



Circulation Policy

Approved by: Eastern Counties Regional Library Board
Approved Date: September 19, 2019
Effective Date: October 1, 2019

Purpose

With this Policy, Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) strives to provide the communities we serve with suitable access to our collection of library materials, and to effectively manage that collection, so that it can continue to be shared as a core library service.

Library Card Registration

An Eastern Counties Regional Library card account is required to borrow from the library's collections and access many of the library's digital resources (including eBooks, databases etc.) A library card number is also required to manage your account, place requests, and renew items online or over the phone.

Any person who wishes to access ECRL services may register for an ECRL card at no charge. Identification is required in order to register for a library card. Acceptable pieces of identification include: Driver's license, Health card, or other piece of identification that includes the individual's name and address. Identification must be current (i.e. not expired). Adults are fully responsible for the use of their library card.

Children and youth (18 and under) must have a parent's, guardian's, or caregiver's permission to register for a Juvenile library card. By granting their permission, that adult is agreeing to take full responsibility for use of the Juvenile card.

Use of Library Card

You must present your library card in order to borrow library materials or manage your account in person at a library branch. In lieu of your library card, you can present a piece of identification that can be used to confirm access to your account. If you wish to receive library service over the phone (e.g. checking your account status, renewing items, etc.) you will be required to provide information that will allow the library staff to confirm access to your account.

These measures are to ensure only authorized access of your library card and account, which is necessary because all cardholders are responsible for:

- Materials checked out on their card
- Promptly reporting changes in account information (e.g. address or phone number)
- Promptly reporting the loss or theft of a library card. You will receive a new library card free of charge.

Borrowing and Returns

Customers with an ECRL card can borrow up to 100 items at any one time. This limit does not include items borrowed from the ECRL's digital collections. Digital content providers may have borrowing limits specific to those collections.

Juvenile card holders younger than 18 are not permitted to place holds on or borrow films or other media classified as 18A or R (Restricted). Juvenile card holders younger than 14 are not permitted to place holds on or borrow films or other media classified as 14A. Proof of age may be requested in order to comply with film classification age restrictions.

The Library is not responsible for any damage caused to audio-visual equipment by library materials.

Materials can be borrowed from and returned to any ECRL location. ECRL may also have community-based return locations (e.g. drop boxes). Because these locations are not emptied daily, items may show as being checked out on library card after they have been returned. Once the material is brought to a library location, the items will be cleared from the customer's account.

ECRL participates in the Libraries, Archives and Museums Nova Scotia (LAMNS) Borrow Anywhere / Return Anywhere (BARA) initiative, which means that ECRL items can be returned to any public library, community college or university library in Nova Scotia. ECRL also accepts returns of items from other libraries in the province. Customers may experience a delay in their account information being updated if items are returned using the BARA system.

Account Status and Notifications

Customers are responsible for monitoring their library card activity, including items checked out and due dates. Customers will be provided with a PIN when they register for a library card; using their library card number and PIN, they can access their account information online on ECRL's website. Customers who cannot access their account online can do so by contacting library staff by phone or email. Customers with a working email address listed in their account will receive email notifications to alert them of the following:

- Pre-notification of due dates
- Overdue notices
- Notification of holds available for pick-up

Customers who do not have an email address listed in their account will receive telephone notifications when holds are available for pick-up, and notices by mail if they have overdue items.

Holds

Items not available at a particular branch, out on loan to another customer, or not yet available (new items on order), can be placed on hold and sent to your preferred ECRL location to be checked out. Holds can be placed in person or over the phone at a library branch, or online using ECRL's online account feature.

Customers will be placed on a waiting list and those with an email address or telephone number listed in their accounts be notified when the item becomes available. Customers will have 14 days to pick-up their available holds.

Customers have the option to suspend (defer) their holds until a future date (e.g. if the customer will be on vacation, or otherwise unavailable to pick up their requested items).

Loan Periods, Renewals, and Overdue Fines

The loan period for most library items, including books and multiple-disc DVD sets, is 3 weeks. The loan period for single disk DVD and Blu-ray items is 1 week. Loan periods for special collection items may vary; you will be notified of these at the time of check-out.

Loan periods may be extended by renewing items. A renewal extends the due date by the same length of time as the original loan period. The renewal period starts on the day the item is renewed, not the original date the item was due. Each item can be renewed one time. After that, the item must be returned to the an ECRL location (to ensure it is not lost), and then can be checked out again. Items cannot be renewed or checked out again if another library customer has placed a hold on the item.

There are no overdue fines for books returned late. A late fee of \$1 per day up to a maximum charge of \$5 is charged on movies or television series that are returned late (after the due date).

A customer's library account will be blocked and they will be unable to check out more items if that customer has:

- \$10 or more in overdue fines to be paid; or
- 3 or more overdue items still checked out.

Lost or Damaged Items

When a borrower reports an item as lost, the replacement cost will be charged to their account. Any item 6 weeks overdue will automatically be considered lost and the replacement cost will be added to the customer's account. This fee must be paid before the customer can borrow more items. If a lost item is returned, the replacement cost is removed from the customer's account. If the item was a DVD or Blu-ray, an overdue fee will be applied.

If a customer believes they have returned an item that is marked as overdue or lost, they should notify library staff in person, by phone, or by email. Library staff will trust the customer and remove the item from their account.

If a library item is damaged to the extent that it cannot be put back into circulation, the customer should return the item or notify library staff by phone or email. The damage will be forgiven, and replacement costs will not be charged.

Authorizing Access to Account

Customers can authorize others to have access to their borrower account, and can add or delete authorizations at any time.

To access the cardholder's account, those who have been provided with authorized access will be asked to present acceptable ID or their own library card to match their name to that listed in the account.

Once the Authorized Access person presents acceptable ID or their own library card, they can do the following on a card owner's account:

- Access the borrowing information
- Renew items
- Place requests
- Pick up holds for the card owner
- Pay fines/fees and obtain receipts

- Report a card lost/stolen

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact the Chief Librarian at 902-747-2597 ext. 222.