

## **Circulation Policies**

### **Purpose:**

The circulation policies of the Ethel L. Memorial Library exists to facilitate community access to the materials and information in the library's collections, while protecting these same collections.

### **Policies**

1. Library Card Policy
2. Material Loan Limits and Loan Periods
3. Renewal Policy
4. Fines and Fees
5. Claims Returned Policy
6. Overdue Notices
7. Library Material Hold Policy
8. Collection Agency Policy

Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library's circulation policies is intended to be in accord with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

### **1. Library Card Policy**

#### **Policy Statement:**

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library issues library cards to facilitate loan of materials and to enable the library to keep a record of which materials are on loan to patrons.

#### **Regulations:**

##### **Obtaining a Library Card**

1. Any resident of the United States over the age of 18 may receive an adult library card upon completion of an application and provision of proof of identification (ID) and current address.
2. On the library card application, the applicant must:
  - a. provide his or her full, legal name, address, phone number, etc.
  - b. include the driver's license number if the applicant has one
3. Acceptable photo ID and proof of current address shall be one or more of the following:
  - a. valid state driver's license or other government issued photo ID with current address

- b. utility bill
- c. printed checks
- d. property tax statement
- e. canceled mail, postmarked within the last two weeks
- f. typed lease that shows the address
- g. Department of Motor Vehicles-issued change of address card

Non-residents of Texas may receive a library card with full borrowing privileges by completing the above steps.

Anyone under the age of 18 can receive a juvenile card after completing an application and securing the signature of his/her parent or legal guardian. Children must be present in order to apply for a library card.

### Renewal of Library Cards

1. All library cards are valid for one year. At the end of that period, patrons will be asked to verify their address and phone number and may need to present a valid ID.

### Use of Library Cards

1. Patrons can maintain full library privileges by:
  - a. returning materials on or before the due date
  - b. adhering to the borrowing limits for all types of material
  - c. paying for lost or damaged materials before the item is 28 days overdue
  - d. promptly informing the library of any change of address or phone number
2. Patrons must provide a library card to check out.
3. Whenever a patron calls into the library to conduct a transaction on his/her account, he or she must provide a library card number and/or his or her name.
4. A patron's record will be marked delinquent when items are overdue or money is owed. This status will affect the patron's ability to borrow materials from the library.
5. A patron retains full library borrowing privileges as long as his/her library record is not blocked. A library record becomes blocked under the following circumstances:
  - a. When an item is overdue by 1 day
  - b. A patron exceeds borrowing limits by type or quantity of material
  - c. When the total amount of unpaid fines and fees exceeds \$.01
  - d. When a patron's account has five or more claims returned items on it.
6. Once a patron's library card is blocked, all library privileges for that patron are suspended including borrowing and renewal of items. Patrons may not use the library computers when their card is blocked.
7. Using another patron's library card to check out materials is not permitted.

### Lost, Stolen, or Previously Issued Library Cards

1. Patrons must report lost or stolen cards in order to avoid being held responsible for materials checked out on their cards.
2. There is a charge of \$3.00 to replace a lost library card.
3. If a patron reports a card lost or stolen, the patron must provide identification in order to get a new library card in addition to paying the \$3.00 replacement fee.
4. A child must bring a parent with them in order to get a new library card in addition to paying the \$3.00 replacement fee.

### Patron Responsibilities

1. Because the Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library verifies the identity of all library card applicants, the individual named on the account is responsible for all fines and fees assessed to that account.
2. A library patron is responsible for all materials checked out on his or her card or on the cards of children for whom he/she has signed library card applications regardless of who checked the items out.
3. All lost or stolen library cards should be reported immediately because the owner of the card is responsible for all items checked out on the card until the card is reported lost or stolen.
4. When a patron moves, it is the responsibility of the patron to inform the Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library of the new address.

### Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library Employee Borrowing Privileges

1. EWML employees may not renew books that are still on reserve for other patrons or staff members.
2. EWML employees must wait their turn on reserve lists and may not change their priority to be higher on the list for materials.
3. Staff members who leave the employ of EWML will have their status changed from fine-exempt to non-fine-exempt.

