

Essex Library Association Policy

X.xx CIRCULATION

Background and General Information

Essex Library Association collections are available for use by residents of the Town Of Essex, including Essex, Centerbrook and Ivoryton, who hold a valid Essex library card. Loaned materials remain the property of Essex Library Association (“the Library”).

Essex Library cards are issued to identify users of library materials and to provide a means of recovering materials that have not been returned. Patrons are expected to present their library card when checking out materials. Loan periods are designed both to allow adequate time for borrowers to use materials and to provide timely loans of materials that are in high demand.

Equal Access to Materials and Privileges

It is the policy of the Library to endorse free and equal access to Library materials and services for all people, regardless of race, creed, national origin, age, or other personal criteria. It is the policy of the Library that parents and legal guardians, not Library staff, are responsible for the selection of material by children. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to monitor, supervise, approve or restrict their children from access to Library materials and services including the Internet.

Confidentiality of User Records

It is the policy of the Library that personally identifiable information contained in the circulation records of the Library remains confidential to the fullest extent permissible by law.

Library Cards: Eligibility and Registration

Essex residents: Any person aged five (5) years old or older who shows proof of residence within the Town of Essex may receive an Essex Library card which will be valid for three years. There is no charge for a library card.

Non-residents: Borrowing privileges will be extended to non-residents with a permanent Connecticut address who present a valid library card issued by the public library in their home town. Non-residents will be required to have their name, address, library card number and telephone number entered into the Essex Library’s computer system before they can borrow Essex Library materials.

Temporary residents: Borrowing privileges will be extended on a short term basis to non-residents who do not have a permanent address in Connecticut (i.e. au pairs, caregivers, family members) that are temporarily living in Essex. The Essex resident with whom the temporary resident is staying must assume responsibility for all items checked out by the

temporary resident by signing an agreement to that effect. Temporary resident cards will expire after six months, but may be renewed for additional six month intervals.

LOST ITEMS – Patrons are responsible for the full replacement cost attached to the record of any item that is damaged, lost or not returned. Patrons may not replace lost items with substitutions purchased from outside sources.

Acceptable identification: Applicants for an Essex library card must show identification with a current residential address. Identification with only a post office box number will not be accepted. Any one of the following is considered acceptable identification:

- A valid Connecticut driver's license or identification card issued by the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles with photo and current residential address.
- A current property tax statement for residential property in the Town of Essex.
- An official photo identification card, or another piece of identification with a current Town of Essex residential address, such as a current rent receipt, utility bill, personal check or recently postmarked mail.
- A residential property tax statement may be requested for applicants who live in the Town of Essex but supply only a post office box number as an address.

Minors: A parent or legal guardian must sign the application for applicants under the age of 18. The parent or guardian's identification or current Essex library card will be accepted as proof of residence. Parents or guardians are responsible for all items checked out by children under the age of 18.

Renewal of Essex Library cards: Cards must be renewed at the Library. At the time of renewal, applicants will be required to complete a current Patron Registration Form.

Responsibilities

- A Library patron is responsible for all materials checked out on his/her card and the cards of children (or others) for whom she/he has assumed responsibility. If a patron allows others to borrow materials using his/her card, those materials are the responsibility of the card owner.
- Lost cards should be reported immediately. A library patron is responsible for all materials checked out on his/her card up to the date the card is reported lost to the library staff. There is a \$2.00 replacement fee for a lost card.
- Parents or guardians whose library cards are blocked due to fines or lost items may not use their child's card until their own record has been cleared. A child may continue to use his/her own card to check out materials if his/her parent's card is blocked.

Loan Periods and Limits

For information on loan periods and limits, please refer to the Library's current schedule of loan periods and limits, available upon request from Library staff.

Non-circulating items: Newspapers and materials from the Vertical Files and books which have been designated Reference do not circulate. Copiers are available for persons needing copies of information from materials that do not circulate. There is a charge for all copies made using library equipment.

Use of the book return: All items may be returned in the book drop located at Essex Public Library; however, non-book items are susceptible to damage if returned in the drop, and patrons are asked to package or secure (for example, with rubber bands) items such as videos, DVDs, CDs, CD-ROMs or audio books, so that the materials do not fall apart in the book drop. In addition, patrons are asked to return all oversize items to the check-out desk as large items may cause a jam in the book return. The staff requests that all materials be returned to the check-out desk when the library is open.

Library materials from schools: Library materials belonging to Essex schools should not be returned to the Essex Library.

Overdue Notices/Bills

Library users are responsible for keeping a record of the due dates of their library materials. A notice will be sent as a reminder after items are overdue fourteen (14) days. A printed receipt for payment for lost and damaged items will be given to the patron.

Fines and Fees Policy

For information on fines and fees, please see the Library's current schedules of overdue fines and other fees, available upon request from Library staff.

Missing items: Patrons will be notified of items missing from materials they have returned. The materials will remain checked out to the patron and kept out of general circulation until the missing item is returned or paid for. After one month, the item will be declared lost and charges added to the patron's record.

Damaged items: The library staff will attempt to repair slightly damaged items, but charges will be assessed for lost or damaged materials to cover costs associated with repairing damaged materials.

Refunds: If a patron locates an item within thirty (30) days after making payment for it, the amount paid for the replacement cost of the item, minus outstanding fees and fines on that patron's account will be refunded. A check will be issued for refunds over \$30.00.

Waiver: The library staff has the option of reducing or waiving charges if they determine that this action is warranted by extenuating circumstances.

Payment of fines: Fees and fines may be paid by cash or check. Fines in excess of \$25 may be paid using a credit card accepted by the Library.

Denial of Borrowing Privileges

Borrowing privileges will be denied by Library staff if the total amount of fees and fines exceeds \$50.00 on the user's record.

Denial of borrowing privileges will be handled by Library staff with discretion and courtesy. Denial of borrowing privileges is not meant to be punitive but to maintain availability of Library materials.

Service Without a Card

Service will be given to borrowers who have forgotten their library cards, provided that their registration information is available locally and if outstanding fees or fines on their registration records do not exceed \$50.00. Proof of identification may be required.

Approved by ELA Board – 14 February, 2011