

Merrill Public Library

Circulation Policy

Section 1: Eligible Borrowers Defined

Every Merrill resident or rural Plymouth County resident who has a Merrill Public Library card in good standing may borrow items from this library's collection. Also any resident of another Iowa town or city approved for reciprocal borrowing through the Open Access Program may borrow items from this library's collection.

At the discretion of their parents or legal guardian, children are eligible for a library card. Parental signature is required for persons under age 14. Responsibility for a child's selection and return of materials and any fines or charges accrued on the child's card is held by the parent or guardian of the child. Children's library accounts shall be linked to their parent's account until 18 years of age.

Section 2: Issuing Cards

All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid library card to borrow library materials. Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library card. The following statement will be printed on the registration form for the patron's information and acceptance:

I agree to be responsible for all items borrowed with the library card issued in my name, including items borrowed with it by others with or without my consent unless I have previously reported the loss of my card. I promise to abide by all library rules and policies, both present

and future, and to give prompt notice of change of address or loss of library card. I understand that there will be charges for overdue, lost, damaged, and stolen library materials. I understand that the library provides access to a broad range of resource and that it is my responsibility to judge for myself and for my children or minor dependents what resources are appropriate for my/our personal use.

Section 3: Standard Loan Periods

Books, audio books, and magazines may be borrowed for a 3 week period. DVDs may be borrowed for 1 week.

Section 4: Renewals

Books, audio books, and magazines may be renewed twice for another 3 weeks. Movies may be renewed once for another week. Renewals can be made in person or by telephone.

If an item has been reserved, it may not be renewed.

Section 5: Reserves

Any circulating items in the collection may be reserved. Items may not be reserved for specific dates. A reserve will be satisfied at the time the item becomes available.

As soon as the item becomes available, the library staff will notify the requesting patron. Reserved items will be held aside for 3 business days following the day of notification. Any reserved item not called for by the end of this period will be given to the next requesting patron or, if no additional reserves exist, re-shelved.

Section 6: Quantity Limitations

Quantity limitations are not imposed except for children's books and movies. Children's books are limited to 20 per patron at a time. Movies are limited to 5 per person.

Section 7: Overdue Items

Patrons are responsible for returning borrowed items on or before the due date. Returns may be made in person or via the outside bookdrop.

Section 8: Overdue Fines and Fine Maximums

Overdue fine charges are \$.05 a day with a maximum of \$1.00 per item for books, audio books, and magazines. Movies carry a late fee of \$.50 a day with a \$2 maximum.

No overdue fine may exceed the cost to replace the item involved.

Section 9: Replacement Charges

Patrons who lose or damage library items borrowed on their library cards will be charged to replace those items. Overdue fines will not be added to the replacement charge when a lost or damaged item is paid for.

Section 10: Financially-Related Borrower Suspensions

A patron will have his or her borrowing privileges suspended whenever he or she owes the library \$5.00 or more in overdue fines and/or replacement charges.

Section 11: Discretion in Financial Transactions

At the discretion of the library staff, payment to remove a financially-related borrowing suspension may be delayed until a future date, and the patron may be allowed to borrow items during the intervening time.

The Library Director may authorize staff members to reduce or cancel overdue fines or replacement costs if circumstances warrant.

Section 12: Interlibrary Loan Policy (ILL)

If Merrill Public Library does not have certain material requested by a patron, the librarian may request it from SILO (State of Iowa Libraries Online). The circulation period is set by the lending library. Renewals are at the discretion of the lending library.

Section 13: Confidentiality of Records

Confidentiality of library records is covered in Iowa code, Section 22.7 and states that the records of a library shall be kept confidential when, by themselves or examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out or requesting an item or information.

Information concerning an individual's account will be released to that individual only.

The library interprets possession of a card as consent to use it unless it has been reported lost or stolen, or there is reason to believe that consent has not been given.

The library will release information to the parent or guardian of a minor child for the purpose of recovering overdue materials and settling accounts for lost, late or damaged material, and for other matters related

to the recovery of material or charges incurred by minor children for which a parent or guardian may be considered liable. However, information will not be provided to the parent or guardian who is merely attempting to determine what library materials a minor child is using.

Confidentiality extends to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired, and includes internet and electronic resource search records, reference interviews and transactions, circulation records, interlibrary loan records, and other personally identifiable uses of library materials, equipment, or services.

The Merrill Public Library will ensure the confidentiality of a patron's library record, account, and library presence by securing and limiting access to these same records and back-up records to only approved staff members.

The library cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information sought or received, or materials consulted or borrowed, from third party digital services to which we provide service.

The Library Director or the Director's designee, as the lawful custodian of library records, is authorized to release records that are otherwise confidential “...upon a judicial determination that a rational connection exists between the requested release of information and a legitimate end and that the need for the information is cogent and compelling” (Iowa Code 22.7).

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