



## Loans Policy

Policy Owner	Library Operations Team Leader
Issue Date	February 2008
Last Revised Date	5 August 2011
Next Review Date	July 2012

### 1. Purpose

This Policy sets out the framework for the consistent application of lending and circulation services to ensure that the library service operates efficiently and effectively for the benefit of the whole community.

### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all City of Melbourne library service points.

Melbourne Library Service (MLS) provides access to a variety of resources in different formats and languages. Formats include books, DVDs, magazines, newspapers, CDs, language kits, large print books, talking books and CD-ROMs.

Lending materials are available in several languages other than English (LOTE): Arabic, Chinese, Indonesian, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

Members may also access other services and resources within the Library including: photocopying; internet and email access; personal computers; adaptive technology; meeting rooms; study facilities, and display facilities.

Some of these facilities incur a usage charge as specified in the section on Fees and Charges.

### 3. Definitions

- *Council* means City of Melbourne
- *Library* means a Library belonging to, or under the control or management of, Council and includes the buildings, rooms, offices, passageways, staircases, foyers, meeting rooms, adjacent entrances and sanitary facilities and includes the City, East Melbourne and North Melbourne Libraries and library facilities at Docklands Hub
- *Melbourne Library Service (MLS)* means library services available through the City of Melbourne
- *Customer* means any person, whether or not a member, who visits a Library for the purpose of using any Library resources and/or facilities
- *Member* means any user who has fulfilled the requirements for membership of the Library and has a current membership card
- *Authorised Staff Member* means any person officially employed by Council in the Library

#### 4. Application

This policy applies to all individuals and organisations wishing to lend materials, including the number of items which may be borrowed, the length of time that they may be borrowed and any charges or fees associated with lending services or the use of library facilities.

#### 5. Policy

In order to borrow items, customers must be current members of the MLS and/or have a current membership card. The MLS membership card may be used at all service points. Items may be returned to any City of Melbourne Library. There is also a collection and return point at The Hub at Docklands. All Victorian residents are eligible for membership and short-term membership is available for interstate and overseas visitors. Problems noted on a membership record must either be resolved before new loans are issued or an agreed process negotiated with an authorised staff member to proceed with borrowing.

If a member does not have their library card, they must be able to produce an acceptable form of identification.

##### Loan Periods, Quotas and Limits

The maximum number of items that can be on loan to a full library member at any one time is 50. This can include any combination of items that are for loan listed in the table below.

Item type	Loan period	Loan limits	Renewal limits
Books	21 days	50	2
Magazines	21 days	50	2
Language kits	21 days	5	2
ENG resources	21 days	5	2
CDs	21 days	50	2
DVDs & videos	7 days	50	2
IELTS resources	7 days	3	2
Hot Picks books	7 days	50	0
Hot Picks DVDs	Overnight	50	0
Overdrive eBooks/eAudiobooks	7,14 or 21 days	4	0
Bolinda eAudiobooks	14 days	4	0
Reserve collection	2 hours (in library)	1	0
Reference, local history, newspapers & current issue magazines	Not for loan	Not applicable	Not applicable

The loan period for organisational/ Institutional members is 3 weeks.

Short-term and Unverified members may borrow a maximum of 2 items. Institutional/organisational members may have up to 50 items per membership card.

R-rated material may only be borrowed by members who are 18 years of age or over. Proof of age must be shown. MA (Mature Audiences) material may only be borrowed by a member 15+ years of age.

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### Inter-Library Loans

Published material which is not available in the collection, does not meet the guidelines of the Selection and Collection Development Policy or cannot be purchased as it is out of print can be requested on Inter-Library Loan (ILL) from other libraries in Australia. There is a limit of three ILL requests per member and one for short term members at any given time.

Members who have overdue or lost Inter-Library Loans on their record, or who have failed to collect previously ordered material, are not permitted to request other ILLs until the matter is resolved.

There is no charge for items borrowed from Victorian public libraries. A standard charge will apply for any items which incur a direct charge, usually those which are requested from university or special libraries.

Renewals may be available, subject to the requirements of the library that provided the item.

