NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY	DATE EFFECTED: July 20, 2022 DATE REVISED: September 16, 2026	CIRCULATION POLICY
Associated Documents: Code of Conduct, Bed Bug Policy, Suspension of Services for Health and Safety Reasons Policy		

PURPOSE

The Circulation Policy allows the Niagara Falls Public Library to serve all customers in an equitable, consistent, and accountable manner and provides a framework for decisions to be made by staff and management.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Residents of Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls Public Library cards are free to all residents of the city of Niagara Falls. Non-residents who own property in; pay taxes to; work at the City of Niagara Falls or partnering organizations; attend or are employed by a school or daycare in Niagara Falls are eligible for free library cards. Library cards are valid for one year from the date of issue.

Temporary Address

Access library cards are issued to residents of Niagara Falls who live in temporary accommodations, such as a hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, boarding house or similar accommodation. Residents of shelter housing in Niagara Falls are eligible for the time they are living there. Temporary library cards are valid for three months from the date of issue.

Reciprocal Borrowing Agreements

Members of the following public libraries are eligible to get a free library card through reciprocal borrowing agreements with Niagara Falls Public Library: St. Catharines, Fort Erie, Lincoln Pelham, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Port Colborne, Thorold and Welland Public Libraries.

Non-Residents

Non-residents may receive a library card upon payment of an annual membership fee (see Schedule B); such memberships expire one year from the date of issue. The membership fee of a non-resident customer who becomes a Niagara Falls resident or taxpayer within 6 months of the date of issue will be refunded in full on presentation of the card and acceptable proof of address.

NFPL Student Card

Students who are currently enrolled in a recognized university or college located in the Niagara region may obtain a library card from Niagara Falls Public Library by presenting a valid student ID. This policy aims to support academic success and foster community engagement among students.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION BY LIBRARY CARD TYPE

Library card applicants are required to provide documentation to verify identity and home address to be issued a library card. Anyone giving false information will have library privileges withdrawn.

Acceptable proof includes, but is not limited to:

Adult Library Card (ages 18 years and over)

- One piece of official Ontario Government photo identification showing correct name and address of residence, or
- Two pieces from the list below of identification and proof of address:
    - Utility bills (with the exception of cell phone bill) (issued within past 60 days)
    - Tax notice from the city of Niagara Falls
    - Pay cheque or government-issued cheque (issued within past 60 days)
    - Statement of Direct Deposit for government benefits (issued within past 60 days)
    - Current auto or property insurance document
    - Personal cheques with printed name and address information
    - Birth certificate or marriage certificate
    - Passport
    - Employee or union card (with photo)
    - Student ID card (with photo)
    - Official school document
    - Ontario Health Card (Staff must not ask for it, but it will be accepted if presented.)
    - Current signed copy of tenant lease

Teen Library Card (ages 14-17)

- Student ID card (with photo)
- Birth certificate
- Official school document

Child Library Card (ages 13 and under)

- If the parent or guardian is present at the time of registration, proof of the parent or guardian's address is required.
- If only the child is present, the child may take registration materials to the parent or guardian for completion.
- A library card must be signed by a parent or guardian. The child should also sign the card or the parent may add the child’s name in lieu of the child’s signature.

Access Library Card

- If an applicant lives in temporary housing, proof of address from the Adult Library Card list above is required. If not available, acceptable proof of address includes payment or rent receipts in his/her name verifying residency at the address for at least two months. Proof of identification is also required.
- If an applicant lives in shelter housing, a letter from the residence’s administrator confirming the duration of residency is acceptable. Proof of identification is also required.

Educator Library Card

- Acceptable proof of identification and home address as above as well as proof of current employment as an educator at a K-12 school or daycare in Niagara Falls.
    - Letter from school or daycare on official letterhead
    - School or daycare ID for the current school year
    - School or daycare paystub
    - Daycare license
    - Union card

Reciprocal Membership

- Acceptable proof of identification and home address as above, as well as presentation of a library card from a library with which Niagara Falls Public Library has entered into a reciprocal borrowing agreement.

NFPL Student Library Card

- Must be enrolled full-time or part-time in a recognized university or college in the Niagara region.
- A valid student ID card that includes the student's name and the institution's name.
- A piece of ID or paperwork with their address
- Library cards issued under this card type will expire at the end of the academic year. Students must reapply annually to maintain access. If they are enrolled in summer classes they will need to show proof of this.

LIBRARY CARD CONDITIONS AND USE

Upon registering for a library card, customers agree to abide by the rules and regulations set out by the Niagara Falls Public Library Board and shall:

- Accept responsibility for the choice, use, condition and return of all items checked out on the library card.
- Pay outstanding charges.
- Report change of address, phone number or email. Acceptable proof of a new address is required in order for an address to be changed.
- Present the library card in order to borrow, complete the transaction and access account information.
- Renew the library card based on the type of library card. Cards will be issued with an expiry date and customer information will be confirmed annually. Any outstanding charges must be paid in full to renew a library card.
- Report a lost or stolen library card. A replacement fee is charged for a new library card (see Schedule B).
- Customers who loan a library card to someone else will be responsible for all activity on the library card. The Library will assume that someone using the library card is doing so with permission unless the card has been reported lost or stolen.
- Agree that by signing a child's library card, a parent or guardian becomes responsible for the choice, use, condition and return of all items borrowed and for any charges related to the child's library card. If a parent or guardian wants to restrict their child's access to any library items, it is their responsibility to make this known to the child and to monitor the child's use of the library card.

