

LOWER MERION LIBRARY SYSTEM CIRCULATION POLICY

PURPOSE

The circulation policy of the Lower Merion Library System informs library users of the terms and conditions under which materials are loaned in LMLS libraries. Library service and borrowing privileges for cardholders in good standing will be available without discrimination to individuals of every age, sex, race, philosophy, lifestyle and human condition.

The Library Code Act of June 14, 1961, P.L. 324, as amended through July 4, 2004 S 4415 states that every library, established and/or maintained under the provisions of this act, shall be free to the use of all the residents and taxpayers of the municipality, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the board of library directors may adopt, and the board may exclude from the use of the library any such person who willfully violates such rules. The board may extend the privileges of such library to persons residing outside the limits of such municipality upon such terms and conditions as the board may prescribe.

1. REGISTRATION

Any resident or non-resident under the age of 18 will be issued a card with a juvenile status after receiving his/her parent or guardian's consent. All other registrants will receive a card with adult status.

Upon registration, all residents and/or non-residents must sign a Lower Merion Library system responsibilities consent form. Children under the age of 18 must have the signature of a parent or guardian on this form. A copy of the LMLS Privacy Policy will be given with the new or updated registration.

The person whose name appears on a library card is responsible for all materials checked out to that card. Adults who sign the registration form for juveniles are responsible for materials checked out on the juvenile's card. If a library card is lost or stolen, that fact must be reported to the library so that the lost or stolen card may be invalidated. All items checked out prior to the date the card is reported lost or stolen are still the responsibility of the library user. The library charges three dollars to replace a borrower's lost card.

LMLS deems library users who allow third persons to use their library cards or library account information to have consented to the access of their private and confidential library use records by the recipients of their cards or account information.

A. RESIDENTS

All Lower Merion residents are entitled to borrowing privileges at the six Township libraries. There is no minimum age to obtain a borrower's card.

Patrons must complete a patron registration form after supplying identification that provides a current and permanent address within the Township. Photo identification is preferable. Acceptable forms of ID are:

- Deed or Lease
- Utility bill with Property Address
- Driver's License/Registration
- Voter Registration Card
- Checking Account Statement with Property Address
- School ID (K-12)
- Passport plus identification showing address in Lower Merion

College students are considered Lower Merion residents as long as they live on the campus of a Lower Merion college or university, or if they live off campus within Lower Merion Township. College students must show a piece of cancelled mail addressed to them at their Lower Merion address or college dorm in addition to their photo ID if that ID shows a different home address.

Au Pairs or foreign exchange students may register for a card if they have a photo ID and a piece of canceled mail addressed to them at their Lower Merion host family residence.

Temporary residents, those residing in Lower Merion Township for a period less than 6 months, are not issued library cards. However, they will be eligible for guest passes to use the library system's computers.

B. NON-RESIDENTS

For non-residents of Lower Merion Township who reside in Pennsylvania, the Access Pennsylvania Program, also known as the Statewide Library Card Program, entitles them to borrowing privileges at participating public libraries. The Lower Merion Library System is a fully participating member of the Access Pennsylvania Program.

Non-residents must have a current and valid library card from their home library with the blue Access Pennsylvania sticker on it before they can register at a Lower Merion library. The registration procedure is then the same as above, except that they will not receive a Lower Merion library card.

Non-residents of the state of Pennsylvania may receive a card upon the presentation of valid identification and the payment of an \$80 annual fee. You are exempt from paying the non-resident fee if you are:

- A person who owns residential or business property in Lower Merion
- A student attending a public/private Lower Merion school (K-12)
- A teacher in any public/private Lower Merion school (K-12)

These patrons may receive a card *without* a PA Access sticker for a period of one year.

C. ASSOCIATIONS

Library users can associate or link their library cards with other family members as a way to share account information. Parents may link their children without the child's signature. The library cards of all associating parties are required at time of sign-up.

All parties must be present when applying for Adult associations. Adults choosing to link library cards have consented to the access of their private and confidential library use records with all parties linked. (See: LMLS Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)

Linking library accounts allows you to:

- Check the status of linked accounts
- Pick up reserve books
- Pay fines
- Check out items on linked cards
- Carry one card

If at any time a patron wishes to dissolve an association they must fill out a "LMLS Request to Dissolve an Association" form. After the dissolution, the library will keep the paperwork on file.

2. EXPIRATION OF CARDS

Library cards expire after a period of two years. Upon expiration of a patron's library card, Polaris issues a block at checkout for staff to update the patron's record.

Updating a library card must be done in person with proper identification. Outstanding overdue materials or fines on the account must be settled before updating the card.

3. PASSWORDS/PIN NUMBERS

Library users may access their library record or account in the library at the on-line public access catalog computer terminals throughout the library, or on-line from home. Two pieces of information are required:

- the "user id" which is the barcode number on the library card and
- a password or pin number.

Library users may review what materials they have checked out and renew the items if they choose and/or they may place a hold/ reserve on materials they wish to pick up at a Lower Merion library.

The library user must choose a 4 to 10 character password/pin number in person at the circulation desk. The staff member inputs the password/pin number on their record. The library user may request to personally input this pin/password at the circulation desk. Library users can

change the password/pin number in person, with their library card, at the circulation or reference desk or they can change it on-line from their account. The library card barcode number and a pin/password are mandatory to use the public computer workstations.