### Reservations

Members may have a maximum of 20 items reserved at any one time. Members may place, cancel or suspend reservations via the library website. Staff will also accept reservation requests or cancellations from customers via phone or in person. Reservations ready for pickup will be kept on the reservations shelf for seven days.

Reservations may be cancelled by Authorised Library Staff if the reservation cannot be satisfied. This may be as a result of the title not being published or as a result of the item being no longer available and out of print. Library customers will be notified when a reservation is cancelled.

Reservation notices are communicated to library members by SMS text and email messages. Members without mobile phones or email accounts will be sent printed notification by mail.

### Renewals

All library items available for loan may have 2 renewals.

Renewals may be made in person, via the library website, at any library service point, or by telephone, except if an item has already been reserved by another member or if the member has been suspended or barred.

Renewals are calculated for the relevant loan period from the date the renewal is made.

Short term loan items cannot be renewed.

Items that have been reserved by other members cannot be renewed.

**Renewals are not available during downtime of the Library Management System.**

### Overdue Items

Fines will not be charged for items returned 1 day late. For items returned more than 1 day late fines accrue from the first day that the item is overdue.

Fines accrue at the daily rate per item to the maximum fine. Members may continue to borrow until their fines reach the maximum. Members who have more than the maximum fines on their card will not be allowed to borrow until the amount owing has been reduced to the maximum or less. Fines may be paid by installments as agreed with an Authorised Staff Member.

### Advanced Reminder Notices

## **Melbourne Library Service**

Members have the option of requesting an emailed reminder. As a courtesy, a notice will be sent to members two days prior to the borrowed items due date(s). Advanced reminder notices are only available by email and should not be considered as the only form of due date reminder.

### Overdue Notices

As a courtesy, members will be notified of overdue items by email or mail. "First & final" notices are sent for all materials seven days after the item is due.

Overdue notices will be received in the following formats:

Email – members providing an email address will receive all overdue notices via email. This is the preferred method of communication and takes precedence over other formats

Mail – printed and mailed notices will be issued to members who do not have an email address.

### Final account

Borrowing may be restricted depending on the number of items overdue and the period of time they have been overdue. If items are not returned four weeks from the date of the overdue notice, members will receive a printed first and final account for the amount owing which will include a processing fee per item.

### Debt Recovery

Dunn & Bradstreet is an official City of Melbourne Debt Recovery company. Matters relating to outstanding library loans are referred to them. Once the matter has been referred customer enquiries can only be resolved by Dunn & Bradstreet. A dedicated telephone number has been established. This number is 1300 365 553.

### Lost Cards

There is a charge for lost membership cards. Lost cards should be reported to Melbourne Library Service immediately.

### Lost and Damaged Items

In the event that library property is not returned, destroyed or damaged a full replacement cost will be charged plus a relevant processing fee.

MLS will not accept a replacement copy of a lost or damaged item under any circumstances. No refunds are given if a lost item that has been paid is subsequently found, however the member may keep the item.

### Water damaged items

It is not possible to return water damaged print material to library shelves for re-use. There is a significant risk of mould quickly spreading through collections. These will be charged as damaged items.

### Audiovisual Items

MLS accepts no responsibility for damage claimed to have occurred to equipment as a result of playing material borrowed from the Library.

### Items without a barcode or not on the Library Management System

If the item(s) to be borrowed do not have a barcode or do not appear on the Library Management System, staff are requested to speak with the shift supervisor to determine if the item can be loaned.

Partial Check-ins

Library staff may try to reach the patron by telephone or SMS advising them of partially returned items.

If it is not possible to reach the patron by telephone, a memo will be included on a member's record advising of any partially returned items. A message will be forwarded advising the member that the full complement of the borrowed item(s) was not returned and request a return as soon as possible.

Claims Returned / Claims Never Borrowed

A member may declare that the item listed as overdue was returned or never borrowed. If the item is not found (i.e. library staff have checked and the item cannot be found), the member will be offered the option of either signing a Statutory Declaration form (provided by MLS) or paying the replacement price of the item.

Completed statutory declaration form need to be witnessed by an authorised person and return to the Library within 28 days of dispatch. On presentation of the completed and appropriately witnessed form fees will be waived.

