

CIRCULATION POLICY

- I. Library Card Eligibility
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- III. Borrowing Privileges and Responsibilities
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The Merrimack Public Library welcomes all individuals to use its collections and services within the library facility. Free and open access is essential to the role of the public library.

The Merrimack Public Library does not restrict access to any materials on the basis of a person's color, religion, national origin, socioeconomic status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, or age.

The library adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and makes every attempt to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities with regard to the use of the library facility, participation in library activities, and attendance at library programs.

The library staff must not be expected to act in loco parentis by parents who wish to limit the materials accessed by their own minor children. Parents who wish to limit their own child(ren)'s materials should accompany the child(ren) to the library and supervise the borrowing process.

Individuals wanting to borrow materials may register for a library card according to the guidelines outlined below.

I. Library Card Eligibility

Anyone living, working, attending school, or owning property in Merrimack is eligible for a library card free of charge. Changes in personal information affecting eligibility will render the card immediately invalid, in which case the individual must purchase a non-resident card to maintain their account. Cards are available to non-residents for a fee (as outlined below).

1) Residents

All residents of Merrimack are eligible for a free library card. Residents are those who are over the age of 5 years and identify Merrimack as their legal domicile. Proof of residency is required to obtain a library card. Cards must be renewed every three years.

a. Children

A parent or legal guardian must accompany children (ages 5-13) to obtain a library card. The parent/legal guardian must agree for the child and assume financial responsibility for materials borrowed on the card. The parent/guardian must present a valid ID, as outlined in Appendix A.

b. Teens

Young adults (ages 14-17) assume financial responsibility for materials borrowed on their own library cards. They must present a photo ID and proof of residency to receive a library card. If they are unable to present these forms of identification, they may apply for a card in the presence of a parent or legal guardian, who must then present a valid ID.

2) Non-Residents

a. Property Owners

Individuals who own property in Merrimack and support the Merrimack Public Library through their taxes are eligible for a free library card. Proof of ownership is required. Cards must be renewed every three years.

b. Individuals Employed in Town

Individuals who work in the Town of Merrimack are eligible for a free library card. Proof of employment is required. Cards must be renewed every year.

c. Students

Students currently enrolled in a school in Merrimack are eligible for a free library card. Proof of enrollment is required. Cards must be renewed every year.

d. Other

Non-residents who do not work or attend school in Merrimack may purchase a membership for an annual fee of \$100. Once purchased, a single card is issued and may be used by any member of the cardholder's family (permissions for each individual using the card must be noted on the account). Registration and renewal of non-resident memberships must be completed in person. Cards must be renewed every year.

3) Greater Merrimack Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce Members

Greater Merrimack Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce members who are non-residents are eligible for a free library card with limited access to items being read by the library's Business Book Group. Confirmation from the Book Group Leader is required. Cards must be renewed every year.

4) Temporary Residents

Temporary housing residents may be eligible for a library card on a temporary basis.

Such individuals will be issued a card for a period of one month with a temporary Merrimack mailing address and a driver's license for identification. This card does not restrict the number of items that may be checked out; however, it may not be used to check out materials in the Library of Things collection.

5) Institutions

Nonprofit organizations or institutions within the Town of Merrimack may be issued a library card at the discretion of the Head of Circulation. Such cards are valid for one year. It is the responsibility of the institution to provide the library with a list of approved borrowers annually. Institutional card users may borrow circulating materials in pursuit of the institution's activities. Institutional cards are not intended for personal use.

II. Registration

All applicants for library membership must appear in person and present acceptable identification with their current name and address to obtain a library card. This applies to first-time cardholders as well as those renewing or replacing their library cards. See Appendix A for acceptable documentation.

Self-registration is offered through the library's online catalog. This self-registration is considered temporary until the individual visits the library to establish a permanent library card. Self-registration does not allow materials to be checked out; however, an individual may place reserves and access online resources. Self-registered accounts expire and are deleted after one month.

