

Amherst Town Library Circulation Policy

Access to Materials

The Amherst Town Library welcomes all individuals to use its collections and services within the library facility. Free and open access to the total library is essential to the role of the public library.

In accordance with Article V of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, the Amherst Town Library does not restrict access to any materials on the basis of a person's gender, color, religion, nationality, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or age.

The Amherst Town Library adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and makes every attempt to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities with regard to use of the library facility, participation in library activities, and attendance at library programs.

Individuals wanting to borrow materials may register for a library card according to the guidelines outlined below.

Library Card Eligibility

Library cards are available to anyone living, working, or owning property in Amherst. Cards are also available to Amherst students and institutions, and to non-residents for a fee.

1) Residents

All residents of Amherst are eligible for a free library card. Residents are those who, regardless of age, identify Amherst as their legal domicile. Proof of residency is required to obtain a resident library card. Cards must be renewed every six years.

2) Non-Residents

a) Property Holders

Individuals who own property within the town boundaries and support the Amherst Town Library through their taxes are eligible for a free library card. Proof of ownership is required. Cards must be renewed every six years.

b) Town Employees

Individuals who work in the Town of Amherst are entitled to a free library card. Cards are valid for one year. Proof of employment is required.

c) Students

Students currently enrolled at the Amherst Middle School or Souhegan High School are eligible for a free library card. All student cards expire September 1 and must be renewed annually. Proof of enrollment is required.

d) Other

Nonresidents who do not work or go to school in Amherst may purchase a membership for an annual fee (see Appendix D). One card is issued and may be used by any member of the cardholder's family. Additional cards for family members are available for a one-time fee (see Appendix D). Registration and renewal of nonresident memberships must be completed in person. Memberships are not intended for use solely to download electronic content or gain remote access to databases subscribed to by the library. Memberships are valid for one year.

3) Institutions

Nonprofit organizations or institutions within the Town of Amherst may be issued a library card at the discretion of the Library Director. Cards are valid for one year. It is the responsibility of the institution to provide the Library with a list of approved borrowers annually. Users of an institutional card may borrow circulating library materials for an extended period (see Appendix C) in pursuit of the institution's activities. This card is not intended for personal use.

All library cards receive the same benefits and levels of service regardless of resident or nonresident status.

Registration

All applicants for library membership must appear in person and present acceptable identification with current name and address to obtain a library card. This applies to first time cardholders, as well as those renewing or replacing cards. See Appendix A for acceptable documentation.

Library User Records

In accordance with NH RSA 91-A:5 and RSA 201-D:11, library user records are confidential. The Amherst Town Library will not divulge titles that are currently checked out, items that are overdue, or materials that have been requested to anyone other than the library cardholder without the express permission of the cardholder.

Borrowing Privileges and Responsibilities

1) Checking out Materials

- a) Any individual with a valid card from the Amherst Town Library may borrow circulating library materials.

- b) A *valid* library card (see appendix B) should be presented when borrowing materials. If a patron cannot present a card at the time of checkout, a current photo ID (such as a driver's license) displaying the cardholder's name and address will be accepted. If the address on the ID does not match the library database, the patron is required to verify their address verbally before checkout.

Cardholders will be assessed a fee (see appendix D) to replace a lost card.