Members are only permitted to have one active Claims Returned/Claims Never Borrowed for an item or a group of items that they have claimed to have returned or never borrowed at one particular time. Members need to fill in the statutory declaration form or pay for items before any other items can be put to "Claims Returned".

For members under the age of 18 years, parents/guardians must be the signatories on the declaration forms and are responsible for ensuring the appropriate person has witnessed the form.

**6. Member Charges and Fines**

The following criteria are used when determining or reviewing the appropriateness of any charges or fines relating to the use of library and information services:

- Compliance with legislation;
- Consistency with conditions for State Government funding;
- Consistency with the principles outlined in the Council Plan;
- The effect on the efficient delivery of services;
- Consideration of the characteristics and special needs of our diverse community;
- Consideration of consistency with pricing in the wider library industry;
- The ability of our community to pay charges; and

consistency with the definition of "basic" and "value added" services as defined by Local Government Victoria (Department of Planning and Community Development [Attachment 2])

Library members can photocopy free of charge for a maximum of one copy per page the following items:

- Not for Loan items from the reference and local history collection; and
- Items required for approved targeted programs such as homework clubs.

Materials available for loan, newspaper/magazine articles or non-library materials (eg items belonging to library members) will attract the standard photocopying fees.

## **7. Responsibilities**

Members must comply with the terms and conditions for lending items as detailed in this Policy. Failure to do so may result in suspension of Library privileges and, if appropriate, referral to the police or debt collectors for further action.

## **8. References**

*Membership Policy*

*Internet/email Policy*

*Venue Hire Policy*

*Notice Board and Display Facilities Policy*

## DEFINITION OF BASIC AND VALUE ADDED SERVICES

All individuals need to have access to the information which will satisfy their personal needs. Local government authorities have an obligation to provide basic public library services free of charge.

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### Basic Public Library Services

Basic public library services are those which:

1. Provide free entrance to the library;
  2. Provide access to the library's information resources, regardless of the format in which material is held, and including print, tape, disk, CD ROM and networked electronic resources;
    - Free access to networked information resources must be provided at each library branch to a level sufficient to meet a reasonable volume of demand. Because circumstances differ from one library to another, a formal quantitative benchmark has not been developed.
    - Libraries may charge for some forms of Internet use, where the nature of the use is not primarily focused on information. Such uses include receiving and sending e-mail, Internet chat, game sites and financial transactions. If a library decides to charge for these facilities, it can determine the level of the charge.
    - *In order to meet equity, disability and related requirements, libraries must consider providing more liberal access to some members.*
  3. Provide assistance with the use of the collection and with reference enquiries;
  4. Provide training in the use of public access catalogues;
  5. Lend items from the collection to members of the public for specific periods of time;
  6. Educate the public in the effective use of public libraries;
  7. Provide special programs such as story-telling;
  8. Provide any additional service which enables access to other basic services (For example, books on wheels services and bulk loans).
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### Other Services

Libraries sometimes charge for services which provide greater ease of access, convenience or private benefit, and which may attract additional costs to the library service provider. These services are distinguished from the basic services listed above. They may have a higher level of value added by the library. Other services include:

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1. Use of remote online resources where access is only obtainable by payment of a specific per use charge, but excluding use of online resources which are paid for by subscriptions, site licenses or other non-use based charges;
2. Providing access to loans from collections outside the public/State library network, such as academic, government or special libraries;
3. Reserving specific items in library collections;
4. Providing printed or electronic copies of materials held or accessed by the library;
5. Providing for public use standard office software, such as word processing and database software;
6. Requiring staff to undertake research, to write reports, or to provide other high level support;
7. Providing any service which attracts an external service charge, eg on-line database searching, speakers, theatre performances.

In the case of services not defined as basic, individual library service providers should be free to determine those services which would attract a charge, providing that due consideration is given to the possible impact on neighbouring library services caused by such decisions.

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(This definition is based on that developed by the Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services and was endorsed by the Victorian Public Library and Information Network in December 1996. It was modified in May 1999 to incorporate a clarification on access to Internet services).

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