1) Library User Records

In accordance with NH RSA 91-A:5 and RSA 201-D:11, library user records are confidential. The Merrimack Public Library will not divulge titles that are currently checked out, items that are overdue, or materials that have been requested by a library cardholder to anyone other than said library cardholder without the express permission of the cardholder.

III. Borrowing Privileges and Responsibilities

1) Checking Out Materials

Any individual with a valid library card from the Merrimack Public Library may borrow circulating library materials. Library patrons are responsible for all materials checked out on their library cards.

A valid library card (see Appendix B) should be presented when borrowing materials. If a patron cannot present a library card at the time of checkout, a current photo ID (such as

a driver's license) displaying the cardholder's name and address will be accepted. If the address on the ID does not match the library database, the patron is required to verify the address on the library database verbally before checkout.

One replacement card is available per year to members in good standing (see Appendix B) for free. A \$5.00 fee is charged for each additional replacement card issued within one year from the first, free replacement.

Library cardholders (or the parent or guardian of a cardholder under the age of 14) are financially responsible for all items checked out on their card. Library users are expected to treat the library facility, equipment, and materials carefully and respectfully. Materials should be returned to the library in the condition in which they were borrowed.

Most library materials are available to be checked out. Exceptions include items in the library's Reference collection as well as newspapers and laptops. Items are circulated for a specified period based on their format, content, and demand (see Appendix C).

2) Self-Checkout

Self-checkout terminals are available in the library building for patron convenience. Patrons with excessive charges (see Appendix B) may be blocked from using the self-checkout terminal.

3) Loan Limits

The library does not impose a limit on the number of physical items that may be checked out under a single library card at any given time.

4) Renewals

The library automatically renews most borrowed library materials. The library's Hot Books, New DVDs, items in the Library of Things collection, items requested by other library patrons, and items from some other GMILCS libraries will not automatically renew.

5) Returning Materials

Library materials may be returned in the library building (during open hours), in the bookdrop on the north end of the library property (24-hour access), in the bookdrop located on Naticook Road in South Merrimack (24-hour access), or to another GMILCS library (see Appendix D). The South Merrimack bookdrop is retrieved once a week.

Interlibrary loans (below) must be returned inside the Merrimack Public Library building or using the bookdrop located on the north end of the library property.

6) Overdue Materials

The Merrimack Public Library does not charge overdue fines. Cardholders will be

notified by the selected notification method on their account if they fail to return library materials by their due date. If materials are not returned after delivery of overdue notices, a bill for the replacement cost of the materials will be sent to the cardholder's mailing address.

7) Lost/Damaged Materials

Library cardholders will be held financially responsible for materials checked out using their library card. Should an item become lost or damaged to the extent that it will not remain in the library's collection, the cardholder will be required to refund the library for the cost of the item. Patrons may pay such fees with cash or check, or online with credit cards using the eCommerce site available through the library's online catalog.

Items that are damaged but repairable may be assessed a materials fee at the discretion of the library staff. When the library is able to replace a part of a lost or damaged item (i.e., one disc of an audiobook, an included instructional booklet, etc.), the patron will be assessed a charge based on the replacement fee rather than the purchase of the full item.

At the discretion of the Head of Circulation, the library may accept a replacement copy of a lost or damaged item in lieu of payment.

Library materials that have been overdue for 40 days are considered Lost Items. Patron accounts will be charged for the full cost of Lost Items. Charges will be waived for Lost Items returned within 60 days of being overdue in good condition. Lost Items returned after this time will be accepted at the discretion of the Head of Circulation.

Library Accounts with Lost Item charges of \$40.00 or greater will be submitted to a debt collection agency after 60 days overdue. A collection fee of \$10.00 is added to any account submitted to collections. Borrowing privileges are suspended until the balance on the account is under \$10.00.

In the event that a Lost Item is found after payment, the payment may be refunded at the discretion of the Head of Circulation, and only if library has not yet purchased a replacement. Such a refund does not apply to lost interlibrary loan materials that are afterwards found and returned.

