



NEWBURYPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

CIRCULATION POLICY

As a member of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC), the Newburyport Public Library (NPL) adheres to system-wide circulation regulations. MVLC regulations include policies and procedures such as borrower registration, interlibrary loans, out-of-state network loans, and suspension of borrowing privileges for patrons of other libraries.

The NPL's circulation staff strives to anticipate and to fulfill community-borrowing needs.

Eligibility

- Any-MVLC resident may register for a consortium library card at no cost in person at any MVLC library, or online through the e-Card registration system. In-person registration requires a photo ID with the resident's current address, or a photo ID and official documentation showing the current address (lease, tax bill, utility bill, pay stub, etc.).
- All MVLC library cards expire on a three-year cycle, and patron's information must be confirmed for renewal. This can be done in-person or via phone at any MVLC library.
- Massachusetts residents with a valid library card may have their card registered for use at all MVLC libraries by producing their home library card. Items borrowed from any MVLC library must be returned to a MVLC library and cannot be returned to another Massachusetts library network.
- Newburyport school teachers and students who reside out of state are eligible to receive an NPL card for local use only that expires annually on June 30. Proof of employment/enrollment at a Newburyport school is required to renew borrowing privileges.
- Out-of-state residents employed in a Newburyport business are eligible to receive an NPL card for local use only that expires annually. Proof of employment is required to renew borrowing privileges.
- Temporary residents providing proof of Newburyport residence for a minimum of 30 days are eligible to receive an NPL card for local use only that expires at the end of their stay.

Checkout Procedures

- When checking out Library materials, a patron should have their library card available. If a patron does not have their card, a form of identification will be requested to verify that the patron holds a current library card. Only the registered patron may use their library card for materials checkout. A card holder may authorize specific individuals to pick up

items on hold. Patrons should notify the Circulation Desk about a lost or stolen card. The registered card holder is responsible for materials checked out to their card.

Checkout Periods

- Checkout periods are three (3) weeks for most circulating items; magazines, DVDs, “Books to Go” and some Reference materials check out for one (1) week; most nontraditional “Library of Things” items check out for two (2) weeks. Some Reference materials and all Archival Center materials do not circulate and may be used in the Library only.

Reserves

- A patron may reserve materials that are not currently available by placing interlibrary loan requests in person at a Library service desk; by telephone, chat or email; or online through the patron’s account. Any number of requests can be made, and there is no charge for this service for items from Massachusetts libraries. The patron is notified by telephone, text message, or e-mail when the requested materials are ready for pick up. Reserved items will be held for eight (8) days.

Renewals

- Library materials that have no waiting list may be renewed twice. Renewals can be made in person, by telephone to the Circulation Desk or the MVLC Renewal Line, or online through the patron’s account. MVLC automatically renews items that do not have a waiting list. Books to Go, Reference materials, Commonwealth Catalog, OCLC items, and Library of Things items cannot be renewed.

Overdue Materials

- Overdue materials, except museum passes and Library of Things items, are not subject to late fees or fines. It is expected that all borrowed materials will be returned by their due dates. The Library’s two book returns (at 94 State Street and on Storey Ave. between Walgreen’s and Market Basket) are collected daily. If materials are held past their due date, reminder notices are made by phone or sent by e-mail or text.
- Items are considered to be lost 49 days after the due date and a replacement cost is automatically billed to the patron’s account. Borrowing privileges will be suspended for patrons when \$20.00 or more is owed. Bills are resolved either when the item is returned or payment is made. Payment can be made by cash or check at the Library, or online by credit card.
- Massachusetts General Law Ch. 266 s. 99a states that willful removal or nonreturn of library materials constitutes theft of public property and is prosecutable and punishable by fines and imprisonment.
- Occasionally, a patron receives a notice for materials they believe they have returned. A careful search is undertaken to make sure that the items have not been shelved without having been checked in. The Library will accept a patron’s claim that a lost item was returned for up to three (3) items per year, excluding Library of Things items.

Library of Things

- Patrons checking out Library of Things items agree to abide by and sign a User Agreement. Library of Things items are subject to late fines if returned after the due date. Library of Things materials may be temporarily taken out of circulation for Library use or if they need to be repaired or replaced. Library of Things items must be picked up and returned inside the NPL. Library of Things items may not be suitable for all members of the community. Responsibility for a child's use of Library materials lies with the parent or guardian.

Museum Passes

- One (1) museum pass may be checked out per cardholder per day, up to a total of three (3) passes per month. Museum passes cannot be renewed. Reservations can be made online, at the Library, or by telephone up to 30 days in advance. Reservations can be cancelled in person, online, or by calling the Circulation Desk. Most museum passes can be picked up (coupon style) or redeemed online (digital pass) up to 7 days prior to the reservation date. Permanent circulating passes can be picked up no more than 24 hours in advance. Failure to use a reserved pass may result in a temporary loss of museum pass privileges. Most passes are dated coupon passes or digital passes and do not need to be returned to the Library. Permanent circulating passes must be returned by 10:00 a.m. the day following use. Late returns are assessed a fee of \$5 per day, and the loss of a permanent pass will incur a \$10 replacement fee. Museum guidelines for entry with a library pass are variable; patrons should check with the museum for the most up-to-date information.

Confidentiality of Library Records

- The NPL recognizes that circulation and other Library records identifying the names of patrons are confidential in nature.
- No records will be made available by Library Staff to any inquiries, including law enforcement, unless a subpoena or warrant has been served by a court of competent jurisdiction. The Library Board of Directors will refuse the acceptance of issue, the issuance or the enforcement of any such process, order or subpoena until such time as proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction. The Library Board of Directors will consult with legal counsel to determine the validity of such process, order, or subpoena. Records will be made available immediately upon presentation of a valid warrant. Records will be released in response to a subpoena after consultation with legal counsel. Whereas a subpoena or a search warrant under the USA Patriot Act (P.L.107-56) suspends state statutes, confidential patron information will be turned over to federal law enforcement officers if such documents are presented. Library representatives shall not honor requests from federal law enforcement officers unless a subpoena or search warrant is presented pursuant thereto. Only federal officers can use the Patriot Act to request information.
- The NPL recognizes and uses Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, Section 7, which states the following: "...that part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be public record as defined by clause twenty-sixth of section seven of chapter four" and recognizes the

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association, which in Article III states the following: “We protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.”

Lending to Massachusetts Residents of Municipalities with Decertified Libraries

- The NPL upholds the importance of maintaining the minimum standards of public library service required for public library certification by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, and therefore will not loan materials to residents of municipalities with decertified libraries.
- Public libraries that receive a waiver from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners are considered certified. Residents of municipalities in which the library has received a waiver will be permitted to borrow materials.

Approved by the Newburyport Public Library Board of Directors on June 26, 2024