



NORWALK
Public Library

Circulation Policy

April 28, 2022

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GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Norwalk Public Library

The Norwalk Public Library (NPL), comprised of the Main Library on Belden Avenue and the South Norwalk Branch Library on Washington Street, has nearly 200,000 physical items for public circulation. Our collection includes books, audiobooks, audiovisual materials, CDs, magazines, museum passes, Chromebook kits, WiFi hotspot kits, and more. NPL also offers downloadable materials and interlibrary loan service. Our extensive fiction and nonfiction book and audiovisual materials include a wide variety of world language selections. The library also offers online resources that are accessible to NPL card holders both remotely and within the library buildings.

Mission Statement

The Norwalk Public Library, with our open access to diverse resources, serves as the information and cultural center for Norwalk's citizens and businesses.

Circulation Objective

The circulation objective supports the library's mission. NPL's goal is to have every eligible Norwalk resident obtain a library card and to actively and responsibly enjoy use of the materials.

Library materials belong to Norwalk residents. NPL is a fine free library, however, replacement fees and other charges are levied to recoup costs for lost or damaged items, and to ensure fair access to library materials. The library director is responsible for prioritizing the protection of library materials as authorized by the library board of directors.

The implementation of the circulation policy is performed by circulation staff members who are trained in library circulation policies and procedures.

CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY AND NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY GUIDELINES

The Connecticut State Library's BorrowIT CT/DeliverIT CT regulations stipulate that Connecticut residents obtain a public library card from their town of residency. Once the card is obtained, card holders may register their cards at other public libraries in Connecticut with the identification required by those libraries. These regulations allow public library card holders to borrow physical materials from most public libraries in Connecticut. The borrower is responsible for returning materials to the libraries from which they borrow. If patrons return items from other libraries, staff will transfer care of those items to the **BorrowIT CT/DeliverIT CT** system. Returns are not immediate. Returns can take up to six months and the borrower is responsible for any fees incurred.

GENERAL CIRCULATION POLICY

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS

Library cards are non-transferrable. Adults may give third-party permission to a designee (a spouse, a nanny, caretaker, etc.) to pick up items on hold in their stead. Parents are automatically allowed to pick up their children's holds. Having family members' cards linked is particularly helpful when identifying family members who are allowed to pick up each other's holds.

A library card owner is responsible for all use made of the library card and for all materials borrowed on it. The parent or guardian of a minor patron is responsible for all use of said minor's card.

GETTING A LIBRARY CARD

Library Terms and Conditions

- Patrons may apply for a library card in person or online.
- Library cards expire on the last day of the month, three (3) years after the card is issued.
- Temporary cards and cards for non-residents who are employed or attend school in Norwalk will expire on the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.
- There is no cost to renew expired library cards, or to replace library cards. Borrowers follow the same process as getting a new card; however, charges exceeding \$20.00 must be paid before a renewal or replacement card is issued.

ADULTS

RESIDENTS 18 YEARS OR OLDER

Adults are offered the choice of the grey or blue adult library card designs.

To qualify for a Norwalk Public Library card, residents must verify their identity and Norwalk residency by presenting either one ID from section A or two IDs from section B.

- A. Photo IDs that are signed, valid, current, and include the applicant's name and Norwalk address:

Connecticut Driver's License

Connecticut Photo ID

U.S. Passport with photo and home address

NOTE: If the passport does not list a home address, then a second ID will be required.

B. Two IDs required, one from each column:

PROOF OF IDENTITY

- Employee ID with photo
- School ID with photo
- Green Card/Permanent Resident Card with photo
- U.S. Military Card with photo

PROOF OF CURRENT NORWALK RESIDENCY

- Norwalk tax bill (for residents, not property/business owners)
- Lease/rental agreement
- Auto registration
- Mail addressed to applicant's current Norwalk residence

A post office box address is not considered proof of residency in Norwalk.

Photo IDs that have been expired for four (4) months or more are not acceptable.

Non-Connecticut state IDs with a Norwalk address are not acceptable.

Owning property in Norwalk is not the same as residing in Norwalk and is not considered sufficient grounds to obtain a library card; however, residents who live part-year in Norwalk are eligible for a Norwalk Public Library card with appropriate identification and proof of Norwalk residency. Please explain to patrons residing in other Connecticut towns that they can get cards in the city in which they reside and bring that card, along with photo ID, to be input into our system in order to use our services.

Patrons who live on the border of neighboring towns and have address in those towns, but pay Norwalk taxes may show their Norwalk tax bill as proof of residency.

OPEN DOORS SHELTER RESIDENTS

Adults who reside at Open Doors shelter must provide a letter from a case manager on Open Doors letterhead verifying Merritt Street residency. Once the letter is presented, staff will process the application. If the adult has children under the age of 18 who want library cards, those names must on the letterhead, as well. Please note that these cards expire on the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS CENTER RESIDENTS

Adults who reside at Domestic Violence Crisis Center (DVCC) housing in Norwalk must provide a letter from a case manager on DVCC letterhead. For their safety, DVCC addresses in Norwalk and Stamford are acceptable. Once the letter is presented, staff will process the application. If the adult has children under the age of 18 who want library cards, those names must on the letterhead, as well. Please note that these cards expire on the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.

