

LS 403 Use of Library Parking Lots and Property

Section: 400-Facilities

Effective: August 2024

Purpose

This policy provides a uniform process for managing library parking lots and property including the towing of vehicles that are unauthorized, abandoned or in inappropriate locations on library property pursuant to Hillsborough County's Parking Ordinance (Hillsborough County Ordinances and Laws Chapter 50 Article V, Sections 50-113 -50-115). Florida Statute 715.07 defines a vehicle as any mobile item which normally uses wheels, whether motorized or not.

Policy

Library parking lots are for library customers and staff to park their vehicles while using the library. Overnight parking is prohibited. Any other usage must be approved by Library Administration who can authorize parking on library property by county, state or other government personnel for use in connection with their functions and duties. Library parking lots shall not facilitate school drop-off or pick-up lines as this creates safety concerns and traffic congestion for customers.

Florida Statute 125.0231 prohibits public camping or sleeping on government property; therefore, these actions constitute inappropriate use of Library parking lots and property. In accordance with LS501 Library Code of Conduct, sleeping anywhere on library property, including in a vehicle, is prohibited. Unauthorized vehicles, including bicycles will be considered abandoned if left on library property for over 48 hours. Abandoned vehicles are subject to removal by the authorized towing company. Abandoned bicycles will be removed by Facilities staff.

All vehicles are required to be within designated parking spaces. Vehicles parked outside of designated parking spaces, using multiple parking spaces, on sidewalks or crosswalks, in designated disabled parking spaces without proper permit, parked in driveways, blocking entrances, exits, book drops, garbage dumpsters or drive throughs, are inappropriately parked. Bicycles need to be parked in designated bike racks, placing them in any other area is unsafe and inappropriate parking.

Library staff will attempt to notify owners of vehicles and bicycles parked inappropriately on library property. Failure to relocate vehicles parked inappropriately will result in towing by the authorized towing company. Bicycles will be removed by County Facilities.

Procedure

The authorized towing company will provide signage, in accordance with Florida Statute 715.07, for each library branch location. Additional Library Parking Only signs will be posted at each applicable entrance and exit.

Unauthorized and abandoned vehicles left on library property overnight will have a Warning Notice placed under their driver's side windshield wiper referencing library policy, requesting compliance, and noting consequences of failure to use library parking within stated guidelines. Staff will document in HCPLC Report the date the Warning Notice was issued along with the make, model, license plate number, VIN (if visible), and any other necessary details about the vehicle. If the vehicle has not been moved within 24 hours, a second Warning Notice will be issued and documented in HCPLC Report. If a vehicle has received two Warning Notices and has not been moved after 48 hours, designated staff will notify the authorized towing company to remove the vehicle. Staff will follow the above procedure for abandoned bicycles including taping the Warning Notice to the seat and completing an HCPLC Report. If they have not been removed in 48 hours and two Warning Notices have been issued, staff will submit a Facilities work order request to have the bicycle removed from the property noting if a lock needs to be cut-off. Once removed an HCPLC Report will be completed by staff.

When vehicles or bicycles are determined to be parked inappropriately on library property, staff will attempt to contact the owner using the library's intercom system or by word of mouth. Staff can seek assistance from Contracted Security Personnel (off-duty officers and security guards). After 1 hour and reasonable attempts have been made to locate the owner and the vehicle or bicycle has not been relocated, staff will contact the authorized towing company for removal or submit a Facilities work order to have the bicycle removed. Before the vehicle has been removed from library property by the authorized towing company, staff will gather the following information: make, model, color, license plate number, VIN (if visible), and any other necessary details. Once the vehicle has been removed staff will complete an HCPLC Report with the vehicle information noted above and the specific time the vehicle announcement was made, time the towing company was called, the time the vehicle was removed. Staff will then contact Electronic Reference and Information (ERI) with the vehicle information.