



**DOWNERS GROVE
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

1050 Curtiss Street
Downers Grove, IL 60515
630-960-1200

November 18, 2022

The Downers Grove Public Library (DGPL) is committed to providing a safe experience for all staff and patrons to discover, grow, play, and learn. We strive to fairly and consistently enforce our Code of Conduct while leading with empathy.

DGPL works closely with the Downers Grove Police Department to address issues in and around the library, including providing training to library staff on safety and security. Individuals whose behavior violates the Code of Conduct may be banned from using the library. The library has no control over what occurs outside of its doors, but inside, the library would like to assure patrons that there are policies and procedures to keep our community safe. Those policies can be found on the library's website, at dglibrary.org/transparency.

The library acknowledges that situations that cause concern may occur in our building, as they may with any other public building. Our board has been closely following the safety and security needs of the library, and patrons may find records of conversations and research around the topic in recordings and minutes of previous board meetings. To reassure patrons who are concerned: the library does have policies and procedures around how to handle incidents, and we remain in close communication with the Downers Grove Police Department.

The library is a public building, meaning anyone may enter its doors. The issues of homelessness, drug abuse, and mental health in the Downers Grove community did not originate at the library, nor can they be resolved by the library alone. We work with many partner organizations such as the Village of Downers Grove, DuPage County Health and Human Services Committee, DuPage Pads, Hope's Front Door, People's Resource Center, and NAMI DuPage to address these issues. In addition, the library has hired full-time monitors, increased camera surveillance, provided additional training to staff with the assistance of the Downers Grove Police Department, and created a program to host social work interns from Aurora University. Additional resources and solutions are currently being considered.

None of these issues can be assumed simply by an individual's appearance, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, the library assesses and responds to each situation in accordance with its policies and procedures. Library staff consult the Downers Grove Police Department to make informed decisions on how to respond to specific situations or improve response to future situations.

DGPL values transparency while operating within the constraints of the Illinois Library Confidentiality Act, First Amendment Rights, employment law and employees' rights to privacy, Freedom of information Act, and

laws protecting minors' privacy. Community members from all demographics come to the library and our incident reports reflect this. The reality is that many patrons who are involved in incidents do not fit the stereotype that comes to mind. We encourage everyone to use critical thinking and check their sources when forming an opinion on this topic; misinformation and disinformation can be used to divide neighbors and community members when we should be working together to create solutions.

DGPL recognizes the importance and seriousness of safety and security at the library. We are actively continuing conversations around this topic, and are working to provide an opportunity to address community questions. We hope community members will join us in this conversation with empathy, approaching it with open and curious minds. Additionally, we will be entering our strategic planning process in the new year and look forward to inviting community members to share their input at that time.