



## Circulation Policy

**Approved by the Joint Board of Library Trustees 12/10/20**

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide written guidelines pertaining to the circulation of library materials for the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library. This policy is based on the need to make materials available to all patrons on an equal basis and to ensure adequate access based on the size and nature of the collection.

Exceptions to the following policy statements may be made when warranted at the discretion of the Library Director or his/her designee.

### Library Cards

Library cards expire every three years. Patron information is verified and updated as needed to review. The Merrimack Valley Library Consortium purges the database of inactive borrowers, these are typically borrowers who have not used their cards in five or more years.

#### Hamilton and/or Wenham Residents:

Residents of Hamilton and/or Wenham may obtain a library card by presenting proof of residency in either town. Acceptable documentation includes: Massachusetts driver's license, Massachusetts car registration, Massachusetts state issued ID, Hamilton or Wenham property tax bill, lease/mortgage or utility bill.

Children under age 13 are required to have a parent or legal guardian present when applying and a parent or legal guardian must sign the application. Children age 13 and over are required to present proper identification (school ID/driver's license) or be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian with acceptable identification.

#### Residents of Merrimack Valley Library Consortium Communities:

Residents of MVLC communities who have a valid library card from their hometown library have access to materials and services offered by Hamilton-Wenham Public Library. Subscriptions to locally purchased databases may be limited to residents only.

#### Residents of Massachusetts Communities Outside of MVLC:

Residents of Massachusetts communities outside of MVLC who have a library card from their hometown may have it registered for used at all MVLC libraries. Identification as noted above is required.

### Temporary Library Cards:

Nonresidents from towns in Massachusetts who do not have a library card may be issued a temporary MVLC library card which expires in 30 days. This temporary library card is only for materials checkout by the named cardholder and cannot be used to reserve materials or access databases. Those given a temporary card should obtain a permanent card at their hometown library.

### Town Employees:

Any Town of Hamilton or Wenham employee residing in Massachusetts may apply for a Hamilton-Wenham Public Library card; proof of employment must be presented. Town employees residing out of state may apply for a local use only card.

### Gordon College, Pingree School & Penguin Hall Academy Students:

Out of state students of Gordon College, Pingree School or Penguin Hall may use their student ID card to obtain a local use only Hamilton-Wenham Public Library card. These card expire after one year and can be renewed provided they are still enrolled.

### Organizational Library Cards:

Organizations, schools, and businesses located in Hamilton or Wenham may apply for a Hamilton-Wenham Public Library local use only card. The application must be signed by an administrator, owner or head of the organization. The card expires in one year. Information should be verified and updated as needed to renew.

### Summer Residents:

Out of state summer residents providing proof of Hamilton or Wenham residence for a minimum of 30 days are eligible to receive a local use only Hamilton-Wenham Public Library card. The card will expire after one year.

## **Card Use and Replacement**

Subject to constraints of this policy regarding withholding of borrowing privileges and other specific circumstances, all cardholders have equal use of the collection. Parents and other caregivers, not the library staff, are responsible for determining what their child may read, listen to, or view.

Patrons are encouraged to carry their library cards with them to check out material, but a valid picture ID will be accepted as well. Anyone presenting a card is deemed to have the cardholder's permission to use the card as if it were the presenter's own. If a patron does not present their card or appropriate ID, borrowing privileges will be withheld until the card or ID is produced. Materials selected by the patron may be held for that patron through the close of business on the third day after borrowing privileges were withheld.

It is the cardholder's responsibility to inform the library of lost cards and changes in name, address, e-mail address, telephone number, etc. The library is not responsible for loss of privacy or other consequences of failure to notify the library of such changes.

If a patron reports their library card lost or stolen, and the patron can provide an acceptable form of picture ID, a replacement card may be issued at the cost of \$1.00. The patron's card must be in good standing in order to issue a new card.

Library staff, trustees, and volunteers are subject to the same borrowing rules as other library patrons.

