

## MOUNT VERNON CITY LIBRARY

### 4. CIRCULATION POLICY

#### 4.01 PURPOSE

The Circulation Policy of the Mount Vernon City Library exists to facilitate community access to the materials and information contained in the library's collections.

#### 4.02 ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION

##### 4.02.010 Library Cards

In order to borrow materials from the Mount Vernon City Library patrons must register for a Mount Vernon City Library borrower's card. Borrowers must present their library card each time they check out materials. Each library card must be signed by the borrower named on the account (or his or her parent or guardian, in the case of minors under age 18) at the time of registration, in front of library staff, to be considered valid.

##### 4.02.020 Acceptable Identification

Applicants for borrower cards must provide official picture identification with a birth date and proof of current residence. The preferred forms of identification (ID) are a valid Washington driver's license, or identification card, issued by the Washington Motor Vehicles Division with photo and current residential address on the front of the ID.

If an applicant lacks these forms of ID, or his or her official picture ID does not list the current residential address on the front, the library will accept official picture ID along with a piece of official mail or an official document indicating his or her current residential address, such as:

- A current utility bill for the address (gas, water, local phone, cable, power) in the name of the applicant
- A current voter registration card with the residential address in the name of the applicant
- A current bank statement or printed checks with the applicant's name and current residential address
- A current official rent receipt or lease agreement for the address in the name of the applicant
- Medical coupons, a car insurance statement, cell phone bill or recent paycheck stub with the residential address in the name of the applicant
- Alternate identification and/or proof of address at the discretion of the Library Director.

All accounts are valid for up to one year, at the end of which time borrowers will be asked to confirm their address and other personal information.

#### 4.04 TYPES OF CARDS

##### 4.04.010 Mount Vernon Residents and other Vested Borrowers

Borrower cards are issued without cost to residents of the City of Mount Vernon, and other vested borrowers as described below. For the purpose of obtaining a borrower card, a Mount Vernon City *Resident* shall be: an individual inhabitant of a single family house, multi-family dwelling, manufactured home, or retirement home within the incorporated city limits of Mount Vernon. *Inhabitant* shall be defined according to Webster's Third New International Dictionary as: "A person who dwells or resides permanently in a place as distinguished from a transient lodger or visitor." All vested borrower cards expire annually on the individual's birth date, unless noted otherwise.

Vested borrowers include:

- Individuals whose residential address is within the incorporated city limits of Mount Vernon.
- Individuals showing evidence of property ownership in the City of Mount Vernon: proof shall consist of confirmation from the Skagit County website or a current tax statement in the individual's name for real property within the incorporated city limits of Mount Vernon.
- Individuals holding a current annual business license from the City of Mount Vernon: proof shall be the license itself, receipt of payment for said license from the City Finance Department, or confirmation of the applicant's status through the City Finance Department. The license or receipt must be in the name of the applicant or his or her spouse.
- Certificated staff of state certified schools within the City of Mount Vernon (hereafter referred to as teachers): teachers must verify their eligibility with appropriate documentation as prearranged between the library and the school or school district. Teacher cards expire on September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- Regular permanent employees of the City of Mount Vernon: proof of employment shall consist of presentation of the most current pay stub, or other proof at the discretion of the Library Director.
- A seasonal resident is defined as someone whose permanent home is outside the state but who lives inside the incorporated Mount Vernon city limits for a portion of the year. Seasonal residents must provide proof of their permanent and local residential addresses in addition to picture ID.
- Reciprocal borrowers in accordance with an interlocal agreement.

#### **4.04.020 Non-Resident Borrowers**

An individual who does not meet any of the conditions listed in section 4.04.010 for vested status is considered a non-resident and may purchase a non-resident card for use by his or her household. The non-resident fee is set by the Board of Trustees. Each non-resident applicant must provide proof of his or her residential address as outlined above in section II.A.

- Non-resident fees are \$80 per year (per household), \$40 bi-annually (per household), or \$20 quarterly (per household). Senior citizens may purchase a card for \$40 per year or \$20 bi-annually or \$10 quarterly. Senior citizens are defined as persons age 65 and older. Non-resident cards expire one year, six months or three months from the purchase date. Non-resident fees are not refundable.
- A seasonal non-resident is defined as someone whose permanent home is outside the state but who lives within Skagit County, but outside the incorporated Mount Vernon city limits, for a portion of the year. Each seasonal non-resident must provide proof of his or her permanent and local residential address in addition to picture ID.
- A non-resident patron who no longer wishes to retain his or her library privileges may gift the time remaining on the account to another non-resident person. The recipient must also be a non-resident patron in good standing, or must meet the usual requirements to obtain a non-resident library card.