The library will charge a \$15.00 fee for any checks returned due to insufficient funds.

8) Reserving Items

Patrons may place requests on library materials in person, by phone, or through the library's online catalog. Requests will be filled in the order in which they were placed. Patrons must pick up requested items within seven days. If the requested item is not picked up after seven days, the library reserves the right to pass the item on to the next patron on the request list or to return the item to the shelf or owning library.

Interlibrary loan materials will be held for patrons for ten days. If the requested item is not picked up after ten days, the library reserves the right to return the item to its owning library.

9) Interlibrary Loan

Items not owned by the Merrimack Public Library or other GMILCS libraries may be requested from other libraries through the interlibrary loan (ILL) service. The Merrimack Public Library will borrow materials from other libraries upon request of a Merrimack cardholder as long as the Merrimack Public Library does not own the item and the cardholder's account is in good standing (as outlined in Appendix B). Four items may be requested through the ILL system at one time, unless special circumstances exist.

All ILL borrowing is provided free of charge.

10) Museum Passes

The Merrimack Public Library provides a limited number of passes available for free or at a discounted entry rate to area museums, parks, and zoos. Two passes per day may be used per cardholder. Passes are limited to one pass per week per cardholder during school vacation weeks.

Passes may be reserved in advance online via the library's website, by phone, or in person. Museum passes are made available to Merrimack Public Library cardholders only and are not available to other GMILCS library cardholders who would otherwise be eligible to borrow materials through the Common Borrower Card service (detailed below). Passes can be checked out up to two weeks before the date they have been reserved to be used.

11) Lost or Stolen Cards

Library patrons are responsible for all materials checked out on their library cards. Cardholders agree to report a lost or stolen library card immediately. After reporting the loss, the card will be made "inactive." If a lost/stolen card is returned to the library, it will be held at the Circulation Desk for 30 days.

In order to obtain a replacement card or reactivate a lost card, a photo ID is required.

12) Change of Personal Information

It is the responsibility of cardholder to keep their patron record accurate and current. Changes of name, phone number, email address, and mailing address should be reported to library staff or updated through the "My Account" feature of the library's online catalog. Changes to address will require proof of residency to finalize (see Appendix A). Library cards that have been expired and inactive for three years will be deleted from the patron database if there are less than \$10.00 in fees and no blocks on the account.

13) Closing a Library Account

All library materials must be returned to the library and all fees paid before a library account can be closed. It is the cardholder's responsibility to verify that all materials have been received by the library and that there are no outstanding fees.

14) Revocation of Library Privileges

The library reserves the right to restrict or revoke a library card if borrowing privileges are abused. Borrowing privileges may also be suspended if a cardholder has excessive charges (see Appendix B). The Library Director is authorized to use a collection agency or small claims court to settle overdue accounts if normal billing procedures do not resolve the abuse.

IV. Common Borrower Card

The Merrimack Public Library has a reciprocal borrowing agreement with other libraries within the GMILCS consortium. This agreement enables Merrimack Public Library cardholders to check items out from other libraries in the consortium. Libraries may choose to limit access to certain collections.

A valid library card (as defined in Appendix B) or current ID displaying the patron's name and address must be presented to use the service. If the address on the ID does not match the address in the library's database, the patron is required to verify their address verbally before checkout.

Patrons should be aware that other GMILCS library policies may differ from those at the Merrimack Public Library. Items may be returned at any participating GMILCS library. Reparations for lost or damaged items should be made with the transacting library.

Appendix A — Acceptable Identification to Verify Name and Address for Registration

To apply for a library card, an individual must appear in person and provide a photo ID that contains the name and current address of the applicant. If the photo identification does not have the applicant's current address, the applicant must provide an additional piece of documentation with that information.

In the case of minors (persons under the age of 18), as a substitute for an ID, an accompanying adult who has an ID for the same address may vouch for the identity of a minor and show proof of residence for the minor wishing to obtain a library card.

