

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM CIRCULATION POLICY

Purpose

The Circulation Policy of the Miami-Dade Public Library System is designed to provide fair and equitable access to Library materials and services while protecting the community's investment in its collections.

Types of cards

Resident

Patrons living in the Miami-Dade Public Library System Special Taxing District for at least 1 month. The taxing district is comprised of Miami-Dade County, with the exception of Bal Harbour, Bay Harbor Islands, Hialeah, Miami Shores, North Miami, North Miami Beach, and Surfside. Most of these municipalities maintain their own libraries.

Reciprocal Borrower

Residents of Hialeah, North Miami and North Miami Beach. With the exception of Interlibrary Loan and Home Services, reciprocal borrowers whose accounts are in good standing have full borrowing privileges.

Non-Resident

1. Non-residents meeting any of the following conditions may obtain free cards allowing them to check out materials and access the Library's proprietary databases.

Property owners within the taxing district. A tax bill in the applicant's name is required.

Employees of Miami-Dade County and Public Health Trust regardless of residence. They must present employment ID. This privilege does not extend to family members. Federal, state, and municipal employees do not qualify. Eligibility for this type of card lapses when the cardholder leaves the employment of Miami-Dade County or Jackson Public Health Trust.

Teachers and other workers who are regularly employed in public and private schools or group programs within the taxing district. Proof of employment in a specific school or group facility in the taxing district is required. Those eligible for resident or property owner cards may not also have a teacher's card.

2. All other non-residents pay an annual fee to enjoy library privileges such as checking out materials and accessing the Library's proprietary databases.
Fee Card patrons pay \$100 per year.

Non-Verified Address

Registrants who would qualify for free cards but who do not have proof of current address are limited to two items. These borrowers are limited to checking out two items. They do not have Interlibrary Loan privileges, and they cannot check out laptops. Their cards are set to expire after seven days. The card type is upgraded when they supply proof of address.

Non-Verified Address Extended

Patrons with an address of a shelter or a group home are limited to checking out two items. They do not have Interlibrary Loan privileges, and they cannot check out laptops. Their cards are set to expire after six months.

Juvenile

Children 16 years old or younger are issued Juvenile Cards. There are no differences in the child's ability to borrow or use Library materials. Because both parent's and child's names are in the patron record, both have access to borrowing information. Children must meet the standards for resident status. *The responsibility for what a minor borrows rests with the parent or guardian.*

Juvenile Reciprocal Borrower

Children 16 years old or younger who live in Hialeah, North Miami or North Miami Beach. These children must meet the requirements for both Juvenile card and Reciprocal Borrower. *The responsibility for what a minor borrows rests with the parent or guardian.*

Juvenile—Need Parental Authorization

Children 16 years old or younger who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign the library card when it is issued will be limited to two items. A Parental Authorization form ([FO-151](#)) will be mailed to the parent. When the library receives the signed authorization form (either from the parent, mailed or from the child), the child's card will be updated to **Juvenile**. A **Juvenile – Need Parental Authorization** card is valid for 1 day. Children must meet the standards for resident status.

Juvenile Reciprocal/No Parental Authorization

Children 16 years old or younger who live in Hialeah, North Miami or North Miami Beach, but do not have a parent or guardian available to sign the library card when it is issued will be limited to two items. A Parental Authorization Form ([FO-151](#)) will be mailed to the parent. When the library receives the signed authorization form (either from the parent, mailed or from the child), the child's card will be updated to **Juvenile Reciprocal Borrower**. A **Juvenile Reciprocal/No Parental Authorization** card is valid for 1 day.

Home Service—Individual

Home Service—Individual patrons are served by the Library's Connections Department. These are patrons of all ages who live within the library's taxing district and who are physically unable to come to the library. The frail elderly, chronically ill, physically disabled, caregivers or those without adequate means of

transportation may all qualify. Patrons who can ONLY read large print books due to a visual impairment and who file the "Certification of Disability" form with the Connections Department qualify for the Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped postal subsidy. In addition to receiving materials by mail, **Home Service—Individual** patrons may also check out at a branch/bookmobile. They must meet the same eligibility requirements as **Resident, Fee** or **Property Owner** patrons. Reciprocal borrowing privileges do not apply.

Home Service—Institution

Home Service—Institution Cards are issued to senior centers, nursing homes, convalescent centers, ALF's (adult living facilities), retirement residences, geriatric and rehabilitation units at hospitals, and local agencies, organizations and groups who serve older adults. The facility must be located within the library's taxing district. **Home Service—Institution** Cards entitle facilities to services such as book deposit collections, programming resources, and programming services.

Guest

Guest Cards are for computer use only. This is for non-residents who wish to use the computers. They may not borrow any materials with this card. They do not have access to the Library's proprietary online databases. When registering, patrons are required to show picture ID proving that they are non-residents, and their accounts must include their full address. There is a \$5.00 fee for a Guest Card, which is good for three months.

