

## **CIRCULATION POLICIES (Effective 1/1/2013)**

### **LIBRARY CARDS**

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

A library card is a tool for lifelong learning, discovery and entertainment. It can give you free access to thousands of books, DVDs and downloads worth millions of dollars. As with any other valuable asset, you must take care to protect your card. You are financially responsible for the items checked out on your card. To keep your account in good standing you should return or renew materials before the due date. Do not let others use your card. Report the loss or theft of your card to the library immediately. Borrowing privileges may be suspended for abuse of library circulation policies.

#### **OBTAINING AND KEEPING YOUR LIBRARY CARD**

Your first Lowell Public Library (LPL) borrower's card is free to residents or property owners in the Lowell Public Library District. There is a fee for replacement cards. To receive a library borrower's card, you will need to fill out an application form and provide proper identification and verification of address. Acceptable identification includes a valid driver's license or other government issued photo ID, and a proof of current address.

The parent or guardian of a minor child must apply in person for a card for a minor child. The adult must have a valid library card in good standing with the library, present appropriate identification and sign an agreement to be responsible for materials borrowed by the child.

Library cards for adults and children are linked and a block for excessive fines or fees on a child's card will also block the borrowing privileges of the responsible party for that child.

Information about reciprocal borrowing cards and non-resident purchased cards can be obtained at the Circulation Desk.

Teachers and out of Library district students of the Tri-Creek School System may apply for a library card for the school year.

The library reserves the right to withdraw borrowing privileges from any patron providing the library with false registration information, displaying unruly conduct, failing to return borrowed materials, or for accumulating fines.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

We consider your library account and transaction information private and confidential. The library does not provide such information to anyone other than the account's owner, with the following exceptions:

- 1.) When issued with a valid subpoena or warrant;
- 2.) When requested by the parent or legal guardian of a minor for the purpose of paying fines or recovering lost items;
- 3.) When an account with lost materials or unpaid fines is turned over to a collection agency.

## **CARD RENEWAL**

Library cards are normally valid for 3 years, but address checks are made annually. Purchased and reciprocal cards are only good for 1 year. We verify with the home library that a library card is in good standing before issuing or renewing reciprocal library cards.

## **LOST AND REPLACEMENT CARDS**

If your library card is lost or stolen, please notify the library immediately to prevent others from charging items to your account. There is a replacement charge of \$3.00 for the lost card.

A patron is responsible for all material charged to the card until it is reported as lost or stolen.

All delinquencies (fines, overdues, outstanding bills) must be paid in full and all overdue items returned by the patron before a new card is issued.

## **CIRCULATION POLICIES**

### **USING YOUR LIBRARY CARD**

Most of the items in the library collection circulate and are available to patrons to check out. Some items do not circulate due to their high or irreplaceable value, fragile condition, or when the library deems that the materials would be better used within the library.

Library resources are limited. To help assure a fair and equitable distribution of library materials, there is a maximum limit on the number of items which can be checked out at one time on a library card.

The library requests that its patrons respect public property, its loan policies, and cooperate with the library to insure that borrowed materials are returned in good condition and within allotted loan periods so that others may also enjoy the library's resources.

Patrons are financially responsible for all materials checked out on their library card.

The library may suspend borrowing privileges when patrons abuse circulation policies.

### **BORROWING**

All patrons borrowing materials must show their valid borrower's card when checking out material. Library cards are not transferable to others and patrons must use their own card to borrow materials. Family members may not use the cards of other members of the family to check out materials.

### **LOAN PERIODS AND RENEWALS**

All materials which circulate and can be checked out have a definite loan period for use. Date due information is provided at checkout and materials are expected to be returned on time.

Patrons can request to renew items they have checked out to extend the loan period. Because of high demand some items may not be renewable. Materials will not be renewed if they are needed by other patrons, or have reached a maximum number of renewals.

Material can be renewed by person at the library, by phone and by the Internet.

