



Town of Chatham

Council on Aging
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Chatham Council on Aging Code of Conduct and Standards of Independence

The Town of Chatham Senior Center has established this Behavior Policy to ensure that all of our Senior Center and agency sponsored events are welcoming, safe, and provide equitable access to services for all participants. Appropriate behavior at the Chatham Senior Center is expected at all times. Generally, the vast majority of center participants, volunteers and staff show respect for others and contribute to an atmosphere that is safe and welcoming. However, when any one person's behavior is so disruptive, threatening and/or offensive that he or she is impeding other participants from confidently and comfortably attending the center, center-sponsored events, or seeking center services, it is imperative that steps are taken to remedy the situation. Steps will be taken to address and correct the disruptive person's behavior, or failing that, suspend the person from the center.

It is expected that Chatham Senior Center participants, volunteers and staff be able to function independently, responsibly, and appropriately. The Chatham Senior Center is not staffed to provide therapy, personal care, or to supervise the behavior of individuals. **The COA reserves the right to require that a personal caregiver accompany and attend an individual to the Senior Center.** If, at any time, a Chatham Senior Center staff member, volunteer or participant feels that his or her personal safety is in jeopardy, the offending party will be asked to leave the center. If the offending party refuses, a call will be made to local law enforcement. These situations may involve threatening or aggressive behavior, or overt interference with the normal operations of the center or commissions of an illegal act. These behaviors will not be tolerated.

No individual may engage in inappropriate conduct at a Chatham Senior Center or agency sponsored event. Inappropriate conduct includes any individual or group activity which is disruptive to other individuals lawfully using Chatham Senior Center services, or is otherwise inconsistent with a peaceful and law abiding demeanor.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are permitted in the Council on Aging. It is expected, however, that people using cell phones will be respectful of others. To allow COA staff to do their work, cell phone use is not permitted in the COA lobby and front office area. To provide an optimal environment for COA participation in all other parts of the building, people are asked to silence their cell phone ringers (set to vibrate) and that calls be kept short. Lengthy calls should be made in appropriate areas where the conversation does not disturb others. These appropriate areas differ daily due to varied use of the building to accommodate programming and service provision. Please honor requests for quiet and move to another location if an unintended distraction occurs. Thank you for your cooperation.

Inappropriate Behavior

The following are examples or conduct that shall be deemed “inappropriate.” This conduct is not consistent with responsible attendance at the Chatham Senior Center or an agency sponsored event. This is not an exclusive list and other forms of conduct may require staff intervention or be deemed inappropriate by the Chatham Senior Center staff. Failure to consistently comply with Chatham Senior Center policies may result in expulsion or suspension.

Inappropriate behavior requiring staff intervention includes but is not limited to:

1. Loitering without purpose in the Chatham Senior Center, their entrances, or parking lots.
2. Failure to wear footwear and shirts on premises.
3. Knowingly entering non-public areas of the Chatham Senior Center premises.
4. Interfering with Chatham Senior Center staff in the performance of their duties.
5. Canvassing, selling, soliciting, or engaging in any other commercial or political activity on Chatham Senior Center premises unless approved by the Director of the Chatham Senior Center.
6. Behavior that is disrespectful or verbally abusive.
7. Creating a disturbance by engaging in disruptive conversation above normal conversational noise levels (whether in person or on a cell phone), deliberately making excessive noise, shouting or talking in a disturbing fashion, the gratuitous use of profanity or engaging in other disruptive conduct.
8. Bringing any animal onto Chatham Senior Center premises, except service animals, unless approved by the Director of the Chatham Senior Center.
9. Leaving personal packages, bags, and backpacks, unattended.
10. Putting feet on the furniture or misusing Chatham Senior Center property.
11. Usage of the computer and/or Internet so as to cause harm to others or damage the property of others.
12. Exhibiting body hygiene that is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance or a health hazard to other individuals in the Chatham Senior Center facility building.

Prohibited Behavior

The following prohibited behaviors will be seen as grounds for immediate expulsion and/or suspension from the Chatham Senior Center or agency sponsored events. Refusal to leave the center or agency sponsored events, when asked to do so by the Chatham Senior Center Director or Designee, will result in a call to local law enforcement for assistance.

1. Being present at the Chatham Senior Center or attending center activities or events while under the influence or possession of alcohol and/or drugs.
2. The use of threatening language. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, physical threats, name-calling, obscenities, sexist and/or racist language.
3. Behaving in a physically violent, abusive, aggressive and/or threatening manner, or any behavior that would put a person’s safety in jeopardy.
4. Possession of weapons or explosive substances, other than those authorized by law enforcement personnel.
5. Panhandling (food, money, cigarettes, etc.) at the Chatham Senior Center.
6. Interfering with the Chatham Senior Center staff’s ability to deliver Center services, or to create and maintain a safe and secure environment for other participants.
7. Committing any criminal offense or participating in any illegal activity.
8. Usage of the public computers and/or Internet so as to: cause harm to others or violate the law, to encourage others to violate the law, or view, transmit, or download sexually explicit pornographic materials or child pornography.