Self Registered

Borrowers who register online have this patron code and are not allowed to borrow materials until registration has been completed at a Branch Library. This code is automatically entered by the online system.

Application for a library card

In order to obtain a library card, a person must prove both who he/she is and where he/she lives. Children 16 years old or younger must have their applications authorized by a parent or guardian. All applicants, both children and adults, must be present when the application is made or online application is completed.

- A. Personal identification is required to receive a library card. Personal identification is defined as photo identification from an official source (driver's license, employment, student or state ID, passport, etc.), voter's registration or, for students K-12, report card, textbook or school book with student's name. Florida driver's license or ID number, if available, will be entered in the borrower record. A child who is accompanied to the library by a parent may obtain a library card based on the parent's personal identification. That identification must meet the criteria to obtain a library card.

Online registrants must present acceptable ID in order to have their records updated and be approved for checkout.

The following are not considered personal identification: imprinted checkbook, rent receipt, mail or bills; they can be used as address verification in conjunction with personal ID.

- B. Patrons who can provide personal ID and proof of current residential address are given full privileges immediately. Proof of address must show both name and address.
- C. Patrons with personal ID who cannot prove address are entered as **Non-Verified Address** and are sent an address verification mailer. Non-Verified Address registration is valid for one week and must be upgraded to full privileges for the patron to continue to use the card. Full privileges are granted when the patron returns to the library with the mailer or other ID that verifies address. The exception to the 7-day limit would be patrons with an address of a shelter or a group home. These patrons are issued **Non-Verified Address Extended** cards, with an expiration date of six months from the date of registration or account renewal. **Non-Verified Address** patrons and **Non-Verified Address Extended** patrons are limited to 2 items.
- D. Police officers and firefighters may have their residential address omitted from the patron record at their request. They must still show proof of residency or eligibility for a card. A note stating "law enforcement, no home address shown" should be put in the record. A mailing address must be entered in the record.
- E. Children 16 years old and younger must have parental authorization to obtain a library card. A parent authorizes the child to have a card by signing the child's application or by returning a signed Parental Authorization Form ([FO-151](#)) by mail or with the child. If a parent is not available to sign the application, the child will be allowed to borrow two items, and a Parental Authorization Form will be sent.

Patron responsibility

- A. The patron must notify the library of a lost or stolen card immediately to avoid unwarranted liability. A patron will not be held responsible for any books checked out on the card after it has been reported missing.
- B. The responsibility for the material a minor checks out rests with the parent or guardian. Any restrictions placed on a minor's use of the library are the responsibility of the minor's parent or guardian. The library cannot be responsible for enforcing such restrictions.
- C. Each patron should present his or her own library card in order to check out materials. The responsibility for all materials checked out and any financial obligation incurred for overdue materials rests with the patron whose card was used to check out the materials.
- D. The patron is responsible for returning materials on time and in the same condition as when they were checked out.

- E. The patron is responsible for returning materials to a Branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library System. Materials are not considered to be returned until they have been checked in through our automated system.
- F. Overdue notices are sent to patrons as a courtesy of the library. Failure to receive one does not exempt the patron from overdue fines and/or replacement costs of materials that are lost or damaged.

Revocation of privileges

A STOP will be placed on a patron's card for:

- A. Financial obligation in excess of \$30.00;
- B. More than 50 overdue items (**Non-Verified Address** patrons, **Non-Verified Address Extended** patrons, and children without parental authorization are limited to two items out and are therefore stopped at two overdues);
- C. Returned mail on which the address matches the one in the patron's record. This includes address verification mailers, holds notices, or any other mail;
- D. Theft or mutilation of library materials;
- E. More than 10 items "claims returned" or "claims never had."

Updating borrower records

- A. Personal identification, as defined in *Section 2, Application for a Library Card*, is required before opening a borrower record to change any information.
- B. Library card renewal
 1. Resident, staff, and non-resident library cards expire every year. Guest cards expire every three months.
 2. Borrowers must show identification and proof of address. If patron does not have identification showing current residential address, an address verification card will be sent.
 3. Borrowers must pay any outstanding balances on their accounts before renewal.
 4. Reciprocal borrowers must prove continued eligibility by showing proof of residential address in Hialeah, North Miami or North Miami Beach.
 5. Nonresidents who are eligible for free cards must prove continued eligibility (tax bill, employment ID, etc.)
 6. Borrowers who have a stop on the card cannot renew their cards until the problem is resolved.
- C. Patrons with expired cards will be able to access the Library's online databases and will be able to reserve Library computer workstations. They will not be able to check out any items, including laptops. They will not be able to access their

accounts online, request items, or renew checked-out items. Patrons with expired Guest cards will not be able to reserve Library computer workstations.