### **Requests, Reserves, Renewals and Returns**

Requests for materials may be made in person, by phone, via the online catalog, or by email. Reserved materials will be held through the close of business on the seventh day after the reserve is filled. Patrons will be notified of available reserve materials by phone, email or text. In order to pick up a reserved item, the patron must present the library card or ID used when placing the hold. Card holders may authorize another individual to pick up their holds for them by either physically giving that person their card or notifying the library to add a note to their borrower record.

If MVLC libraries do not have an item that a patron is requesting, the library can request material from outside the consortium. Staff will do a search of the Commonwealth Catalog and attempt to find the item in the state. The library can also search the OCLC nationwide catalog for specialized items and research. There may be a fee associated with this service.

In keeping with MVLC policy, most items may be renewed two times if no one is waiting for the item. Renewals are done automatically by the library software however, patrons may renew items over the phone or via the online catalog as well.

Library materials may be returned to any library belonging to the MVLC. The Hamilton-Wenham Library does not charge fines for late materials. However, patrons should be aware of the borrowing policies of the library where they check out materials as fine policies vary from library to library.

### **Lost or Damaged Items**

It is the responsibility of the patron to return all materials in good and complete condition by the item due date. Patrons should report any noticeably damaged items or equipment to the library immediately.

Upon patron request, library staff will check the collection for items which are believed to be returned but which remain outstanding on the patron's record. If checks by the library staff and the patron fail to locate the item, and the patron believes the item to have been returned, it may be marked "Claims Returned" in the library database. This function does not have any adverse effect on the patron's record. The library reserves the right to restrict the number of "Claims Returned" items per patron.

The Hamilton-Wenham Public Library follows the consortium recommendation and withholds borrowing privileges when a patron's fees or bills accrue to \$20 or they have 20 items overdue. In the event a patron is declined borrowing privileges, materials selected by that patron may be held through the close of business on the third day after borrowing privileges were withheld.

Materials lost or severely damaged while checked out to a borrower incur a charge equal to the list price of the item when new. The library will accept in kind replacements for lost items with permission of the Head of the Circulation or his/her designee. Replacements must be brand new and the same edition and copy type as the original. No refunds will be given if a lost item is found after it has been paid for by the patron.

Library patrons may be charged reasonable replacement costs for missing or damaged packaging, missing pieces of sets, etc. The following is a schedule of fees for damaged or lost items:

- Missing or damaged barcode = \$2
- Missing or damaged CD, DVD, or Playaway case = \$5
- Individual CD from set = \$5
- Charging cord from Playaway View = \$5

### Privacy and Confidentiality

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 7 *"That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record..."* Confidentiality extends to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, and include database search records, reference interviews, circulation records, interlibrary loan transactions, registration records, and all other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities, or services.

Circulation, registration information, and information retrieval records may not be disclosed except to:

- The cardholder – This is regardless of age or relationship.
- Staff of MVLC libraries acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library system and in facilitation interlibrary loans.
- Persons authorized by the cardholder to access the individual's records identified by a note of permission given by the cardholder or persons with physical possession of the library card. Picking up holds is considered access to a cardholder's records.
- Representatives of any local, state, or federal government, pursuant to subpoena or search warrant authorized under the authority of federals, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or investigative power. Upon receipt of any such subpoena or search warrant, the library director will consult with legal counsel to determine if the subpoena or search warrant is in proper form and if there is a valid basis for its issuance before providing confidential information.

## Borrowing Materials

<b>Item Type</b>	<b>Loan Period</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Renewal Limit</b>	<b>Fine</b>
Books	3 weeks	unlimited	2 renewals	None
Hot Titles Collection	2 weeks	unlimited	No renewal	None
Audiobooks	3 weeks	unlimited	2 renewals	None
DVD's/Blu-ray	1 week	unlimited	1 renewal	None
Music CD's	3 weeks	unlimited	2 renewals	None
Magazines	1 week	unlimited	1 renewal	None
Reference	In library use only			
Newspapers	In library use only			
Video Games	1 week	unlimited	1 renewal	None
Hot Spots	1 week		No renewals	\$5 a day
Board Games	3 weeks	unlimited	2 renewals	None