A child under 16 must have a parent or guardian present in order to be issued a password. At age 16, children may be issued their own passwords.

4. LOAN PERIOD

Library users are required to bring their library card or proper identification in order to have borrowing privileges.

A. Regular Loan Periods

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| • All videos and DVDS | 1 week |
| • Ludington Adult Department Magazines | 1 week |
| • All other books and materials | 3 weeks |
| • ILL material | Loan period will vary |

Library materials are never due on a day on which the library is closed, but will be due on the next library business day.

As a courtesy to our patrons the library system generally sends out a reminder by mail or e-mail when items become twenty-one days overdue. After forty-two days another reminder is sent by mail. However, patrons are responsible for returning on time all items charged to their account.

B. Renewals:

- All items, except interlibrary loan materials, videos and DVDs, may be renewed twice if a reserve/hold has not been put on that item.
- Renewals can be done at any LMLS member library circulation desk, by telephone, or through the on-line catalog.
- The library card barcode is necessary for any renewal. Renewing an overdue item does not absolve the library user of paying overdue fees.

5. RETURNS

Library materials may be returned to any LMLS branch or Access PA library with the exception of videos, DVDs and inter-library loans which must be returned to the lending library.

Book drops and Audio-visual drops are available at each library for returning materials after hours or on days the library is closed. The library will give fine free days for LMLS items to compensate for the hours closed. Materials from any non LMLS library cannot be checked in.

6. LIBRARY FINES

To promote the return of material and optimal sharing of the library collection, the Lower Merion Library System charges fines and fees for overdue, lost, and/or damaged library materials. Library users are responsible for returning or renewing items by the due date.

Overdue fines are as follows:

- Adult books and materials 30 cents/day/item maximum fine \$10.00
- Juvenile books and materials 20 cents/day/item maximum fine \$5.00
- CD-ROMS, DVDs and Videos \$3.00/day/item maximum fine \$10.00

No fines are charged when the libraries are closed.

Borrowing privileges will be suspended when a patron's account reaches twenty dollars in fines or replacement costs. Borrowing privileges will be reinstated upon payment of the full amount. The status of an individual's library card will be used only in regard to circulation of materials at the library, and does not affect the person's use of other services at the library.

If any material is lost or damaged beyond repair, the library user will be charged the replacement cost of the material at list price. If a library user locates a lost item within a month after payment, and there is a record of that payment, a refund will be issued. The overdue fines will be charged.

PENNSYLVANIA CONSOLIDATED STATUTES – TITLE 18

Sec. 6708. Retention of library property after notice to return.

- (a) Offense defined. – A person is guilty of a summary offense if he retains, any book, pamphlet, magazine, newspaper, manuscript, map or other property belonging in, or to, or on deposit with, any library open to the public or any part thereof, for a period exceeding 30 days after such library has given written notice to return the same.
- (b) Disposition of fine. – Any fine imposed under this section shall be paid over by the magistrate imposing such fine to the library instituting the prosecution, and the costs of prosecution.
- (c) Form of notice. – Such notice may be given by personal service upon the borrower, or by the mailing of a registered or certified letter to the address of the borrower on file with said library. The notice shall recite this section, and shall contain a demand that the property be returned.

1972, Dec. 6, P.L. No. 334, effective June 6, 1973.

7. RESERVES

Reserves may be placed on all items that the library system owns, except DVDs, videos, and reference books.

1. The fee for placing a reserve is \$0.25 per item.

2. A library user may reserve items in person at the library, by phone, or electronically from our public catalog computers or from a home computer.
3. The barcode number from the library user's card is mandatory for placing a reserve.

As soon as a reserved item becomes available, the library will notify the requesting cardholder. Reserved items will be held for three business days following notification. Any reserved items not picked up within this period will be given to the next requesting cardholder or, lacking further reserves, put back on the shelf. Library users may choose to be notified of reserves by e-mail.

Reserves placed from home on items that are listed as available should be ready for pick up on the next business day. However, patrons should wait until they are notified or until the status of their hold changes from *active* to *held* when they access their hold requests on-line.

Reserves on magazines and multi-volume audio books need to be placed by a staff member.

When a staff member telephones a patron about a held reserve only the person for whom the reserve is held will be told the title of that item.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Telephone requests for information about materials checked out to patrons (adult or child) will be responded to only if the caller has the barcode number on the library card.

Associations or linked library cards are permitted in the Lower Merion Library System. However, linking library records waives your privacy rights under PA 24 PS Section 4428 among the linked parties.

The library user has a right to know that all borrowing information will be kept confidential. The Lower Merion Library System will act in accordance with state laws to protect library user confidentiality.

Pennsylvania State Law mandates that:

“Records related to the circulation of the library materials which contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the state Library or any local library which is established or maintained under any law of the Commonwealth or the library of a university, college or educational institution chartered by the Commonwealth or the library of any public school or branch reading room, deposit station or agency operated in connection therewith, shall be confidential and shall not be made available to anyone except by court order in a criminal proceeding.”

(Section 4428. Library Circulation Records.)

Updated: November 2009