## **2. Material Loan Limits and Loan Periods**

### Policy Statement:

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library sets loan periods and loan limits in order to provide patrons with fair and reasonable access to the library's resources. The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library sets limits on the length of time that an individual can keep a specific type of material in order to more fairly distribute limited resources such as audio-visual materials. The limit also reflects the fact that it takes more time to utilize some types of materials than others.

### Definitions:

A loan period is the total number of hours, days or weeks that one patron can keep a specific item.

A loan limit is the total number of items of a specific type or total value that any one patron can have on loan at one time.

A New Book item is one that has four or more holds on it, or that is expected to be in very popular among patrons, such as best sellers.

Regulations:

1. Books, with the following exceptions, are lent for a period of 28 days. The exceptions are:
  - a. New Materials: 14 days
  - b. Reference Books at the discretion of the Library Director.

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library also sets the following loan period limits on non-book items:

- c. Videos: 3 days
- d. DVDs: 1 day

Reference books circulate at the discretion of the Library Director. Periodicals do not normally circulate. However, a circulating copy of a particular issue can sometimes be acquired for a patron.

2. The length of time or number of items that patrons may keep items of a certain type (holiday books, books on specific subjects or by specific authors, for example) may be temporarily reduced at the discretion of the Library Director. Time limits must be for a specific period of time and must be removed when that period of time has expired. *Examples: during the month of February, Black History books may be set to a circulation period of two weeks. On March 1, the circulation period shall be reset to the original three weeks. At Christmas it may be necessary to limit the number of holiday books borrowed by any one person based on the size of the collection.*
3. The material loan limits exist to enable fair access to the Library's resources. Patrons are limited to borrowing up to 7 items total and the following limits:
  - a. 2 videos
  - b. 1 DVDs
  - c. 3 New Materials adult, YA or juvenile fiction or non-fiction
  - d. 1 interlibrary loan items
4. Patrons may borrow multiple copies of the same title at the same time unless the

title has holds, in which case no patron may have more than one copy of a title at one time.

5. Loan periods on 28-day books may be extended at the discretion of the Library Director, or designated substitute for the following reason(s):
  - a. Loan periods on 28-day books may be extended at patron request in the event of vacations. However, the loan period may not exceed nine weeks (63 days) in length. The length of the original extended loan period will be taken into account in determining whether materials can be renewed. For example, if a book is borrowed for an extended loan period of six weeks, the book could be renewed once for an additional three weeks.
  - b. When the due date falls on a holiday for which the library is closed, the loan period will be extended until the next day that the library is open.
6. All borrowed materials must be returned to the Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library. Items returned to another library will accumulate overdue fines until the item is returned to the EWM library and discharged.
7. Only books may be returned in the book return. Videos, DVDs, and audio books, should be returned inside the library to avoid the possibility of damage. Patrons who return these items in the book return will be accessed a \$1.00 fee.
8. When the renewal limit has been reached, it is the patron's responsibility to return the item or incur a fine.
9. A New Material item is any book for which there are four or more reserves. The library reserves the right to change the loan period of these items from 21 days to 14 days on a temporary basis to make the items available more quickly to a greater number of patrons. New Material items cannot be renewed under any circumstances. Only two New Material items may be checked out to any one patron at a time. Once demand has been met, the loan period for these items will be reset to 28 days. The library reserves the right to set loan periods for potential New Material items to 14 days before 4 reserves are placed on the title.
10. Juvenile library cardholders are not permitted to check out videos or DVD's.

### **3. Renewal Policy**

#### **Policy Statement:**

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library allows patrons to renew library materials as a courtesy to patrons who have not completed their use of an item. Limits on renewals exist so that all patrons can have an equal opportunity to use the library's materials.

#### **Definition:**

A renewal is an extension of the original loan period.