### **OVERDUE NOTICES**

Overdue notification is expensive. We encourage patrons to keep track of their due dates and return library materials on time to avoid overdue charges. As a service to patrons, we offer automated

notification by phone or email for overdue items. However, you are still responsible for overdue charges even if you did not receive an automated notification.

## **FINES AND FEES**

Library resources are limited. The library charges fines and fees as an incentive for patrons to keep items they check out in good condition and to return them in a timely manner so that they can be shared and used by others. See the Fines and Fees Schedule for details.

Patrons are charged overdue fines for library materials held longer than the prescribed loan period. These charges are assessed on a per item/per day basis until the maximum overdue amount is reached.

Patrons are charged replacement charges for items that are lost, damaged or unreturned. Overdue items not returned within six months of the last date the item was due, are considered lost and patrons will be charged the replacement value of the items, the maximum allowed fines and appropriate processing fees. The library may consider a written request to waive the replacement cost of a returned lost item if the library deems that the item is still needed for the collection.

Patrons are expected to return material in undamaged condition, considering normal use and wear. Patrons will be charged replacement costs of items returned damaged and deemed unsuitable for further circulation.

Patrons who lose or damage a single item in a set will be responsible for the replacement of the entire set if a single replacement item cannot be acquired.

The library has contracted an automated notification system for notifying patrons by phone, email or text message when items are overdue. However, patrons are responsible for returning material by the date it is due, and not receiving or ignoring an automated notification is not an acceptable reason to waive charges.

The library may use the service of a collection agency to collect outstanding fines and fees. If an account is submitted, the library will add an additional collection charge.

The library reserves the right to take legal action to recover materials, fines and fees owed to the library.

## **WAIVERS**

Patrons may request a waiver of charges for exceptional situations. You will need to fill out a "Request for Waiver of Library Charges" form. You may be asked to provide additional documentation to support your reasons for claiming a waiver.

## **BLOCKS**

The borrowing privileges of patrons are blocked when their accumulated fines and fees total \$5.00 or more. Patrons with a blocked account may not check out new material, renew materials or use public access computers until their account is unblocked.

Patron accounts are unblocked when all checked out materials are returned, and the total outstanding charges on the account is under \$5.00.

## **LINKS**

Parents are responsible for the library accounts of their children and their borrowing privileges are linked together. If a child's library card is blocked, then the library card for the responsible party of that child is also blocked.

## **RETURNS**

Library materials must be returned to the circulation desk before the close of business on the date due. Materials returned in drop box late in the day or after closing will not be checked in until the following day and an overdue fine may be charged.

## **HOLDS**

Patrons in good standing may request a hold be placed on items checked out by another patron. They will be notified when the item has been returned and is ready to check out. There is a limit on the number of items a patron can have on hold at one time.

## **INTERLIBRARY LOAN**

If the library does not own the item you need, you may place an Interlibrary Loan request at the reference desk. We will try to locate and obtain the item from another library system for you. Patrons must have a valid Lowell Public Library card and account in good standing to place an interlibrary loan request. There is a limit on the number of active interlibrary loan requests at one time.

Interlibrary loan requests may take 2-3 weeks or more. Patrons will be notified by phone when the requests are filled.

The fees and loan periods for interlibrary loan materials are set by the lending libraries. Some libraries will allow interlibrary loan items to be renewed, others may not.

**CLAIMED MATERIALS**

Sometimes patrons will claim that items checked out to them have already been returned or were never borrowed. We allow patrons to carry a limited number of such claims on their records, but we encourage them to keep searching for our materials.

**REFUNDS**

Patrons may request and receive refunds for items they have paid to replace but have found and returned to the library within ninety (90) days of payment. Patrons are encouraged to keep and show receipts for payment. There are not refunds for ILL items.

**COLLECTION**

Library materials are public property and the failure to return borrowed library materials is a serious offense. Patrons who do not return library materials may be referred to a collection agency for the recovery of our materials and collection expenses.