- c) Library cardholders (or the parent or guardian of a cardholder under age 18) are financially responsible for all items checked out on their card. Library users are expected to treat the library facility, equipment, and materials carefully and respectfully. Materials should be returned to the library in the condition in which they were borrowed.
 - d) Most library materials are available to be checked out for home use. Exceptions include: items in the Reference Collection and Local History Collection, newspapers, the most recent edition of magazines, and projectors (see Equipment Loan procedure). Items circulate for a specified period based on their format, content and demand (see appendix C).
- 2) Self-Checkout
Patrons with excessive fines may be blocked from using the self-checkout terminal.
 - 3) Loan Limits
The library does not impose a per card item limit.
 - 4) Renewals
 - a) Materials may be renewed twice as long as they have not been requested by another patron.
 - b) Renewals may be placed in person, by phone, or electronically through the online catalog. Patrons with excessive fines may not renew items online.
 - c) Renewal requests left on the after-hours answering machine will be honored.
 - d) An additional renewal may be granted for books over 500 pages and audiobooks containing more than 15 discs.
 - e) Renewals are not available on items with requests.
 - 5) Returning materials
Library materials may be returned in the library (during open hours), in the bookdrop (during closed hours) or to another GMILCS library (Appendix E). Interlibrary loans must be returned to the Amherst Town Library.
 - 6) Overdue Materials
Patrons will be assessed fines for failing to return library materials on or before their due date (see appendix D).
 - 7) Lost/Damaged
 - a) Library cardholders will be held financially responsible for materials checked out on their card which are lost or damaged to the extent that they will not remain

in the library's collection. Cardholders will be required to refund the library for the cost of the item, as well as a processing fee (appendix D).

- b) Items which are damaged but repairable may be assessed a materials fee at the discretion of the library staff. When the library is able to replace a part of a lost or damaged item (i.e. one disc of an audiobook, instructional booklet, hanging bag), the patron will be assessed a charge based on the replacement fee rather than the purchase price of the entire item.
 - c) At the discretion of the Library Director, the library will accept replacements in lieu of payment for lost or damaged materials.
 - d) Lost charges for items which are found and returned within three months from the date of payment may be refunded, *only if the library has not yet purchased a replacement*. Any overdue or processing fees will be reinstated. There is no refund for lost Inter-library loan materials.
- 8) Reserving items

Patrons may place requests on library materials in person, by phone or through the online catalog. Requests will be met in the order in which they were placed. When a patron fails to retrieve a requested item that is available five days, the library reserves the right to pass the item on to the next patron on the request list or return the item to the shelf.

9) Lost or Stolen Cards

Library patrons are responsible for all materials checked out on their library cards. Cardholders agree to report lost or stolen library cards immediately. After reporting the loss, cardholders will not be held responsible for any materials that are subsequently checked out the card, or for fines or charges on such materials.

If a lost/stolen card is returned to the library, it will be held at the Circulation desk for 30 days. In order to obtain a replacement card or reactivate a lost card a photo ID is required. Replacement cards are subject to a fee (see appendix D).

10) Change of Address

It is the responsibility of cardholders to keep their patron record accurate and up-to-date. Changes of name, phone number email, and address should be reported to library staff or updated through the "my account" feature of the online catalog.

The Amherst Town Library may purge the records of those patrons whose cards have expired.

11) Closing a Library Account

All library materials must be returned to the library and all fees paid before an account

can be closed. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to verify that all materials have been received by the library and that there are no outstanding fees.

12) Revocation of Library Privileges

The library reserves the right to restrict or revoke a library card if borrowing privileges are abused. Borrowing privileges may also be suspended if a cardholder has excessive charges for lost or damaged items, fines for late materials or other library fees (see appendix B).

Common Borrower Card

The Amherst Town Library has entered a reciprocal borrowing agreement with other libraries within the GMILCS consortium. The agreement enables Amherst Town Library cardholders to check items out from the other libraries in the consortium. Libraries may choose to limit access to certain collections. A valid library card (or current photo ID displaying the patron's name and address) must be presented to use the service. If the address on the ID does not match the address in the library database, the patron is required to verify his address verbally before checkout. The policies of the lending library will prevail so patrons should be aware that loan periods, fine schedules, etc. may differ from those at the Amherst Town Library. Items may be returned and fines may be paid at any participating libraries. Reparations for lost or damaged items should be made with the owning library.

Items obtained through inter-library loan are subject to the Inter-library Loan policies and procedures even if they are borrowed from a GMILCS library.

Appendix A - Acceptable Identification to Verify Name and Address for Registration

To apply for a library card, a person must appear in person and provide a photo ID that contains the name and current address of the applicant. If the photo identification does not have a current address, the applicant must provide one additional piece of documentation with that information.