Circulation of Library Items

A customer may borrow circulating items upon presentation of a valid Niagara Falls Public Library card in good standing. Cards from other public libraries are not accepted to check out material.

Loans

A valid library card in good standing may be used to borrow the Library's circulating items and to access the Library's digital resources. Excepted are Reference and/or Local History items, which are non-circulating.

Borrowing limits and loan periods are determined by item type and/or card type. See Schedule A "Borrowing Information" below for specific borrowing limitations and loan periods for items in the Library's collection.

Library card memberships have a maximum borrowing limit of 75 items, except those with specialized membership. See "Specialized Membership/Services" below for more information.

Renewals

If there are no holds on an item, it renews automatically on its due date up to two times. Expired accounts or accounts with outstanding charges are unable to renew items.

See Schedule A "Borrowing Information" below for specific information about renewal periods.

Holds

A valid library card in good standing can place holds on eligible items. A maximum of 75 items can be placed on hold. The same Library Card that placed the hold must be used to pick up and check out the hold, or customers can create an association with another NFPL customer to have that person pick up items on their behalf.

Return of Borrowed Library Items

Customers are required to return items by the due date. Items may be returned to any Niagara Falls Public Library location, unless otherwise indicated at the time of check out. Items remain on a customer's library card until they are checked in by staff.

Return boxes are available at all library locations. Items may be returned via the return boxes, unless otherwise indicated at the time of check out.

Items may not be returned to a public library in a community outside of Niagara Falls. If a customer claims to have returned material that has not, to date, been checked in, the items will be marked "Claims Returned" and any associated charges will be suspended while staff trace the item.

Charges for Unreturned or Damaged Library Items

The Library will charge a replacement cost for items that are 28 days overdue, damaged or lost.

Library cards will be blocked if there are 10 items overdue at any time. (5 for Access Cards)

The Library reserves the right to forward any unpaid accounts to a collection agency for recovery of items and/or payment of the replacement costs. A non-refundable service fee is added to the amount owed. See Schedule B "Fees" for more Information.

Refunds for Lost Material

A refund is provided for an item that has been paid for, provided that:

- the item is determined to be in acceptable condition by staff
- the item is returned within 6 months of payment

Suspension of Borrowing Privileges

A customer's library account will be blocked from borrowing or renewing items if there are items checked out that are 28 or more days overdue. The account will be unblocked when 1) the amount owed is paid in full, 2) the item is returned in acceptable condition, or 3) the item is replaced by the customer. Any outstanding charges must be paid off in full in order to renew the card.

The borrowing privileges of any customer may be suspended at the discretion of the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate, subject to review by the Library Board.

SPECIALIZED LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP/SERVICES

Access Library Card

- Temporary library cards may have a maximum of 5 items checked out at a time.
- The maximum may be increased by the Manager of Operations or a designate.

Visiting Library Service

- Participation in the Visiting Library Service must be arranged through the Operations Department.
- Loan period is 6 weeks.

Reciprocal Borrower Membership

- Reciprocal borrowers will accept the borrowing terms, policies and procedures of Niagara Falls Public Library as part of the condition of the loan of an item.
- Reciprocal borrowers will be responsible for the return of borrowed items directly to Niagara Falls Public Library.
- Reciprocal borrowers will be held responsible for unreturned or damaged items.
- Interlibrary Loan and Visiting Library Services are not available to reciprocal borrowers through Niagara Falls Public Library.

Educator Library Card

Educator Library Cards are available to those who teach at K-12 schools or licensed daycare centres and are:

- Niagara Falls residents teaching in the Niagara Region
- Non-residents of Niagara Falls teaching in Niagara Falls

Upon registering for an Educator Library Card, the cardholder agrees to:

- Accept responsibility for the use, condition and return of materials checked out on the library card.
- Accept responsibility for unreturned or damaged material checked out on the library card.
- Update the library on any change to personal or work contact information.
- Report a lost or stolen library card.
- Borrow materials only intended for use in an educational setting. Educators may not borrow items for personal use on the Educator Library Card. Borrowing of personal materials will void the use of the card.

Educator Library Cards expire on June 30th each year. To renew, educators must present proof of teaching status for the period July 1-June 30 of the following year.

The Educator Library Card can be used at any Niagara Falls Public Library location.

Educator Library Cardholders are not eligible to participate in any reciprocal borrowing agreements that the Niagara Falls Public Library has in place with other libraries.