#### **Regulations:**

1. Renewals are granted dependent upon:

- a. material type
  - b. the presence of a request for the material by another patron
2. Additional renewals beyond the original two can be granted at the discretion of the Library Director or a designated substitute. So that other patrons may have a chance to find the item by browsing, materials will not be renewed consecutively more than four times. Items must be returned to the shelf for 24 hours before being checked out again to the same patron.
3. Staff will not discharge a book then immediately check the book out again to the same patron the same day when the renewal maximum has been reached. Materials must return to the shelf for a minimum of 24 hours before being checked out again to the same patron.
4. Library materials can be renewed in person or by phone or through the library's on-line catalog on the Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library website.
5. Overdue materials can be renewed; however any fines incurred prior to the renewal will be added to the patron's account and must be paid before renewal.
6. To maintain the integrity of the reserve system, items for which other patrons have placed holds on may not be renewed.
7. Staff may renew materials up to four times (the third and fourth time shall be at the discretion of the Library Director) to allow patrons more time to look for a lost item, providing the patron's account is not delinquent. However, under no circumstances will staff renew materials beyond the permitted four so a patron can avoid paying for a lost item.
8. When the renewal limit has been reached, it is the patron's responsibility to return the item or risk incurring a fine or lost book charge.
9. At the discretion of the Library Director or a designated substitute and as a courtesy to patrons who cannot get to the library, a one day renewal may be granted beyond the original two full-term renewals to allow patrons to avoid paying a late fee. If the patron does not return the item the following day, overdue fines will be assessed for each day the item is overdue.
10. Staff will provide patrons with the new due date whenever an item is renewed. If an item is renewed over the phone, it is the patron's responsibility to record the new due date.
11. If the patron's account is delinquent, materials cannot be renewed. Exceptions can be granted at the discretion of the Library Director or designated substitute.
12. Renewal requests for Interlibrary Loan materials are not permitted.

#### **4. Fines and Fees**

##### **Policy Statement:**

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library charges fines as an incentive for patrons to return materials in a timely manner so that other patrons can have access to the items. The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library charges fees to offset the cost of recovering and replacing lost and

damaged library materials.

Definitions:

A fine is a variable charge imposed for the late return of library materials.

A fee is a fixed charge imposed to cover the cost of processing replacement library materials or recovering or replacing lost ones.

Regulations:

Overdue Fines

1. Items not returned by the due date will be charged as follows:
  - a. All items (with the exception of those listed in b & c below) will be charged 25 cents (\$0.25) per item per.
  - b. All DVDs will be charged \$2.00 per item per day.
  - c. VHS will be charged \$1.00 per item per day.
2. Borrowing privileges will be suspended when the amount of money owed reaches or exceeds \$.01 in fines and/or fees.
3. No fines will be charged on the days the library is closed.
4. The library does not send out notices of fines incurred.
5. Staff will inform patrons of money owed each time the patron borrows materials.

Miscellaneous Fines and Fees

1. The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library reserves the right to pass on the cost of fees incurred when borrowing an item for a patron through interlibrary loan whether the patron picks up the item or not.
2. A fee of \$3.00 per incident is charged for the replacement of a library card and should be paid at the time the card is issued.
3. Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library charges a fee of 15 cents per page for printing black and white, 50 cents for printing color.
4. Charges for printing from photocopiers and microfilm reader printers shall be 15 cents per page in black and white, 50 cents for color.

Fines and Fees for Lost and Damaged Materials

1. Once items have been kept 28 days after the due date, the item will be assumed to be lost and will be marked lost.
2. The library adds a processing fee to the cost of replacing any lost library materials. The fee will be waived in the event that a patron is able to provide the library with a replacement for the lost item that is identical in title and of a format and condition acceptable to the Library Director.
3. The library reserves the right to charge a fee to cover the cost of lost or damaged

materials. Charges will be imposed for lost or damaged video, DVD, CD or audio book cases at their replacement cost. There will be a charge of \$1.00 for lost or damaged barcodes. Lost plastic jackets will be charged \$2.00. Library Directors have the discretion to charge for other types of damage depending upon the severity. If the damaged material can be repaired, the charge for the damage shall be no more than \$5.00.

