

STOUGHTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY MATERIALS USE POLICY ~ Revised: September 21, 2016

I. Purpose

To assure the fairest possible use of library materials by all library users, the Library Board governs the loan periods, use practices, fine and fee rates, and overdue notice production for library materials, including books, non-print materials, electronic resources and any other items 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 borrowed 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 users regarding library materials.
- D. "Blocks" are defined as notations in a user's record that refer to overdue, lost, miscellaneous charges, incorrect address, and other user record notations.
- E. "Valid Library Card" is defined as a library user registration that has current residence and contact information and does not contain unresolved blocks such as fines more than \$20.00.
- F. Lost Date: The date overdue items automatically are changed to "Lost" status.

III. Checkout Process

Users 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. Library users who have valid library cards, may checkout without their cards, if they can show valid photo ID.

Checkout privileges will be denied if a user's record contains unresolved blocks such as fines of more than \$20.00. For fines less than \$20.00, staff will encourage the user pay what they owe as soon as possible.

The Library Director has the discretion of limiting checkout privileges and quantities of materials for immediate family members of a library user who has excessive fines or lost/damage charges, or for persons living in the same residence as a library user who has excessive fines or lost/damage charges.

IV. Loan Periods

The loan periods apply as outlined in Appendix A. At the staff's discretion, 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 items that may be checked out. In the case of items 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 library user 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 any special assessments placed by lending institutions.

V. Fines, Fees, Reimbursements

Fines are assessed 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.

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 for failure to return items by the due date. Fines apply as outlined in Appendix A. No fines are charged for any day the library is not open. Items returned to other libraries will be considered returned on that date. The maximum overdue fine for any one item is \$5.00, except for Lucky Day materials which are \$10.00 per item.

B. Fees

Library users who pay for lost or damaged items will be charged a fee based on the cover price of the item when it was new. Even though the actual cost to the Library may be less, the additional amount is designed to cover the cost of staff time and processing (barcodes, covers, etc...) Replacements for lost or damaged items will only be accepted with prior management approval. Only new items will be accepted. Library users who pay for lost or damaged items will not be charged any fine if the item is overdue, but only the replacement cost.

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

All overdue items, regardless of value, remain on the user's record until resolved, and a block is placed on the user's record that may bar further checkout privileges. If users who owe the Library money file for bankruptcy, the Library will stop trying to collect any money owed, but those users are still responsible for payment of debts owed to the Library.

Payment plans are available for Library users who owe more than \$20.00.

C. Payments Without a Library Card

Library users may pay fines and fees for others and for themselves without having a library card present. However, to protect patron confidentiality, no information other than the dollar amount will be given.

D. Reimbursement for Lost Items Returned and Eligible for Refund

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

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

The amount of reimbursement for an item will be the amount paid by the Library for that item. Library staff may 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 the Stoughton Public Library will be reimbursed according to the owning libraries' policies. Reimbursement, if offered will be made by the owning library.

VI. Notices

A. Hold Notices

Notices are sent to notify library users that reserved materials have arrived for them and should be checked out within 7 calendar days. These notices may be sent through phone, text or email.

B. Overdue Notices

Notices are sent to remind library users to return overdue items; however, it is the Library user's responsibility to be aware of when items are due. These notices may be sent through email or regular mail notification. Fines may be waived if the overdue notification systems are down.

1. The first overdue notice is sent after items are 26 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 user that unless the matter is resolved in a given period of time, it will be turned over to materials recovery service. The second notice goes only to users who have charges of \$50 or more.
3. The Library utilizes a materials recovery service to assist in collecting fines and charges over \$50. All such library accounts will be turned over to the materials collection service, including the parents or guardians of juvenile cardholders with such accounts. The user 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 checked out with the library card issued in their name, including material checked out on it by others with or without the card holder's consent, unless the card 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 use; the card holder will not be responsible for further items checked out on that card.
- D. Limited-Use Cards – If more than one member of a household accrues enough charges (\$50) to be sent to collections for not returning materials or not paying library charges, the Library may make the still usable cards of other members of the same household "limited use." A limited use card allows the holder to check out only three items at a time and place holds on only two items at a time. This allows people to still use the library and also limit the potential loss to the Library. Once charges have been paid, then the limited use card status will be changed to normal card status.

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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	14 days
Children's holiday picture books	7 days
Music recordings	14 days
Audio books	28 days
DVDs	7 days
DVD series instructional nonfiction DVDs	28 days
Lucky Day DVDs	
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
Teen	\$.20
Juvenile	\$.10
Lucky Day collection	\$1.00

Appendix Adopted March 8, 2006
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