuse, threatening remarks. Managers are encouraged to consult with their Director when there is uncertainty around a decision.

Directors approve suspensions of 3 months to 1 year. The Executive Director, Customer Experience approves suspensions beyond one year and up to 3 years. The CEO approves suspensions beyond 3 years.

Appeals

Suspended customers are entitled to an appeal process. Directors may provide provisions for reinstatement to EPL, based on the offense and the individual's appeal. For example, a customer may be permitted to return to the library only if the individual is escorted by a guardian. For local suspensions, customers may appeal directly to the branch management team of the branch where the incident occurred.

Appeals to the Director's decisions may be heard by the Executive Director, Customer Experience and/or CEO, as appropriate.

Procedures

Confirm Customer Identity:

Identity of the customer must be confirmed before issuing a suspension. As per the Library Use Policy: "All persons using facilities or services provided by the Library shall provide correct names and current addresses when requested to do so by library staff or as otherwise required."

Photographing Customers Involved in Incidents:

- Staff or Security may photograph customers, on an exceptional basis, to support documentation of an active, serious incident when a) a customer's identity is unknown and b) when staff or customer safety is being threatened.

A photograph should not be taken if doing so will escalate the situation or compromise staff safety.

If a suspension includes verbal or physical assault, or damage to library property over \$500, a request may be made to Facilities to get a screen shot from video cameras, if available. Alternate sources of photos, such as Facebook or other online sites may also be used.

Suspension Dates:

Suspensions are issued for terms that are one day less than the incident date. For example, for a three-month suspension effective on March 15th, the suspension will extend until June 14th inclusive; the individual is welcome back to EPL on June 15th.

Short-Term (Local) Suspensions (1 month or less)

For minor offences, Managers or Library Services Coordinators may impose a short-term suspension, suspending a customer's use of a service point and/or its Internet stations for up to one month.

1. Staff issue a verbal warning, notifying the customer about the inappropriate activity, requesting that the action cease.
2. If the activity persists, the customer is asked to leave. In the case of computer activity, the computer session is terminated.

3. A printout of the customer's booking history, if applicable, and a description of the incident may be provided for the Manager/ Library Services Coordinator. Staff will submit a record of the incident into the incident reporting software.
4. Service Point Manager or Library Services Coordinator enters the term of the suspension and the branch where the incident occurred into Workflows as a note, and then blocks the card for access at that branch in MyPC. Managers will enter the length of the suspension in the incident reporting software.
5. For suspensions in excess of 7 days, the Manager provides written notification to the customer and uploads a copy of the notification to the incident report in the incident reporting software. If the customer is under the age of 18, the Manager will attempt to contact the guarantor before a letter is sent.

Intoxication Suspensions Combined with Other Inappropriate Behaviour

Managers have the authority to issue a system wide suspension for up to three months for repeated intoxication or when intoxication is combined with unwanted or inappropriate behaviours (e.g. verbal abuse, threatening remarks). System-Wide suspension procedures are to be followed with the following exceptions:

Note: Any staff member may require/request an intoxicated individual leave the branch for the day without issuing a suspension. These incidents should be tracked in the incident reporting software.

1. Managers will enter the length of the suspension in the incident reporting software.
2. Manager enters suspension into Workflows. Manager initials and enters the date (MM/DD/YYYY), changes PIN, and bars the card.
3. Managers will compose a letter, based on the template and deliver to the suspended customer (or guarantor/guardian if the individual is under 18) and upload a copy of the letter in the incident reporting software.

Note: Managers will be provided a template for the letter.

4. Managers will make an entry into the Suspensions blog with the name, branch and Incident Report number.

System-Wide Suspensions

When an incident is more serious in nature (e.g., a customer's behaviour is illegal, verbally abusive or threatens the safety of staff, customers or security agents, or is a repeat offence), a longer-term, system-wide suspension will be issued.

1. Service Point Manager submits the incident report, which includes the suspension request. This generates an automatic e-mail to their Director, Branch Services and others, as required. At Stanley A. Milner, security agents have the authority to initiate and communicate suspensions in the following instances:

- Repeat intoxication or intoxication combined with other poor behaviour
- Drug dealing
- Open possession or alcohol and/or drugs
- Use of alcohol and/or drugs, including opioid poisonings
- Observed purposeful EPL property damage or fire alarm (not accidental)
- Observed sexual misbehavior

Note: Suspensions initiated by security agents at Stanley A. Milner will be required to submit incident report(s) to the Director, Branch Services, who will review the suspension length for final approval and initiate the suspension procedures that follow.

2. Service Point Manager enters suspension into Workflows: "Suspension pending", Manager initials and enters the date (MM/DD/YYYY), If the customer returns to the library prior to the suspension being approved by the director, staff may not ask a customer to leave for trespassing.

Note: If the customer is a collections accounts customer the Manager will also bar the account in MyPC. If the customer enters the branch while the suspension is pending, staff will advise the customer of the pending suspension and ask them to leave until a decision has been made.

3. Directors, Branch Services review and approve/deny long-term system-wide suspension. Directors may consult with the Director, Facilities Services Division on security-related issues.

Note: Decisions regarding all suspension requests (approved or not approved) are communicated by the Directors to the Service Point Manager(s) and the Administrative Assistant.