#### **4.04.030 Accounts for Minors**

Accounts for children under the age of 18 must be obtained by the child's parent or legal guardian, and require the signature of said adult. The parent or guardian must meet the same eligibility and address verification standards required for an adult card. Parents or guardians are responsible for all items checked out on their children's accounts.

#### **4.04.040 Agency Cards**

The Agency card provides library services to organizations such as day cares, nursing homes, literacy groups, service oriented non-profits, and other like agencies whose mission is to help, teach, or assist others in our community. Agency cards are an agreement between the agency itself, not an individual, and MVCL. As such the borrower application is signed by an officer of the agency. The agency is subject to the same rules as are all borrowers. Agencies located outside the incorporated city limits of Mount Vernon are subject to the regular annual non-resident fee as set by the Board of Trustees. Agency borrowers are not eligible to participate in the reciprocal borrower program.

#### **4.04.050 Volunteer Cards**

MVCL will offer a library card, free of charge, to long-term volunteers who do not qualify for a free card under any of the vested borrower categories, in appreciation for the services they provide. To qualify, a person must have been a volunteer for at least three months, and have worked a regular schedule of eight hours per month during the past three months. Qualified persons will demonstrate a strong commitment to the library, reliability in attendance and successful completion of assigned tasks. The free card is valid only as long as the person remains a current volunteer in good standing. Volunteers under this system are not eligible to participate in the reciprocal borrower program.

## **4.06 LOAN PERIODS, LIMITS, RENEWALS AND RETURNS**

The following parameters have been established to provide library users with an adequate amount of time to both use library materials and return them so that they are available in a reasonable amount of time for other borrowers.

### **4.06.010 Loan Periods**

The majority of items within the library's collection (books, compact discs, magazines and book-and-audiovisual kits may be borrowed for 21 days. If the due date falls on a holiday, or when the library is closed, the loan period will be extended until the next day that the library is open. Special loan periods have been established for the following library materials:

- New books and DVDs: Two weeks/Fourteen (14) days
- Holiday CDs: One week/Seven (7) days

### **4.06.020 Loan Limits**

All borrowers are limited to the following materials:

- 12 DVDs and
- 12 talking books and
- 12 music CDs and
- 3 holiday music CDs
- 100 items (total of any combination of books and AV)

First time borrowers are limited to five (5) items.

Seasonal borrowers are further limited to ten (10) items at all times.

### **4.06.030 Renewals**

- If the item is not reserved for other library borrowers, two twenty-one (21) day renewals of items with standard loan periods are permitted
- If the item is not reserved for other library borrowers, two fourteen (14) day renewals of new books and DVDs are permitted
- Holiday music CDs may not be renewed

Items may be renewed in person, by telephoning the Circulation Department during open hours, or online by accessing the patron's account through the Library catalog. Overdue items may not be renewed if total charges (amount owed plus accrued fines) on the account exceed \$20.00. Due to system constraints, overdue items may not be renewed online.

### **4.06.040 Non-circulating Items**

Newspapers to which the Mount Vernon City Library subscribes may not be taken out of the building as their physical format is very susceptible to damage, they are often impossible to replace in case of loss, and they are frequently used as reference sources. In addition, books that have been designated for reference use do not circulate. In general, these are titles that are not designed to be read from cover to cover, but are used to find answers to specific questions, and must be available at all times to the Reference staff in order to respond to requests for information from the public as efficiently as possible. The Library Director may grant exceptions to this rule.

#### **4.06.050 Return of Items**

Book drops are located outside the front entrance of the library. The book drops are open when the library is closed. At other times materials should be returned to the slots in the front counter.

### **4.08 FINES AND FEES**

#### **4.08.010 Mount Vernon City Library Cards**

Each new borrower will be issued library cards at the time of registration appropriate to the needs of the household. Any library borrower who loses his or her card may obtain a replacement by showing valid photo identification and paying a non-refundable \$1.00 replacement charge. If the borrower later finds the lost card, it may be destroyed or returned to the library for reactivation with valid photo ID. A borrower who has forgotten his or her library card may present picture ID in its place one time, if the account is in his or her name. After that he or she must request a new card as outlined above.

#### **4.08.020 Overdue Fines**

Overdue fines are assessed for items returned past their due date to encourage library borrowers to return their materials by the designated return date so that they are available for other borrowers. Three grace days are given for all items. Items returned after the grace days are charged 15 cents per item for each day overdue.

#### **4.08.030 Maximum Fines**

In order to encourage the return of long-overdue materials there is a maximum fine of \$4.50 per item.

The maximum fine does not include any fees that may be accrued as the result of referral to a collection agency.

#### **4.08.040 Overdue Notices**

In order to remind library borrowers that they have outstanding overdue items two notices will be sent: one at 10 days overdue and a second at 30 days overdue.

The first notice is a reminder and states that overdue items will be declared lost and the appropriate fees charged at 30 days overdue.

