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Checkout Policy

Approved by Board of Trustees[1]December 20, 2006
Revised July 18, 2012

Purpose

Monroe County Public Library promotes responsible lifelong library use with minimal barriers to facilitate fair and equitable sharing of the community?s collections. This policy is designed to encourage users to keep their accounts in good standing so they may continue to borrow and return materials. Abuse of circulation privileges will result in the suspension of library privileges.

Intellectual Freedom

Individual patrons determine for themselves what library materials are appropriate for personal checkout or viewing. Parents or guardians are responsible for determining what their children borrow, view, or use in the library. Library staff will not monitor or restrict any patron's borrowing or use of the library, its materials, or its resources based on a patron's age, background or views. The Monroe County Public Library endorses and defends the concepts of intellectual freedom, as protected by the United States Constitution and as described in the Library Bill of Rights.

The library adheres to and supports the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights[2] " (Appendix A), "Freedom to Read[3]" (Appendix B), "Freedom to View[4]" (Appendix C), and " Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights[5]" (Appendix D).

Confidentiality

Library users? account information, including names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, items borrowed, items requested, activity dates, and all other data particular to an account, is confidential. The library does not provide such information to anyone other than the account?s owner, with the following exceptions:

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

Within these exceptions, only limited and precise information is disclosed to satisfy the specific need of the request.

Eligibility for Library Cards

Resident Library Card

Individuals of all ages are eligible for a Monroe County Public Library card if they meet the following criteria:

1. Live at a Monroe County address
   OR
2. Own real property in Monroe County
   AND
3. Can demonstrate an ability to receive notices.

Indiana University students who meet the above criteria are eligible for a library card.

Employees of Monroe County Public Library will receive a library card for the duration of their employment. As circumstances change any of the above criteria, card eligibility will also change. Individuals who are not eligible for a resident card under these criteria may apply under the policy for non-resident cards.

Non-resident Library Card

Individuals living outside of Monroe County who hold a valid Indiana public library card may purchase a Public Library Access Card (PLAC). A PLAC provides access to all public libraries in the state of Indiana. PLAC holders must provide a valid Indiana public Library card and proper identification in order to obtain a non-resident Monroe County Public Library Card.

Individuals living outside of Monroe County in an area that does not receive library service may purchase an annual subscription card; cost of the card is included in the fee schedule adopted by the Board of Trustees. (See http://mcpl.info/geninfo/board-policies [6]) This subscription card provides access to the Monroe County Public Library only. Individuals eligible for this subscription card include:

- those who do not live in a library taxing district
- those whose home library service is received under annual contract
- those who are out-of-state residents.

Institutional Cards

Only Institutions receiving deposit collection service from Community Outreach are eligible for an institutional card. The card can only be used for items delivered to the institution by Community Outreach.

Issuing Cards

Patrons may apply online or in person. Acceptable identification and address verification [7] must be provided in person before initial checkout.

Homebound patrons and eligible institutions register separately through the library's Community Outreach Department.

Use of Library Card

Patron Obligations

Use of the library card implies acceptance of and adherence to all regulations of the Monroe County Public Library.

The library assumes no liability for any damage caused by the use or misuse of any library materials.

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

Patrons must inform the library of any change in contact information for account notifications. Patrons are required to report lost or stolen cards to the library immediately. The charge for a replacement card is included in the fee schedule adopted by the Board of Trustees. (See http://mcpl.info/geninfo/board-policies [6])

Patrons Who Do Not Present Card at Checkout

Patrons may borrow materials without a library card, if they can verify identity.

Patrons Using Other Patrons' Library Cards

Patrons who have a library card in their possession are assumed to have the authority to use that library card. Patrons may not check out items on another patron?s account as a means of avoiding payment of fines and fees on their own account.

Picking Up Holds For Another Patron

Due to confidentiality concerns, patrons must have permission to pick up holds for other patrons.

Following confidentiality guidelines, holds for patrons under 18 will be given to parents without prior permission.

Suspension of Borrowing Privileges

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

Financial Penalties

Fines

Due date information is provided at checkout and materials are expected to be returned on time. Overdue fines are charged on most materials and are assessed on a per item/per day basis. Daily fines and maximum overdue amounts are charged at a daily rate established in the fee adopted by the Board of Trustees. (See http://mcpl.info/geninfo/board-policies [6])

Fines are not charged for children's materials housed in juvenile shelving areas. (Parent/Teacher Resource Collection materials intended for an adult audience do incur fines.)

Fines are not charged for items checked out from Community Outreach locations. Homebound patrons and institutional cards registered with Community Outreach Services do not incur fines.

Employees of Monroe County Public Library do not incur fines.

Replacement and Processing Fees

Patrons (including Monroe County Public Library employees) are charged replacement charges for items that are lost, damaged or unreturned.

Collection Agency and Legal Action

The library may use the service of a collection agency. When an account is submitted, the library will add a fee as established in the fee schedule adopted by the Board of Trustees (See http://www.mcpl.info/geninfo/board-policies [6]). The library reserves the right to take legal action to recover fines or fees owed.

Exceptions to Financial Penalties

Patron Claims Not Responsible

Patrons may request removal of responsibility in the cases of "Claims Not Checked Out," "Claims Not Damaged," and "Claims Returned." The library imposes limits for the number of

each type of claim.

Credits and Refunds for Found Lost/Paid items

Patrons may be issued credit or refunded the replacement cost if the complete item is found and returned in good condition within 90 days of payment. Refunds will not be given for single parts of a set. Refunds will not be issued for less than $10.

Fine Option Program

Fine Option Program: Volunteer Work for Credit

In cases of financial hardship, patrons age 14 and over may make arrangements with a circulation supervisor to do volunteer work in lieu of payment of fines and fees. Five dollars ($5) credit may be earned for each hour of designated work. Credit may only be applied against fines/fees and is not applicable against replacement costs.

Fine Option Program for Children: Literacy and Learning for Credit

The library is committed to developing children?s reading skills and library habits so that they become responsible lifelong library users. Patrons under the age of 18 may choose to enroll in a reading/literacy program in lieu of payment of all types of charges. Five dollars ($5) credit may be earned through each use and return of designated library material. Limited borrowing privileges apply to participants enrolled in this program.

Removal of Patron Obligations

Patrons may request removal of financial obligations in part or whole in the case of catastrophic loss or extraordinary hardship situations.

Structure and Maintenance

Borrowing limits

The library may impose borrowing limits when necessary.

Loan periods

Loan periods for materials are established for fair and equitable periods of time.

Inactive library cards

The library will conduct periodic purges of inactive library cards.

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Updated August 24, 2012

- [8]
- [9]
- [10]

Monroe County Public Library | 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, IN 47408 | (812) 349-3050

Links:

[1] http://mcpl.info/library-trustees/board-trustees
[2] http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill
[3] http://www.ala.org/offices/oif/statementspols/ftrstatement/freedomreadstatement
[4] http://www.ala.org/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview
[5] http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations
[6] http://mcpl.info/geninfo/board-policies
[7] http://www.mcpl.info/card
[8] http://mcpl.info/print/printpdf/checkout/checkout-policy?quicktabs_search_tabs=1
[9] http://mcpl.info/printmail/printpdf/checkout/checkout-policy?quicktabs_search_tabs=1

[10] http://mcpl.info/printpdf/printpdf/checkout/checkout-policy?quicktabs_search_tabs=1