



Library Membership and Borrowing Privileges Policy (School and Public)

September 2022

PUBLIC LIBRARY ACCOUNTS

Any person may have borrowing privileges at the Converse Free Library, regardless of residency. There is no fee associated with a library account. Nonresidents are expected to abide by the same governing policies as residents and are encouraged to make use of the entire library collection, both physical and electronic. Nonresident accounts expire every 12 months (as opposed to the 36-month renewal period for resident accounts). If it is found that a nonresident patron is using only digital resources during the year prior to a renewal, a fee of \$50.00 per year may be incurred, to cover the higher cost of providing these services.

Children fourteen years and older may register for independent, public-library borrowing privileges. This means Lyme School students registering for a public (vs. school) library account will be in the library's database twice. There are no restrictions on the number of materials borrowed by children using a public library account. The library will not act *in loco parentis*.

Children thirteen and younger must have parental permission to register for a public library account (see Forms section). The library offers two options for registering young users: individual accounts and family accounts.

- An individual account requires the signature of the child's parent or guardian, and gives the child all the privileges of confidentiality under NH RSA 201-D:11. This means that communications (regarding overdues, reserves, etc.) from the library will be shared only with that child.
- A family account can be created for all or some members of a family. All members on the account are privileged to any information on the account.

PHILOSOPHY OF POLICY, IN REGARD TO CHILDREN

Converse Free Library serves the public and school communities. Its resources span the full spectrum of information and literatures for all ages. This pairing of public and school library services provides an unusually rich collection for Lyme children. It also poses some unusual issues. The Library supports the Library Bill of Rights and does not serve *in loco parentis*, yet it recognizes that the collection contains material which would not be included in a library for elementary school children. The expectation is that the school children will use these resources as their ages and interests warrant under the supervision of their parents, their classroom teachers, and the school librarian.

Parents should know that New Hampshire has one of the strongest library patron confidentiality laws in the country (NH RSA 201-D:11). It applies to all, regardless of age. By law, library staff may not share with parents (or anyone) another person's reading choices, including those of children. By extension, the library staff will send all overdue notices and invoices for lost or damaged books directly to the borrower, regardless of age.

SCHOOL LIBRARY ACCOUNTS

All children in the Lyme School will be issued a school (vs. public) library account. Borrowing privileges for school library accounts are limited as follows:

- K & 1st grade may borrow one (1) book at a time;
- 2nd grade may borrow two (2) books;
- 3rd grade may borrow three (3) books; and
- 4th grade and up may borrow four (4) books.

Books may be renewed a maximum of one (1) time. No books may be borrowed if books are overdue on that account. During school hours, children may borrow books and audiobooks only.

While there are no fines for overdue books, children with books overdue for greater than 8 weeks are notified quarterly and are billed for lost material at the end of the school year. During the school year, a child with overdue (lost) materials may have borrowing privileges reinstated if they discuss the issue with parents who then contact the library (by phone or note) to say they are aware.

CIRCULATION

All library materials circulate for two weeks. All materials, other than items from Interlibrary loan may be renewed a maximum of three (3) times. Interlibrary Loans shall be renewable as allowed by the lending institution. Magazines may be renewed once. Materials that have been placed on hold by another patron may not be renewed. Materials in the Reference, LYME, and SCHOOL collections do not circulate, although exceptions may be made with the permission of a librarian.

INTERLIBRARY LOANS

The Lyme Library recognizes that it cannot own all the materials that its patrons wish to borrow; therefore, the staff makes it a priority to procure, upon request, materials unavailable in our collection through the Interlibrary Loan system. In compliance with the Interlibrary Loan Code, the Library also recognizes that it must reciprocate in lending its books to other libraries. Staff time for Interlibrary Loan requests and transactions are considered important and are budgeted for appropriately.

The Library uses the New Hampshire State Library's Automated Information System (NHAIS), when available, as its first source for requested materials. From the list there, materials are requested first from public libraries, then New Hampshire public universities and colleges, then New Hampshire private universities and colleges. Additionally, materials are requested from New Hampshire public and private schools during the school year.

If the material is not found in-state, it may be requested from libraries in other states. Increasingly, out-of-state libraries charge for Interlibrary Loans. Converse Free Library will cover up to \$10.00/item for these charges. The patron will be advised before the request is officially made, if the cost of an interlibrary loan request exceeds this amount.

OVERDUES

The library does not have overdue fines. If material is overdue and another patron has requested it, staff will call the borrower and request that it be returned. Staff will send a written notice at 6 weeks and an invoice (to cover the cost of replacement), signed by the library director, after 8 weeks, since the item will be considered lost at that time. When any patron or family account owes for 6 books, videos, or audios or the bill equals one-hundred-fifty dollars (\$150.00), whichever is less, borrowing privileges for the account shall be suspended until the materials are returned or the invoice is paid in

full. Notice of the suspension of borrowing privileges shall be communicated two weeks in advance of the date on which privileges will be suspended. If the account to be suspended is a family account, the members on the account may not open any individual accounts after the notice of suspension has been mailed. The Overdues Policy may be amended at the discretion of the Library Director, as circumstances warrant.

Revision History

Amended by vote October 2011; May 2018; September 12, 2022