4. Once the suspension is approved, the Administrative Assistant drafts a letter to the customer for the Director, Branch Services, updates the suspension length in the incident reporting software, uploads the letter and mails it if an address is available.
5. Service point Manager updates the suspended customer account in Workflows: "Suspended from EPL until MM/DD/YYYY". Manager initials and notes the branch where the suspension applies, changes PIN, and bars the card.
6. At a minimum, each Friday, the Administrative Assistant updates the Suspensions list on the Safety and Security staffweb page, noting the names of the individuals, the branches and the incident numbers.
7. For serious infractions of harassment, assault, property damage, or other illegal activities, the service point manager should fill out an EPS witness statement.

Note: In the case of Internet suspensions, privileges are suspended system-wide, regardless of the length of the suspension.

Suspended Customers Who Re-Enter the Library

If suspended customers re-enter the Library, they are asked to leave and if they refuse, library staff call Security or Edmonton Police Service (EPS). All trespassing is to be noted in the incident reporting

software as an additional incident and the Administrative Assistant needs to be copied in the notifications tab for tracking purposes.

Issuing Suspensions Greater than one year

In some escalated incidents, a suspension greater than one year may be issued. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. The Directors, Branch Services use the following guidelines when making recommendations for issuing suspensions greater than one year:

Up to 3 years

- Physical assault/ harassment of staff, customers or security agents
- Threat of assault of staff, customers or security agents with a weapon on display
- Incidents involving two or more infractions within a one-year suspension category such as a physical altercation combined with sexual harassment

Up to 5 years

- Actions taken that: a) result in staff, customers or security agents requiring medical attention, b) result in significant damage to Library property or c) are serious enough to warrant this length of suspension

Systemwide Suspension Appeal Procedures

Appeals are addressed through meetings with a Director, Branch Services, and the Director, Facilities Services Division or designate(s). Directors may provide provisions for reinstatement to EPL, based on the offense and the individual's appeal.

Procedures:

1. Customers with system-wide suspensions may request an appeal meeting by submitting a [suspension appeal form](#) to the Administrative Assistant as per instructions in the suspension letter. Suspension appeals are conducted at Stanley A. Milner or by exception, via video call.
2. Generally, the suspended customer must wait 2 weeks before requesting an appeal meeting.
3. Appeals are not offered for any suspension when the remaining length of the suspension is less than 4 weeks.
4. Suspensions can be retained, reduced or rescinded. Typically, the rationale to amend suspensions is made if the customer makes a compelling argument that the behaviour will not occur again.
5. Once a decision is made, the Director, Branch Services formulates a response and responds to the customer in writing.
6. In instances where the suspension is reduced or rescinded, the Administrative Assistant will update the PITS incident and communicate to the Service Point leadership team where the incident occurred. The manager will update the customer's account as appropriate.
7. EPL will conduct one suspension appeal meeting per customer. Under exceptional circumstances, a secondary appeal meeting may be conducted.

8. For suspensions greater than a year, the suspended customer will be required to meet with EPL to discuss the incident and demonstrate remediation or a change in behavior prior to reinstatement of EPL privileges.

Related Policies and Procedures

[Public Internet Access Policy \(B-2010\)](#)

[Library Use Policy \(B-2028\)](#)

[Customer Conduct - Management of \(A-1009\)](#)

[Camera Surveillance \(A-1010\)](#)

[Incident Software System Report](#)

System Wide Suspension Process

Submission

- Manager submits suspension request via the Incident Reporting software that includes suggested length of suspension
- Manager enters note into Workflows: "Suspension pending", manager initials and date entered (MM/DD/YYYY),
- If the customer is a collections accounts customer the Manager will also manually bar the account in MyPC.

Review

- Directors, Branch Services review the request and incident report.
- Directors may consult with the Director, Facilities and Operations on security-related issues.

Approval

- Directors, Branch Services approve/deny suspension recommendation except for three month intoxication suspensions which can be approved/denied by Branch Manager.
- Directors, Branch Services email Administrative Assistant (AA), and cc manager, with suspension approval to draft suspension letter for signature or suspension denial.
- If suspension approved, manager enters suspension into Workflows: "Suspended from EPL until MM/DD/YYYY", changes the PIN, bars the card and cancels holds for suspension of one year or suspends holds if less than one year.
- AA enters the approved suspension length into the Incident Reporting Software
- Note: If suspension denied, manager removes note from Workflows.

Letter

- AA prepares suspension letter for signature, uploads a copy to the incident reporting software and mails to customer.
- AA creates a blog post in the suspensions news blog channel on staffweb
- **For 3 month system-wide intoxication suspensions and branch suspensions:**
- Manager prepares and signs suspension letter.
- Manager enters the suspension length into the Incident Reporting Software
- Manager creates a blog post in the suspensions news blog channel on staff

Timelines:

- Suspension Review / formal suspension submission – 24 hours
- Suspension Approval – 24 hours
- Suspension Letter – 48 hours

List of Categories:

- Computer Violations
- Customer Distress
- Drugs and/or Alcohol
- Minor Disturbance
- Near Miss
- Offsite Incident
- Physical Altercation
- Property Damage
- Sexual Misbehavior
- Staff Injury
- Theft
- Harassment
- Weapons
- Trespass