

Board Motion Number:	2017-30	Date of Review:	2021
Date Approved:	December 11, 2017	Chairperson's signature:	

## CIRCULATION POLICY

### BACKGROUND

Library lending services are provided under the authority of the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.44. The Act empowers the Library Board to make rules for the use of library services by the public.

### PURPOSE

This policy serves to provide direction to library staff responsible for the circulation of library materials and to inform the public of the rules guiding the borrowing of these materials. Oxford County Library ensures fair conditions for library membership and borrowing privileges while protecting resources in a responsible manner and in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*.

### PROCEDURES

#### Access to Library Services

1. Any member of the public who possesses an Oxford County Library card and whose account is in good standing may borrow materials from the circulating collections and access online resources.
2. Any member of the public may use Oxford County Library materials within the branch, without a library card, unless the specific materials require a library card for access.
3. Materials may be borrowed for established periods of time, depending on material type. Under prescribed special circumstances, lending periods can be adjusted.

#### Library Cards

1. Free borrowing privileges are granted to any individual who registers for a card and signs the card. One piece of identification (photo ID preferred) with the applicant's current address is required as proof of identification.
2. Oxford County Library card holders may obtain free reciprocal borrowing privileges by presenting their Oxford County Library card and identification at a branch of: Brant County; Elgin County; Middlesex County; Norfolk County; Region of Waterloo; London; St. Marys; and Stratford.
3. By signing the card, the person agrees to abide by the policies and procedures of the Library. The person whose signature is on the card is responsible for all uses made of the card.

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4. Library cards remain the property of the Library. Library cards are not transferable, although the use of a card by a close family member or friend in exceptional circumstances (e.g. serious illness) may be allowed on a temporary basis at the discretion of branch staff.
5. Library cards expire two years from the date of registration and may be renewed with verification of current address. A card may not be renewed if the account status is Blocked.
6. Children age 12 and under require the signature of a parent/guardian on their library card to verify information and confirm parental consent. Parents/guardians are responsible for any bills incurred on the library card until the child reaches the age of 13.
7. Non-residents who do not live in areas with reciprocal borrowing privileges may apply for a library card by presenting proof of home address.
8. A person may register on behalf of a bona fide community group or institution to obtain an institutional library card. The registrant must present proof of address and proof of affiliation with the group or institution. The registrant is responsible on behalf of the group or institution for any loss or damage to items borrowed on the institutional card. All institutional cards must be approved by the Chief Librarian or designate.
9. Library card application forms will be available at each branch and on the library's website. Teachers may bring completed applications to any branch to have cards prepared for students in anticipation of class visits. Applications for children age 12 and under must be signed by a parent or guardian in order for the card to be issued. The parent/guardian must sign the card for subsequent use.
10. Card holders must report any changes to their information as soon as possible. Lost or stolen cards should be reported to any branch library immediately. Card holders who lose or damage their card may be charged a fee.
11. To avoid mistaken identity and to protect patron accounts, patrons will be requested to present their library card in order to borrow materials and use public computers.

### **Loan Periods**

1. The standard loan period is 3 weeks. Exceptions to this include:  
Book Club in a Bag sets – 8 weeks  
Quick Picks (express collection) and dvds -- 1 week.
2. No limits are placed on the number of items that may be borrowed, with the exception of Quick Picks (limit of 2). The Library reserves the right to limit the number of in-demand items loaned to any patron.

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3. Materials may be returned to any of the 14 branches. All branches are equipped with drop boxes to enable borrowers to return items at any time. Some materials should not be returned through the drop boxes but directly to library staff, e.g. Playaway Launchpads and Views, Kitchen Library items, eReaders, DAISY readers.
4. Library materials may be renewed prior to their due date twice to a maximum of three loan periods. Materials with holds cannot be renewed. Materials can be renewed in person at any Oxford County Library branch, by telephone during open hours, by e-mail, or online via the web catalogue. An active library card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) is required to renew materials.
5. Extended loan periods may be given upon request for projects and other special needs. Reference materials which do not circulate may be loaned for brief periods on special request or in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Branch Supervisor.
6. The library reminds borrowers to return overdue materials through a series of mailed or e-mailed notices culminating in a bill after 12 weeks for the replacement cost of the unreturned item.

### **Holds**

1. Patrons may place holds on library materials which are held by the library or are on order. There is no limit on the number of holds.
2. Patrons may place holds in person at any branch with their library card, by telephone during open hours, or online via the library catalogue.
3. When a hold is available, the patron will be notified by e-mail, SMS text message, or autophone service. Hold materials are held at the pick-up branch for 7 days. After this time, the hold will be removed.
4. Patrons may cancel or suspend holds by notifying branch staff in person or by phone during library hours or via the library's web catalogue.

### **Interlibrary Loans (ILLO)**

1. Oxford County Library recognizes that borrowers have varied reading interests. To meet as many of those reading needs as possible, the Library participates in the Information Network for Ontario Interlibrary Loan system. Books are borrowed for Oxford County Library patrons and Oxford County Library books are loaned to other libraries. Oxford County Library patrons with a valid library card may request the loan of books not in the collection through ILLO at any branch or online using the requests module. There is no charge for this service.

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2. The Chief Librarian may limit the number of requests per borrower.
3. Books borrowed through ILLO have the standard Oxford County Library 21 day loan period unless the lending library specifies a shorter loan period. ILLO items may be renewed at the discretion of the lending library to a limit of one week.
4. Oxford County Library books loaned to other library systems are loaned for 6 weeks to cover shipping and processing time.
5. Any financial penalties imposed by the lending library will be added to the patron's account.
6. The presence of overdue ILLO items on a patron account will block that account until the item is returned.
7. The loss of an ILLO book will result in the termination of ILLO privileges.

**Fines and Fees**

1. In an effort to reduce barriers to access, in 2018, the Library Board eliminated the collection of overdue fines.
2. The presence of 10 overdue items on an adult account and 20 overdue items on a child's account will result in the suspension of borrowing privileges. Privileges will be reactivated when materials are returned or renewed, bringing the number of overdue items below the threshold.
3. When patrons lose or damage library materials, they will be charged up to the full replacement cost of the item as indicated in the catalogue record. The charge to be levied for an older item will be determined by Headquarters staff. For damaged items, the Branch Supervisor will assess the item to determine if it can be repaired. If the damage is minimal, the financial charge may be waived. Borrowers may be permitted to keep the damaged item after the assessed cost has been paid. Repeated incidents of loss and/or damage by a patron will result in the suspension of borrowing privileges and may result in legal action.
4. If a lost item is found and returned within two years after the charges for the item have been paid, a refund may be issued. Lost and paid material charges will first be applied to any outstanding charges on the patron's account, and any remaining balance will be refunded. Refunds for less than \$10 will be issued by branch staff by cash or as a credit on the patron's account. All other refunds will be issued by cheque by the Oxford County Treasury Department.

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**Confidentiality of Personal Information**

1. Identification documents are used to verify name and address only. No other information on the document(s) presented is kept on record.
2. Confidentiality of all personal information held by Oxford County Library in matters relating to lending services is governed by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, and related County of Oxford policies, including: *Anti-Spam Policy; Access and Privacy Policy.*