The second notice, or billing notice, will be sent at 30 days overdue, stating the cost of the overdue item(s), plus a \$3.00 Lost Processing Fee for each item. It will notify the borrower that he or she may be referred to a collection agency if materials are not returned and all charges paid within 30 days of the date of the billing notice. The billing notice states that accounts sent to collection will be charged a non-refundable \$15.00 collection fee.

Failure to receive a notice will not be considered grounds for waiving a fee, as library borrowers are responsible for keeping track of the due dates of their library materials.

#### **4.08.050 Lost and/or Damaged Items**

Lost, damaged, or destroyed materials must be paid for at our replacement cost, plus any accumulated fines or related fees. If an item is returned damaged or missing pieces, the borrower will be charged according to a schedule maintained by the library.

#### **4.08.060 Payment of Charges**

The library will accept the following forms of payment for accrued charges:

- Cash
- Personal check made out to the *Mount Vernon City Library* on a check drawn on a local bank with proper identification and for the exact amount of the charges
- Money order or cashiers check for the exact amount of the charges

No charges will be excused through donation of time or materials in place of payment for legitimate charges.

#### **4.08.070 Collection Agency Submittals**

Delinquent library borrowers who have accounts with balances of \$50.00 or more will be submitted to a collection agency at sixty (60) days overdue, or thirty (30) days after the second overdue notice, or billing notice, is sent.

A non-refundable \$15.00 fee will be assessed when an account is sent to collection.

If the library borrower does not respond to initial collection agency contact and further action is required, he or she will be responsible for any additional collection agency costs incurred by the library to retrieve materials and amounts owed.

#### **4.08.080 Refund of Charges**

Refunds may either be remitted to the borrower via check from the City of Mount Vernon Finance Department, or left as a credit on the borrower's account. A refund will be issued only after any other charges are paid. Checks will not be issued for refunds of \$5.00 or less, per the City Finance Department. An item that has been declared lost and paid for may not be returned for a refund after six (6) months from the due date.

#### **4.08.090 Waiver of Charges**

The Circulation staff has the option of waiving or reducing charges if they determine that extenuating circumstances so warrant.

#### **4.08.100 Claim Returned**

An item that a borrower claims to have returned but cannot be located within the library may be considered *Claim Returned*. At that point the borrower is no longer responsible for overdue fines, replacement charges or any other costs related to that item.

#### **4.08.110 Old Debt**

Accounts with a balance owing of less than \$50.00 are written off as uncollectible after four (4) years. Accounts with a balance of \$50.00 or more are written off after seven (7) years.

#### **4.10 RESPONSIBILITY**

Library borrowers are responsible for all materials checked out on their accounts and/or on the accounts of minor children for whom they have assumed responsibility. If a library borrower allows others to check out materials on his or her account, those materials are still the responsibility of the account owner. Lost cards should be reported immediately; library borrowers are responsible for all materials checked out on their account up to the time that they report the card as lost.

#### **4.12 DENIAL OF BORROWING PRIVILEGES**

To ensure that no library borrower accrues an excessively high fine, library borrowers will have their borrowing privileges denied when their charges exceed \$20.00. Library borrowers who have been referred to the City Attorney and/or a collection agency will have their borrowing privileges denied until all delinquent materials are returned and/or all charges are paid in full.

#### **4.14 CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS**

The Board of Trustees and Administration of the Mount Vernon City Library recognize that the reading activity and interests of library borrowers are and should be private, and that any attempt to invade such privacy, without direct and legitimate need, is an invasion of the personal right of library borrowers and the “right to read” implicitly guaranteed in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Board of Trustees and Administration also affirm their adherence to the Revised Code of Washington section 42.56.310, which reads as follows:

**“RCW: 42.56.310. Library records.** Any library record, the primary purpose of which is to maintain control of library materials, or gain access to information, that discloses or could be used to disclose the identity of a library borrower is exempt from disclosure under this chapter.”

Furthermore, the information contained in library registration records will also be considered confidential and will not be released without the authorization of the individual, or by court order, except as needed by the library for the legitimate recovery or protection of library materials.

The Board interprets “any library record” to include all transactions associated with the use of library materials including but not limited to interlibrary loan forms, records of reference questions, and other documents or electronic records that would link the individual with particular materials or services.

Library staff may permit the individual listed as parent or guardian to view or know his or her child’s transaction record, or other account information, only upon presentation of the child’s library card, or official picture ID establishing his or her identity as the adult responsible for the child’s account. Further corroborating identification from the parent or guardian may be required at the discretion of library staff.

Information about transaction activity (titles, number of items borrowed, and existence of overdues or bills) will be given by telephone only if the caller can correctly state his or her name, address, telephone number, date of birth and library barcode number. Borrowers can check on only their own transaction accounts or those accounts for which they are responsible. Possession of a library card presumes authorization to use and access the account. Lost or stolen cards should be reported immediately. Library staff will not knowingly give one borrower's transaction information to another borrower, except as outlined above.

