

STOUGHTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
MATERIALS USE POLICY

I. Purpose

To assure the fairest possible use of library materials by all library patrons, the Library Board governs the loan periods, use practices, fine and fee rates, and notice production for library materials, including: books, audiovisual materials, electronic resources and any other media that the library determines to be considered part of the library collection.

II. Definitions

- A. "Loan Period" is defined as length of time materials are held and/or checked out.
- B. "Fines" and "Fees" are defined as money collected for late, lost or damaged materials.
- C. "Notices" are defined as information sent to patrons regarding library materials.
- D. "Blocks" are defined as notations in a patron's record that refer to overdue, lost, miscellaneous charges owed, incorrect address, and other patron record notations.
- E. "Valid Library Card" is defined as a library patron registration that has current residence and contact information and does not contain unresolved blocks such as fines more than \$9.99.

III. Checkout Process

Patrons may check out materials by presenting a valid library card at the Circulation Desk or the self checkout stations, if their records do not contain blocks that prohibit them from doing so.

Checkout privileges will be denied if a patron's record contains unresolved blocks such as fines of more than \$9.99. For fines less than \$9.99, staff will encourage the patron to clear the record as soon as possible.

If an immediate family member or person living in the same residence as a patron has excessive fines or lost/damage charges, the Library Director has the discretion of limiting checkout privileges and quantities of materials.

IV. Loan Periods

The loan periods apply as outlined in Appendix A. At the staff's direction, special loan periods may be applied to any material not on hold in order to accommodate vacations, hospital stays and/or other special needs. Special loan periods should be used sparingly.

As a general rule, there are no limits on the number of materials that may be checked out. In the case of materials that are in great demand and short supply, such as some holiday books or homework related items, a temporary limit on the number of items that a patron may check out may have to be imposed at the discretion of the Library Director.

Materials loaned to Stoughton Public Library for local borrowers fall under Stoughton Public Library loan periods and overdue policies; however, borrowers will be held responsible for all special assessments placed by lending institutions.

V. Fines, Fees, Reimbursements

Fines are assessed as a penalty for failure to return items by the due date. Items that are not returned or damaged beyond use or repair will be charged a lost/damaged fee or the replacement cost. A receipt will be issued for any resolved payments.

The library assumes no responsibility for damage or alleged damage to personal equipment while used in conjunction with library materials.

A. Fines

Fines are assessed as a penalty for failure to return items by the due date. Fines apply as outlined in Appendix A. No fines are charged for any day that the library is not open. Items returned to other libraries will be considered returned on that date.

B. Fees

Items that are not returned or are returned damaged beyond use or repair will be charged a lost/damaged fee at the replacement cost.

Patrons who pay for lost or damaged items will not be charged any fine if the item is overdue, but only the replacement cost plus any processing/materials fee.

If it is discovered that the item was lost due to an error on the part of the Library rather than the patron, the patron's record will be cleared of any charges and appropriate refunds issued or credited to the patron's record.

All overdue items, regardless of value, remain on the patron's record until resolved, and a block is placed on the patron's record that may bar further checkout privileges.

C. Reimbursement for Lost Items Returned and Eligible for Refund

There will be no reimbursement for lost items after six months from the due date.

There will be no reimbursement for items with parts missing after four weeks from the due date.

The amount of reimbursement will be the replacement amount paid, minus the fines accrued from the day the item was due up to the day it was reported lost or paid for. Staff will waive overdue charges above the amount of the replacement cost of the item in cases where the item value is less than \$10.00. Lost item reimbursements will not be issued for charges of \$5.00 or less. Other libraries' items paid for at our library will be reimbursed according to the owning libraries' policies and reimbursement will be made by the owning library.

VI. Notices

A. Hold Notices

Notices are sent to notify patrons that reserved materials have arrived for them and should be checked out within 7 days. These notices may be sent through phone, email or regular mail notification.

B. Overdue Notices

Notices are sent to remind patrons to return overdue items; however, it is the patron's responsibility to be aware of when items are due. These notices may be sent through email or regular mail notification.

1. The first overdue notice is sent when items become 28 days overdue. This notice is considered a bill and will reflect the cost of each item that would be charged in the event that the items are not returned.
2. The second notice is a Notice of Unresolved Charges that informs the patron that unless the matter is resolved in a given period of time, it will be turned over to a private collection firm. The second notice goes only to patrons who have charges that amount to a value of \$50 or more.
3. The Library utilizes a private firm to assist with retrieving collections over \$50. The patron is responsible for costs incurred by the library in collecting such fines and charges.

VII. Card Holder Responsibility

- A. As stated in the library card application, cardholders are responsible for material drawn on the library card issued in their name, including material drawn on it by others with or without the holder's consent unless the holder has previously reported the loss of their card to the library.
- B. Until the library is notified of a lost or stolen card, a library card is valid and its owner is responsible for all use of the card and for any lost or overdue materials and fees incurred. In the case of children, the parent or legal guardian who signed the library card application is the responsible party.
- C. Once the library has been notified that a card has been lost or stolen, that card will be invalidated and a block will be placed on further withdrawals; the owner will not be responsible for further items withdrawn on that card.

Adopted: September 1996

Amended: September 12, 2002

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Amended: December 13, 2004

Amended: March 8, 2006

Amended: February 14, 2007

Amended: September 10, 2008

Amended: October 20, 2010

Appendix A: Loan Periods and Fine Schedule

I. Loan Periods

Material Type	Loan Period
Books	28 days
Books: New Fiction, In-Demand Non-Fiction "New" status generally remains for a period of six months, during which time these items are housed on the "New Book Shelf."	14 days
Books: Lucky Day Collection	7 days
Audio recordings : Music	14 days
Audio recordings: Books	28 days
Video recordings: Popular	7 days
Video recordings: Extended Loan	28 days
Reference Materials These materials must be used in the library.	None
Newspapers These materials must be used in the library.	None
Magazines-Past Issues Current Issues must be used in the library	14 days
Electronic Resources	14 days
Miscellaneous: toys, kits	14 days

II. Fines

Material Type	Daily Fine
Adult, except Lucky Day collection	\$.20
Young Adult	\$.20
Juvenile	\$.10
Lucky Day collection	\$1.00

Appendix Adopted March 8, 2006
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