EDUCATOR CARD LOANS

A maximum of 100 items may be borrowed on an Educator Card. The following circulating items may be borrowed:

- Books and wonderbooks
- DVDs, Music CDs, CD Books (maximum of 15)
- Playaways (maximum of 15)
- Book Club Kits / Culture Boxes

In addition:

- Educator Library Cards can be used to access all the digital resources of the Niagara Falls Public Library.
- Interlibrary Loans cannot be submitted via an Educator Library Card.
- Items cannot be borrowed from the Niagara Falls Public Library's NovelBranch in order to receive the full borrowing period for the Educator Library Card.

EDUCATOR CARD RENEWALS

Items may be renewed up to 2 times with a 6 week renewal period each time.

EDUCATOR CARD HOLDS

Holds may be placed on a valid Educator Library Card in good standing. The same Educator Card used to place the hold must be used to check out the holds. An Educator Library Card may have up to 100 items on hold.

RETURN OF LIBRARY MATERIALS ON EDUCATOR CARD

Customers are required to return items by the due date. Items may be returned to any Niagara Falls Public Library location, unless otherwise indicated at the time of check out. Items remain on a customer's library card until they are checked in by staff.

Return boxes are available at all library locations. Items may be returned via the return boxes, unless otherwise indicated at the time of check out.

Items may not be returned to a public library in a community outside of Niagara Falls.

If a customer claims to have returned material that has not, to date, been checked in, the items will be marked "Claim Returned" and any associated charges will be suspended while staff trace the item.

CHARGES FOR UNRETURNED OR DAMAGES LIBRARY ITEMS ON AN EDUCATOR CARD

Replacement fees for lost or damaged materials may be charged to the Educator Library Card on which the materials were borrowed.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CUSTOMER RECORDS

The Library adheres to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. All customer information is confidential and may not be released to anyone, including a parent or guardian, if the customer is 16 years of age or older. This includes any personal information, items on loan, on hold or overdue. If the customer is under the age of 16, a parent or guardian may be given the borrowing information of his/her child.

BORROWING INFORMATION

Schedule A - Card Types

Child Card	**Teen Card**	**Adult Card**	**Access Card**
75 items	**75 items**	**75 items**	**5 items**
Exclusions Musical Instruments Nintendo Switch Consoles Hot Spots Book Club Kits / Culture boxes	**Exclusions** Musical Instruments Nintendo Switch Consoles	**No Exclusions**	**Exclusions** Book Club Kits / Culture Boxes Musical Instruments Nintendo Switch Consoles ILLO

Reciprocal Borrowing Card	Educator Card	VLS Card
75 Items	**100 Items**	**75 Items**
Exclusions Nintendo Switch Consoles Hot Spots Tackleshare ILLO	**Exclusions** Musical Accessories Musical Instruments Nintendo Switch Consoles Hot Spots Light Therapy Lamps Video Games ILLO Board Games and Puzzles Launchpads Nature Kits Park Passes	**Exclusions** Musical Instruments Nintendo Switch Consoles Hot Spots Light Therapy Lamps Outdoor Equipment

Schedule B - Loan Periods and Item Limits

Item Type	Limit Per Card	Loan Periods	Renewals (if no holds)
Fiction, Nonfiction, Wonderbooks	75	21 days	2
DVDs, Music CDs, Audiobooks	15	21 days	2
Playaways	15	21 days	2
Launchpads	2	21 days	2
Nature Kits	15	21 days	2
Video games	2	21 days	2
Board Games, Puzzles	15	21 days	2
Tackleshare	15	21 days	0
Light Therapy Lamps	15	7 days	2
Passes	3	7 days	0
Outdoor Equipment/Picnic Games	15	7 days	2

Wifi Hotspots	1	7 days	2
Wi-Fi Express Hotspots	1	3 days	0
Musical Accessories	15	21 days	2
Musical Instruments	1	21 days	2
Video Games Consoles	1	7 days	2
Book Club Kits / Culture Boxes	2	8 weeks	0
ILLO	NFPL sets the limit of requests per month and is subject to change	4 weeks	See below
*All copies of books in a book club kit must be borrowed and must be borrowed on one library card. **Subject to any restrictions placed by the lending library. ILLO items are renewed at the discretion of the lending library.			
Exceptions	Borrowing policies for digital resources are separate from the limits and renewals stated in this schedule. The individual digital resource should be consulted for its borrowing policies.		

FEES - Schedule C

Fees related to unreturned or damaged material	
Administrative fee for account forwarded to collection agency	$10.00
Missing or damaged barcode	$4.00
Book returned without jacket	$4.00
Replacement cases, booklets or inserts for non-print circulating items	$4.00 per piece
Interlibrary Loan Items	Dependent upon whether the lending library applies a charge.
For specific charges on items, staff will consult with the Library's average cost chart.	

Miscellaneous Circulation Fees	
Non-Resident Fee (if customer isn’t a member of a library that participates in Reciprocal Borrowing with Niagara Falls Public Library	$25.00
Replacement Library Card	$2.00

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