

**LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA**

POLICY TITLE: **Abusive and threatening language and treatment:
Library staff response**

IMPLEMENTATION: *Threatening Language:* Take all threats seriously.

On the Telephone -

Tell the person it is against the law to make a threat on the telephone and you are calling the police. Hang up and call police.

In Person -

Leave the area. Get to protected place. Call police. In isolated area, use panic alarm to call police.

Abusive Language and Treatment:

A customer may be considered abusive for such behaviors as the following: calling you names, swearing at you, shouting or screaming, raging in anger.

A useful initial response to abusive language or treatment is to say something like, "As long as you are willing to listen and not (shout, swear, or whatever is abusive about the person's conversation), we would be glad to work with you to resolve the situation."

On the Telephone - Explain that you will not take abusive language (or treatment)(and that you are hanging up. Then hang up.

In Person - Explain that you will not take abusive language (or treatment) and that you will not help them further. Then move to another customer or, if necessary, remove yourself from the immediate area.

It is in your best interest to remain as calm and cool and businesslike in voice and manner as you possibly can. If you respond in kind, there is potential for escalating the problem. The customer can claim your fault in the situation.

If the library customer complains about your assertive response that you will not take abusive language or treatment, tell the customer you are authorized to take care of yourself and they are welcome to call administration to discuss the matter.

Approved by Library Board: January 17, 1995