

Mason Public Library

Petitions and Solicitation Policy

Adopted 5/19/2017

The Mason Public Library has the authority to make reasonable rules that are universally applicable regarding the allowed use of library buildings and property, including content-neutral restriction of conduct involving passing out literature. The public sidewalks around the Library property are a traditional public forum subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on those wishing to use them for purposes protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

Circulating petitions for signatures or leafleting inside the Library is prohibited. It disturbs the orderly operation of the Library and may make some patrons feel harassed. Also, it may give the appearance that the Library is supporting a specific cause or issue. As such, the Library allows people to circulate petitions and distribute leaflets outside library facilities, subject to the following rules and regulations:

1. Persons circulating petitions for signatures or leafleting may stand on Library property; however, they may not engage in collecting signatures or distributing leaflets inside Library buildings.
2. Circulation of petitions for signatures and/or leafleting must take place outside Library buildings at least forty feet (40') from entrances and exits, due to patron comfort and safety.
3. Persons circulating petitions for signatures and/or leafleting shall not block, hinder, interfere, or otherwise impede persons and staff wishing to enter or exit Library buildings or to use book returns, nor seek to intimidate patrons or staff into signing a petition or accepting a leaflet.
4. Persons circulating petitions for signatures and/or leafleting shall not occupy areas designated as fire or emergency lanes, shall not occupy parking spaces, and must stay clear of traffic lanes and vehicular entrances.
5. Persons circulating petitions for signatures and/or leafleting are not allowed to place or erect tables, chairs, or signs on Library property.
6. Persons circulating petitions for signatures and/or leafleting are not allowed to place leaflets or materials on vehicles in the Library's parking lot.
7. Persons circulating petitions for signatures and/or leafleting may not block doorways, prevent patrons from getting in or out of cars, use abusive language, or behave in any way which is harassing or intimidating.
8. Only one person at a time is permitted to solicit signatures for a single petition or leaflet.

9. No work or petitioning on behalf of candidates for elected office is allowed in Library buildings or on Library property.
10. No leafleting or distribution of literature, or solicitation is permitted for the purposes of selling items, merchandise, tickets, or other for-profit activities and services.
11. Not-for-profit fundraising activities are not permitted in Library buildings or on Library property by any person or organization when the purpose is to benefit a group or organization other than the Library or the Volunteer Friends of the Mason Public Library.
12. The Library has the right to ask any person circulating petitions or leafleting to provide his or her name and/or their supervisor's name, address, and a copy of the petition or leaflet to Library staff.
13. The Library staff, Volunteer Friends of the Mason Public Library, and members of the Library Board of Trustees are exempt from the above constraints in promoting Library activities and issues.

Persons who fail to comply with any of the above policies or procedures will be asked to leave the Library premises and may be barred from the right to circulate petitions or distribute leaflets in the future. The above policies or procedures are to be adhered to at all times, even in inclement weather.

The Library will not assume responsibility for any harm or injury suffered by persons circulating petitions or leaflets, or by those who are signing a petition.

The presence of persons circulating petitions or distributing leaflets outside the Library facility does not constitute the Library's endorsement of any candidate, nor does it constitute support or opposition of the subject matter of any initiative or referendum. The presence of a person circulating petitions or distributing leaflets outside the Library facility does not constitute the Library's endorsement of the policies, beliefs, or political affiliations of any person or group circulating petitions or distributing leaflets.