Requests for transaction activity, or other account information, by law enforcement officials should be referred to the Director, Deputy Director, or Librarian-In-Charge at the time. Any cost incurred by the Mount Vernon City Library in performing a court-ordered search may be billed to the agency requesting the search. Employees need to be aware of the importance of this policy of not revealing borrower reading or research interests in the employees' informal conversations as well as formal duties.

#### **4.16 INTERLIBRARY LOANS – MVCL AS BORROWER**

Interlibrary loan (ILL) is a process through which library materials, or a copy of the material, are made available by one library to another upon request.

##### **4.16.010 Eligible Borrowers**

Interlibrary loan service is available to any current library borrower in good standing (i.e. card is not blocked for fines, overdue materials, or other charges).

##### **4.16.020 Requesting Interlibrary Loan Service**

An interlibrary borrowing request may be submitted in writing, on the appropriate form, with complete bibliographical information. Telephone and internet requests will also be accepted.

##### **4.16.030 Materials Guidelines**

**a. Material types.** Some types of material are not readily available for lending by other libraries, and consequently the following will not be accepted as an interlibrary loan request:

- Reference material (directories, encyclopedia sets, indexes)
- Bound or current issues of magazines and newspapers
- Software
- Rare, archival, manuscript, or fragile items
- Popular items published within the last six (6) months

**b. Number of requests accepted.** Borrowers may have up to twenty-five (25) interlibrary loan requests at any one time. This includes requests which are pending as well as materials that the borrower currently has borrowed through interlibrary loan.



**c. Copyright compliance.** The Mount Vernon City Library complies with Federal copyright law and CONTU (National Commission on New Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works) guidelines, which established the following guidelines for copying for interlibrary loan: "Requests for photocopies must include the copyright warning and the library user must acknowledge awareness of the copyright warning.

#### **4.16.040 Circulation of Interlibrary Loan Material**

Materials will be loaned to borrowers according to the lending library's policy. Magazine articles are photocopied and do not need to be returned. Some items may not be taken out of the library; they are available for the borrower to use at the Mount Vernon City Library for a specific length of time.

#### **4.16.050 Renewals**

Generally, interlibrary loan materials are renewable. ILL staff will renew items if possible when requested to do so.

#### **4.16.060 Fees and Fines**

The charge for interlibrary loan service is return postage for the items to be mailed back to the lending library. This fact is stated in the request process. The Mount Vernon City Library borrower who requested the loan must pay the postage charge at the time the requested item is picked up. In addition, some institutions may charge a fee for interlibrary loan service. Borrowers will be informed of this charge before the item is ordered. It must be paid by check made out to the lending library for the exact amount of the ILL charge at the time the item is picked up.

#### **4.16.070 Overdue Fines and Charges for Lost or Damaged Materials**

Overdue fines are not charged for interlibrary loan material. If a book is lost or damaged, the replacement cost will be assessed by the lending library and charged to our borrower.

#### **4.16.080 Failure to Pick Up Interlibrary Loan Materials**

The interlibrary loan process is costly and the library incurs costs well in excess of the postage fee for each item that it borrows from another library. Consequently, the library will not accept additional interlibrary loan requests from those library borrowers who have failed to pick up items previously requested. Borrowers are responsible for postage and other charges, even if they do not pick up their requested items.

### **4.18 INTERLIBRARY LOANS – MVCL AS LENDER**

#### **4.18.010 Lending charges**

There will be no charge to lend materials from the Mount Vernon City Library's collection to other libraries, nor will charges be assessed for overdue items. If an item is not returned by the borrowing library to the Mount Vernon City Library, the borrowing library is responsible for the replacement cost of the item and any applicable fees.

#### **4.18.020 Loan Period**

Mount Vernon City Library materials will be loaned to other libraries for six (6) weeks. Material may be renewed for an additional three (3) weeks if there are no holds for the item.

#### **4.18.030 Request Formats**

In order to facilitate the processing of interlibrary loan requests, the library will accept requests submitted through OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), FirstSearch program or manually with an ALA Interlibrary Loan Form via US. Mail or fax.

#### **4.18.040 Materials Guidelines**

The Mount Vernon City Library will lend photocopies of periodical articles or pages from books in accordance with federal copyright law. In order to insure that local Mount Vernon City Library borrowers have access to library materials, the following items will not be loaned via interlibrary loan:

- Popular items published within the last six months
- Items with long request lists
- Software
- Reference material (directories, encyclopedia sets, indexes, other reference tools)
- Bound or current issues of magazines or newspapers
- Rare, archival, manuscript, or fragile items

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