

LIBRARY POLICY MANUAL

CIR-3: Circulation of Library Materials

Date Issued: 7/21/04

Revised: 10/16/13

Attachments:

Fines and Fees Table

I. Policy

It is the policy of the library to check out and check in library materials as quickly as possible while ensuring accurate transaction records and inventory control of library materials.

A. Non-Circulating Materials

The following library materials do not circulate outside of the library:

1. Newspapers;
2. The most recent issue of magazines;
3. Reference books (except under special circumstances—See also the Loan of Reference Materials Policy)
4. Local History materials

B. Loan Periods

Loan periods for individual items are determined as follows:

1. **Three (3) weeks** for books, back issues of magazines, books on audiodisc, compact discs (music)
2. **One (1) week** for DVDs
3. **Eight (8) weeks** for book club kits
4. Ebooks and eAudios may be checked out for a maximum of 21 days, and the patron has a choice of limiting the loan period to 14 or 7 days. Some downloadable content may have special circulation periods or may have no expiration period.
5. Seniors (patrons over 62 years of age) receive an extra week for all types of materials except for DVDs.
6. Some items, such as the annual Consumer Checkbook Guide to Federal Health Plans, are given a special circulation period.
7. The loan period for an interlibrary loan is set by the lending institution.

B. Limitations on Circulation

The maximum numbers of items of a particular type allowed on a single account at one time are:

1. DVDs—five (5) (in any combination)
2. Compact discs (music)—ten (10)
3. Books on audiodisc—ten (10)
4. Back issues of magazines—ten (10)
5. Ebooks and eAudios—seven (7) (in any combination)
6. Books—fifty (50)
7. Book Kits—three (3)

D. Delinquent and Blocked Patron Records

Patrons are considered “delinquent,” and borrowing privileges are suspended, under the following conditions:

1. They have accrued over \$5 in overdue fines or other charges;
2. An item borrowed by the patron is 8 weeks or more overdue.

A record may also have a “manual block” placed on it by Circulation staff pending the resolution of a specific problem. For example, the Circulation staff puts a block on a record if the patron reports that their card is lost. In these cases, a note is placed in the patron record specifying the reason for the stop, and what needs to be done to remove the stop.

Resolution of the fine/fee situation so that there is less than \$5 owed on the record, or return of items more than 8 weeks overdue and resolution of any resulting fine/fee situation, immediately removes the delinquent status. Blocks are removed when the stated problem is rectified.

Circulation staff override the delinquent or stopped status for the following reasons: pending a shelf-check for a disputed item; for patrons paying down a large fine through a payment plan; or pending resolution of a disputed fine amount.

Circulation staff extend loan periods, by request, for patrons who are out of town for extended periods and who would not be able to renew.

E. Renewals

Circulating items may be renewed two (2) times, for a period of time equal to the original loan period, as long as that item is not reserved by another patron. Renewals are also subject to restrictions due to patron delinquency, blocked

records, etc. In addition, some items, such as eBooks and eAudios, may be non-renewable by policy or by definition.

Patrons may renew in person at the Circulation desk with or without the items, by phone, or online. Renewal loan periods are calculated from the date of the renewal.

F. Special Circulation Policies

Non-circulating reference items may be allowed to circulate under certain conditions, according to the Loan of Reference Materials Policy. Other items may be assigned special loan periods as needed.

G. Return of Materials

Items may be returned to the Circulation desk during operating hours, or to the outdoor bookdrops at any time. Items may be returned by mail, although the returned date is the date that the item is received and checked in, and the patron is responsible for any items lost or damaged in transit.

Items returned to the book drop prior to opening on a given day are considered to have been returned the previous working day. Overdue fine amounts are figured accordingly.

The patron is responsible for any fines accrued due to late return of an item, any charges related to damage determined to have been done to the item while checked out to the patron, and any replacement costs and processing fees associated with items that are not returned to the library.

H. Fines and Fees

It is the policy of the library to assess charges in accordance with the attached Fines and Fees table.

The Library Director may change fines and fees without notice in accordance with fines and fees rates approved by the Library Board of Trustees. The fine and fee rates are reviewed annually, or more frequently as the need arises. Fines and fees rates are posted in the library and are available on the library website.

Borrowing privileges are suspended when a record has accrued \$5.00 in fines or fees. The Circulation Supervisor or the Library Director may waive or reduce fines and/or fees. A patron may appeal a decision regarding reduction of fines or fees either in person or in writing to the Library Board of Trustees if not satisfied with the decision.

Payment options for resolving fines or fees include payment by cash, check, credit card, or debit card. Credit card payments are accepted by phone. Payment plans which allow a patron to continue to use the library despite fines and fees in excess of \$5.00 may be arranged with the Circulation Supervisor or the Library Director in cases where payment of fines may constitute a hardship for the patron.

Fine amnesty events may also be scheduled by the Library Director and the Library Board of Trustees. For example, fines are regularly waived for patrons making a charitable food donation during a “Foods for Fines” drive.

Library staff and members of the Library Board of Trustees are not assessed fines or fees. Volunteers with a minimum of six months of continuous service are not assessed fines or fees. Exiting staff members or volunteers are charged fines or fees for items unreturned at the time of their departure.

In addition to other maximum fine or fee limits, there is a \$25 maximum fine for overdue items returned and paid for at one time. If overdue charges for all items returned at one time exceed the \$25 maximum, those excess charges are waived.

Fees for lost or damaged items include a processing fee (see Fines and Fees Table, attached). This fee is reflected in the listed replacement cost of the item in the library database. **The library does not accept replacement-in-kind for lost or damaged items.** A patron may receive a partial refund, minus the processing fee, for lost items which are then found and returned to the library. Refunds are not given more than six months after the date of original payment, and are not given without documentation of the original payment.

Accounts with severely overdue items or with excessive fines are subject to legal action by the Library.

For additional relevant policies and procedures, see also: Cash Handling and Cash Register Policy; Lost and Damaged Materials Policy; and Returned Check Policy.

I. Holds

Patrons may place holds on items so that those items are trapped and held for them at the Circulation desk. If multiple patrons place holds on the same item, the first patron to place a hold has first priority. A patron can only place 10 holds at a time for in-house materials. Items that have been trapped and are being held for the patron count toward the limit of 10. Holds on eBooks and eAudios do not count toward the limit of 10, but a patron may only place 5 holds on eBooks and eAudios at a time.

Patrons may place holds on “available” items. These items are retrieved by library staff and trapped for the patron as time permits. Before the items are trapped the item will circulate on a first-come, first-served basis.

Items that have one or more holds placed on them are trapped during check-in for the next patron on the hold list. Items are held for a patron for seven days, after which, if they are not checked out by the patron, they are trapped for the next person on the hold list or, if there is no hold on the item, returned to the shelf. EBooks and eAudios, however, are available for only 48 hours from the date that the patron is notified of their availability.

Patrons may cancel a hold by request, either by Circulation staff or through his or her online account.