D. Address Changes:

1. Borrowers whose mail has been returned to the Library must show identification and proof of address.
2. If a patron has moved to a fee area, he/she must pay the annual fee to continue to receive privileges. If a patron has moved to a fee area and wishes to switch to a Guest Card, the account balance must be brought to zero, and the patron must pay the \$5.00 Guest fee before the new card can be issued.

Replacement cards

The first time a card is replaced, there is no charge. The second time and every time thereafter, there is a \$1.00 charge. Lost or stolen cards count as replacements. Patrons with expired accounts may not be issued replacement cards until they renew their accounts.

Lost or stolen cards

As stated earlier, it is the responsibility of the patron to report a lost or stolen card. Reports of lost or stolen cards may be taken over the phone or in person without the required identification because the intent is to protect the patron. However, no information from the patron's record can be given out because of confidentiality regulations.

Forgotten cards

Patrons who forget their cards may check out items provided they are listed in the computer and can show identification. Adult patrons must show photo ID with name and address. Children should show school ID if possible.

Confidentiality of patron records

Florida Statute 257.261 ensures the confidentiality of library patron records.

FLORIDA STATUTE 257.261 ON LIBRARY RECORDS

- 1) All registration and circulation records of every public library, except statistical reports of registration and circulation, are confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. 119.17(1) and from s. 24(a) of Art. I of the State Constitution.
- 2) As used in this section, the term "registration records" includes any information that a library requires a patron to provide in order to become eligible to borrow books and other materials and the term "circulation records" includes all information that identifies the patrons who borrow particular books and other materials.
- 3) (A) Except in accordance with proper judicial order, a person may not make known in any manner any information contained in records made confidential and exempt by this section, except as otherwise provided in this section.
(B) A library, or any business operating jointly with the library may, only for the purpose of collecting fines or recovering overdue books, documents, films, or

other items or materials owned or otherwise belonging to the library, disclose information made confidential and exempt by this section to the following:

- (1) The library patron named in the records;
 - (2) In the case of a library patron less than 16 years of age, the parent or guardian of the patron named in the records;
 - (3) Any entity that collects fines on behalf of a library, unless the patron is less than 16 years of age, in which case only information identifying the patron's parent or guardian may be released;
 - (4) Municipal or county law enforcement officials, unless the patron is 16 years of age, in which case only information identifying the patron's parent or guardian may be released; or
 - (5) Judicial officials
- 4) Any person who violates this section commits misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, or s. 775.083.

Information on patron records may be released under the following circumstances:

To the cardholder upon presentation of photo identification proving that he/she is requesting information from his/her own record. Patrons calling the library must give the library card number. Staff should ask a few questions such as a name, telephone number, etc. to verify identification.

To the parent or guardian of a child 16 years old or younger upon presentation of photo identification proving that he/she is the named parent/guardian. The record must contain the requestor's name in the parent/guardian field. In the case of theft of library materials, the patron's name, address, phone number, and driver's license number may be given to the police for the purpose of recovering the materials. If the suspected patron is 16 or younger, the name of the parent/guardian is provided instead.

Law enforcement officials with the proper identification and a court order signed by a judge. Because of the delicate nature of these requests, only specific members of the Library administration are authorized to release the records.

The following administrative staff are authorized to release information from patron records: Main Library/Circulation Administrator, Branch Administrators, Assistant Directors, Director. If there is a request for information, the Main Library/Circulation Administrator should be contacted first.

Procedures for processing requests for patron records from a law enforcement official:

1. If a staff member is approached by a law enforcement official with a request for information about a patron, he/she will refer the official to the Branch Manager or Librarian-in-Charge.
2. The Branch Manager will

- a. Verify the official's identification
 - b. Explain the library's policy on patron confidentiality and the documentation needed to release records.
 - c. Ascertain whether the official has the necessary documentation. Court Orders come in two forms – subpoena and search warrants. However, not all subpoenas are court orders.
3. If the official does not have a court order, he/she will be told to contact the Main Library/Circulation Administrator when the documentation is obtained.
 4. If the official has the necessary documentation, the manager will telephone an administrator authorized to release patron information, starting with the Main Library/Circulation Administrator. A copy of the document will be faxed to the Administrator immediately.
 5. If the court order is a search warrant issued under the USA Patriot Act, there is the added condition that neither the staff nor the library can disclose to anyone that the warrant has been served or any results of the search.
 6. When the documentation has been received, the Administrator will contact the County Attorney.
 7. If the court order requires the removal of Library equipment, the administrator will instruct staff to obtain a written receipt of the items taken with an exact description and serial numbers, if applicable. Make sure the names of any law enforcement officials involved are included. All efforts will be made to have Library Automated Services staff present to handle or oversee the removal of computer equipment.