Staff recognition is also a valid form of ID (i.e. a staff member recognizes the individual as a member of the community).

In the case of minors (persons under the age of 18), as a substitute for an ID, an accompanying adult who has an ID for the same address may vouch for the identity of a minor and show proof of residence for the minor wishing to obtain a library card.

<p>RESIDENTS</p>	<p>Proof of Residency</p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (not a P.O. box).</p>	<p>Acceptable documentation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. driver's license • ID card issued by federal or state government agency • auto registration • checkbook • recent utility bill/e-bill • recent property tax statement • lease or mortgage papers • posted mail with name of applicant <p>Another Amherst Town Library cardholder may vouch for a person in the same household or community (either in person or by submitting a letter with their name, address, and the name of individual applying for a library card).</p>
<p>NON-RESIDENTS Business/ Property Owners</p>	<p>Proof of Ownership</p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (not a P.O. box).</p>	<p>Acceptable documentation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recent property tax statement • recent utility bill/e-bill • recent property tax statement • lease or mortgage papers
<p>NON-RESIDENTS Town Employees</p>	<p>Proof of Employment</p> <p>Documentation that shows the individual's name and the work address.</p>	<p>Acceptable documentation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paycheck stub • work badge • letter from Employer

NON-RESIDENTS Students	Proof of Enrollment	Acceptable documentation includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student ID • official copy of current class schedule • report card
NON-RESIDENTS Other	Proof of Identity Documentation that shows the individual's name and physical address (not a P.O. box).	Acceptable documentation includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. driver's license • ID card issued by federal or state government agency • auto registration • checkbook • recent utility bill/e-bill • recent property tax statement • lease or mortgage papers
INSTITUTIONS		Nonprofit organizations or institutions may request a library card by submitting the following information on letterhead, signed by an individual authorized to act on behalf of the organization: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A statement indicating that the organization accepts responsibility for any fines and/or replacement of materials 2. The names of all individuals who are authorized to use the card.

Appendix B – Definitions

Valid card – an Amherst Town Library card which is not expired and does not have excessive fines. Library cards stored via smartphone apps are accepted.

Excessive fines – overdue fines/ fees in excess of \$5.00, any charges for lost/ damaged material

Overdue – the status of library materials that were not returned before the library opens on the day following the Due Date, nor renewed by midnight on the due date

Appendix C – Loan and Renewal Periods

Type of Material	Loan Period	Renewal Period	Overdue Fee	Overdue Fee Limits
Books, Magazines, Music CDs, Audiobooks, Playaway Audios, Cake Pans, Kill A Watt Meters, Puzzles	14 days	14 days	\$0.10 day	\$4.00 per item, per circulation
Non-Fiction DVDs, Telescope, eReaders/Tablets	14 days	14 days	\$1.00 day	\$10.00/Item
Fiction DVDs, Juvenile DVDs, Playaway Views, Wii & DS Games, MP3 Players	7 days	7 days	\$1.00 day	\$10.00/Item
Interlibrary Loan	21 days	--	\$0.25 day	\$4.00/Item
Institutional Loan (all materials)	30 days	--	--	--

All items *except new fiction and fiction DVDs* may be available for extended/ vacation loan upon request

Appendix D – Fee schedule

Non-Resident Card	\$100.00 (Annual)
Additional Non-Resident Family Card	\$5.00 (One -time)
Replacement Card	\$2.00
Lost/ Damaged Processing Fee	\$2.00
Lost Materials (except as itemized)	Retail purchase price of the item
Magazines	\$5.00
DVD Cases	\$2.00
Hanging Bags	\$2.00

Appendix E – GMILCS Libraries

Bedford Public Library
 Danforth Library (New England College)
 Derry Public Library
 Goffstown Public Library
 Hooksett Public Library
 Kelley Library (Salem)
 Manchester City Library & West Manchester Community Library
 Merrimack Public Library
 New Hampshire Institute of Art
 Nesmith Library (Windham)
 Wadleigh Memorial Library (Milford)