4. The replacement cost of lost books, magazines, audio books, videos, DVDs, and music CDs will be based on the current average cost of a new book, magazine, audio book, video, DVD, or music CD for items added to the collection prior to July 1, 2005. The average cost of materials will be recomputed every five years.
5. For items added to the collection after July 1, 2005, the replacement cost for any lost item will be the original retail price of the item.
6. Patrons will receive a receipt for payment received when paying for a lost item.
7. At the discretion of the Library Director, patrons may be responsible for any overdue fines incurred on a lost book at the time the book is paid for.
8. The full cost of the item shall be assessed for any items returned damaged if the extent of the damage renders the item unusable.
9. The patron may keep any damaged items for which they have paid.

#### Default Prices for Lost Materials

### **5. Claims Returned Policy**

#### Policy Statement:

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library extends the privilege to patrons of claiming that they have returned materials that the circulation system indicates are still checked out to them. This policy acknowledges that staff occasionally errs in discharging books from a patron's record.

#### Definitions:

Claims returned means that a patron has indicated that they have returned an item that the computerized circulation system indicates is still on their account.

#### Regulations:

1. If a patron indicates, by phone or in person, that they have returned items the computerized circulation system indicates are still checked out to them, the staff will search the shelves for the items.
2. A staff person will immediately initiate a shelf search. If the staff person finds the items in question, the items will be discharged from the patron's record in such a way that no fines will be incurred.
3. If the staff person does not find the items in question on the shelf, he/she will mark the items claims returned on the patron's record.
4. Patrons will be notified either in person or by phone of the status of their accounts

after the search.

5. Patrons may search the shelves for the items in question. If they are found, the items will be discharged from the patron's record in such a way that no fines will be incurred.
6. Items marked claims returned remain on the patron's record. Patron's may have one (1) claim returned items on their record and maintain borrowing privileges. In the case of circulating items with borrowing limits, the number and type of items with claims returned status will count against the total number of items that can be borrowed. For example, if a patron has 1 "claims returned" DVDs, they will not be able to check out anymore DVDs. If a patron has one "claims returned" video and 2 claims returned audio books, they would be able to check out 4 videos and 4 audio books respectively.
7. Claims returned status will be removed from an item on a patron's record only if the item is located either by the patron at home or by staff at the library and subsequently discharged.
8. The library maintains, as a part of the patron's record, the number of items a patron has claimed to return over their lifetime as a patron.
9. If a patron finds an item previously claimed to be returned they are expected to return the item to the library and will not incur a penalty for doing so.

## **6. Overdue Notices**

Policy Statement:

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library sends overdue notices to patrons as a courtesy to remind them of materials kept past the due date.

Definitions:

An overdue item is an item that has not been returned to the library by the due date.

An overdue notice is a mailed notice listing library materials that have been retained past the due date.

Regulations:

1. The first overdue notice will be mailed to patrons when materials checked out on the patron's card have been kept 7 days past the due date.
2. The second overdue notice will be mailed to patrons when materials checked out on the patron's card have been kept 14 days past the due date.
3. The library does not mail notices for fines incurred.

## **7. Library Material Hold Policy**

Policy Statement:

The Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library accepts holds for library materials in order to provide

access to New Material materials.

**Definitions:**

A hold is a request, placed by a patron, for an item from the collection to be held in their name for future pickup from a designated location.

A patron in good standing is defined as an individual whose record shows no overdue or lost materials, and no fines in excess of .25.

**Regulations:**

1. All library patrons in good standing may place holds on library materials.
2. Patrons with blocked records may not place holds on materials.
3. There is no charge for placing a hold on library materials.
4. Reference books may not have holds placed on them.
5. Only items listed in the online catalog may have holds placed on them.
6. Holds must be picked up in person and can only be checked out on the card upon which the reserve was placed.
7. Patrons are limited to a total of 5 holds at one time.
8. Patrons may place holds in person, by telephone, and via the Ethel L. Whipple Memorial Library online catalog on the library's website. Patrons are blocked from placing holds through the online catalog if their records are blocked.
9. Patrons will be notified by phone, text, or email that the held item is available for pickup.
10. Patrons may place a hold on on-order items as soon as they are listed in the online catalog.
11. Patrons may place a hold on more than one copy of an item at the discretion of the Library Director or designated substitute.
12. Holds will be held for the patron for seven days after the notification date.
13. A patron can designate another individual to pick up their hold by notifying the library in advance.

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