<u>Residents</u> Individuals who reside in the Town of Merrimack	<u>Proof of Residency</u> Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (PO boxes are not accepted as a permanent address).	Acceptable ID includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• US driver's license• ID card issued by a federal or state government agency• Automotive registration• Checkbook• Utility bill issued within the last 30 days (online or printed)• Recent property tax statement• Lease or mortgage papers• Posted mail with name of applicant	<u>Valid For</u> 3 years
<u>Non-Residents: Property Owners</u> Individuals who own businesses or property in the Town of Merrimack	<u>Proof of Ownership</u> Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (PO boxes are not accepted as a permanent address).	Acceptable ID includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent property tax statement• Utility bill issued within the last 30 days (online or printed)• Lease or mortgage papers	<u>Valid For</u> 3 years
<u>Non-Residents: Town Employees</u> Individuals who are employed in the Town of Merrimack	<u>Proof of Employment</u> Documentation that shows the individual's name and the work address.	Acceptable ID includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paycheck stub• Work badge• Letter from employer	<u>Valid For</u> 1 year

<u>Non-Residents:</u> <u>Students</u> Individuals who attend a school in the Town of Merrimack	<u>Proof of Enrollment</u> Documentation that shows the individual's name and the school.	Acceptable ID includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student ID • Official copy of current class schedule 	<u>Valid For</u> 1 year
<u>Non-Residents</u> Individuals who are not otherwise affiliated with the Town of Merrimack but wish to obtain a Merrimack Public Library card for personal use	<u>Proof of Identity</u> Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (PO boxes are not accepted as a permanent address).	Acceptable ID includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver's license • Automotive registration • Checkbook • Utility bill issued within the last 30 days (online or printed) • Recent property tax statement • Lease or mortgage papers 	<u>Valid For</u> 1 year
<u>Chamber of Commerce</u> Greater Merrimack Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce members who are non-residents and are members of the Business Book Group		The Library will contact the Chamber President to verify membership.	<u>Valid For</u> 1 year
<u>Institutions and Schools</u> Nonprofit organizations or institutions within the Town of Merrimack		Nonprofit organizations or institutions may request a library card by submitting the following information on letterhead, signed by an individual authorized to act on behalf of the organization: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A statement indicating that the organization accepts responsibility for any fees and/or replacement of materials. 2. The names of all individuals who are authorized to use the library card. 	<u>Valid For</u> 1 year

Appendix B — Definitions

Valid library card/in good standing — A Merrimack Public Library card that is not expired and does not have excessive charges.

Excessive charges— Overdue fines/fees in excess of \$10.00; any charges for lost/damaged materials.

Overdue — The status of library materials that were not returned before the library opens on the day following the due date, nor renewed by midnight on the due date.

Appendix C — Loan and Renewal Periods

Adult, Youth, and Teen Books – 14 days	Lego Kits – 14 days
Interlibrary Loans – Varies	Hot Books – 7 days (no holds or renewals)
Video Games – 7 days	DVDs – 14 days (*New DVDs – 7 days)
Magazines – 14 days	Holiday DVDs – 7 days (no holds or renewals)
Cake Pans – 14 days	Music CDs – 14 days
Library of Things – 7 days (no renewal)	Audiobooks on CD – 14 days
Large Print Books – 14 days	Playaways – 14 days

1) Loan Periods

Select items may be available for extended loan periods upon request.

2) Renewals

All items with renewal capabilities may be renewed twice. The renewal limit after six weeks of renewal is at the discretion of the Head of Circulation. Renewals are not available on the library's Hot Books, New DVDs, items in the Library of Things collection, and items requested by other library patrons.

Appendix D — GMILCS Libraries

Amherst Town Library	Hooksett Public Library	Nesmith Library (Windham)
Bedford Public Library	Kelley Library (Salem)	Rodgers Memorial Library (Hudson)
Derry Public Library	Manchester City Library	Wadleigh Memorial Libray (Milford)
Goffstown Public Library	West Manchester Branch Library	
Danforth Library @ New England College		

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