Material Circulation

Loan periods

- 28 days – books, audiobooks, CDs
- 14 days – Jumpstart Kits, high-demand items, power meters
- 7 days – videos (VCR or DVD), video games, Early Literacy kits
- 60 minutes – laptops and laptop accessories
- SLP – special loan period - for Interlibrary Loan materials

Limits

- 50 items on a card.
- 10 each videos, DVDs or CDs, video games
- 3 films
- 1 laptop
- 1 laptop accessory
- 1 Early Literacy kit
- There are no limits by subject.
- Laptops/laptop accessories are not loaned to the following borrower types: **Non-Verified Address, Non-Verified Address Extended, Guest, JNP, RJN, or Self.**

Returning materials

- A. Books, audiobooks, videos, DVDs, CDs, and power meters may be returned to any branch.
- B. Receipts are available upon request.
- C. Laptops and accessories must be returned to the desk at which they were borrowed. The item(s) must be inspected before check in, and any fees for damages assessed.
- D. Materials damaged beyond use will be billed for replacement.
- E. Reciprocal borrowers must return materials to the owning system. An item will not be considered "returned" until it is checked in by the owning system. Overdue fines may accrue.

Renewals

- A. Items with requests cannot be renewed.
- B. Laptops cannot be renewed.
- C. Interlibrary Loan renewal requests can be made by calling the Interlibrary Loan Department (ILL) at 305-375-4068.
- D. All other items may be renewed six times for the original loan period.
- E. Patrons can renew items at the branch, by phone or online. The material does not have to be present to be renewed with the exception of items with a status of "lost," "claimed returned," or "claimed never had" which must be present to be renewed.

Overdues and Lost or Damaged Items

Overdue Notices

Courtesy notices are sent to patrons when an item is 20 days overdue.

Lost or Damaged Items

- A. Patrons are charged list price for lost or damaged items. If the actual price of an item is not given in the bibliographic record or available from a standard bibliographic source (i. e., Amazon.com), the default prices are used.
- B. Patrons returning incomplete audio books will be charged for the missing pieces.
- C. Patrons may discharge their obligation for unreturned materials by either paying the bill for replacement or bringing in a new duplicate of the unreturned item, i. e., same ISBN.

Payments

Patrons are responsible for all fines and fees whether or not they receive a bill.

- A. Patrons paying for lost or overdue materials will receive a receipt through the computer system detailing the purpose of the payment and the item(s) involved.
- B. Checks are made payable to MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY
 - ID is required—preferably a valid Florida driver’s license.
 - Checks must be imprinted with the patron’s name.
 - The driver’s license number of the person writing the check and library card or borrower number of the patron whose record is affected (possibly not the same person) is written on the check.

Delinquent Accounts

The Library is part of Miami-Dade County government and as such is accountable to the residents of Miami-Dade County. It is the Library’s responsibility to make sure materials borrowed are returned so they can be used by other residents. In order to be fiscally responsible, it is also the Library’s duty to collect any fines and fees incurred. The Library uses a collection agency to assist in making sure that Library materials are returned and that patron accounts are maintained in good standing.

Delinquent accounts are sent to the collection agency. A delinquent account is defined as one that remains unpaid 30 days after the balance exceeds \$30. Once an account has been sent to the collection agency (and is considered to be in “collection agency” status), it must be paid down to zero before the patron will be able to check out any more items. This includes an additional \$10.00 fee that is charged to these delinquent accounts to cover the fee charged by the collection agency.

For Juvenile accounts, the \$10 collection fee will be charged, and the guardian will be contacted by the collection agency. Juvenile accounts will not be reported to a credit bureau if a balance remains on the account.

Staff accounts will be handled the same as other adult patrons and will be charged the \$10 fee and may be reported to a credit bureau.

Fines and Fees

LATE RETURNS (In effect December 1, 2010)	FINE	MAXIMUM FINE
Adult Material (28 Day)	\$0.20/day	\$8.00
High Demand	\$0.25/day	\$8.00
Young Adults Materials	\$0.15/day	\$8.00
Children’s Materials	\$0.10/day	\$4.00
Videos/DVDs	\$1.00/day	\$20.00
Fully Configured Laptop	\$20.00/item	\$20.00
Laptop Accessories	\$20.00/item	\$20.00
Early Literacy Kit	\$0.15/day	\$8.00

FEE CARDS (In effect October 12, 2010)	FEE
Fee Card (Non-residents of Miami-Dade County and Miami-Dade County residents outside of Library taxing district)	\$100.00/Year
Guest Card (For non-residents—computer use only)	\$5.00/three months

SERVICES (In effect December 1, 2010)	FEE
Interlibrary Loan	\$2.00/filled request
Borrow-by-Mail	\$4.00/filled request