EMANCIPATED MINORS

The State of Connecticut issues a letter of emancipation to emancipated minors. To obtain a library card, emancipated minors must present a State of Connecticut letter of emancipation, appropriate ID, and verification of Norwalk address as described in the GETTING A LIBRARY CARD section.

YOUTH

Though youth library cards may be applied for at any circulation desk, parents are offered the choice to apply in the youth services department at the main library for children grades six (6) and below because they and their children can get a better sense of the materials and services available to them there.

YOUTH 17 AND UNDER

- Minors must accompany the parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult at the time of applying in person for a library card.
- Parents/legal guardians must present a current, valid photo ID and proof of Norwalk residency.
- A responsible adult—aunt, uncle, grandparent, sibling, or caregiver over age 18—may also present proof of identification and residency for the parent/guardian, along with an application completed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- By signing the library card application, parents/legal guardians assume responsibility for all materials borrowed on youth cards and for payment of replacement or other charges.
- If the parent/legal guardian does not have a photo ID, please see the section YOUTH TEMPORARY CARD, below.
- A parent/legal guardian must sign the internet permission area of the application to permit their child to have independent use of Internet computers. Minors granted internet permission are coded with “-I-” after their full name in the integrated library system (ILS) **and** on the library card label. In the absence of parental permission, holders of youth temporary cards may not use the internet on the library’s computers. The monitoring of Internet use or the Internet’s accuracy/ appropriateness is not the responsibility of library staff.
- Youth from birth to age 12 are assigned the CHILD patron type in the ILS.
- Youth age 13 to 17 are assigned the YOUNG ADULT (YA) patron type in the Integrated Library System (ILS), also known as the library system database, but are given the choice to receive a youth card design or a choice of the two adult card designs. **Youth library cards expire on the last day of the month, three (3) years after the card is issued, or on the patron’s 18th birthday.** Please be sure this is reflected in the expiration date. If a youth card expires within four months of the patron turning 18, the patron type classification will be YA, but a choice of the two adult card designs is offered.

Distinguishing between CHILD and YOUNG ADULT in the ILS is necessary since the distinction is required by the State of Connecticut.

CLASS VISITS

The Youth Services departments may distribute library card applications to schools to verify the requested information since the same type of information is required to register for school, or applications may be distributed to teachers to send home with their students. Upon return of the application, signed by parent or legal guardian along with copy of the parent’s or legal guardian’s photo ID, a library card will be issued to the student.

ORGANIZATION LIBRARY CARDS FOR SCHOOLS AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization library cards are intended for schools and non-profit organizations to check out books to be used at their institution. Applications must list a designated card owner, such as a director, assistant director, principal, manager or finance director, from within the organization, who will be responsible for the card and lost items. The owner's name will be placed on the C/O address line of the organization's library account. The applicant must show proof that he/she is employed by the organization and provide a letter on company letterhead stating that they have permission to apply for an organization card. The application should include the names of employees who have permission to use the card. The names will be placed in the note field on the record. If the card owner leaves the organization, the card can be transferred to another owner by submitting the transfer request in writing on company letterhead.

ADULT TEMPORARY CARDS

Adult temporary cards are given to Norwalk residents 18 and older who can only provide an ID from the GETTING A LIBRARY CARD section, or who can only provide information from either column of section B, but not from both. The card holder has access to our virtual/online materials and may borrow a maximum of two (2) physical items. Temporary cards expire after one year. **The term "For Use in NPL only" is added to the name label on the card.** Patrons who receive temporary cards are urged to bring in the missing requirements as soon as possible so the cards can be upgraded to full-privilege cards. Adult temporary cards expire the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.

YOUTH TEMPORARY CARDS

Youth temporary cards are issued to youth aged 12 to 17 under the following two (2) circumstances:

- No parent/guardian is present to apply for a library card AND
 - The minor attends school in Norwalk and can present a current, valid school ID or report card
- OR
- Parent/guardian is present but cannot show required proof of identification, or proof of Norwalk residency per the GETTING A LIBRARY CARD section requirements.

The card holder has access to virtual/online materials and may borrow a maximum of two physical (2) items. Temporary cards expire the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued. **The term "For Use in NPL only" is added to the name label on the card.** All patrons who receive temporary cards are urged to bring in the missing requirements as soon as possible so the cards can be upgraded to full-privilege cards.

In the absence of parental permission, youth temporary cards holders may not use the internet on library computers.

FORGOTTEN LIBRARY CARDS

Borrowing without a library card present is allowed provided the borrower shows acceptable identification. This is required to protect the patron. Acceptable identification is the same as listed above in the GETTING A LIBRARY CARD section. If library cards are forgotten during library visits and patrons wish to check out items, renew items, or obtain the card number to use public computers, a photo ID is preferable; however other forms of ID can be used. They include, but are not limited to:

Driver's license	Student ID
CT photo ID	Class schedule with student's name
Work ID	Bus schedule with student's name
Passport	.

If patrons do not have photo ID, then a few identifiable questions will be asked, such as, but not limited to:

Address	Birthdate
Phone number	Driver's license number
Driver's license expiration date	Middle name or initial

It is preferred that patrons have their library cards when calling the library to renew items. If they do not, then identifiable questions will also be asked.

If a patron regularly fails to bring the library card, offer to issue a replacement, provided the patron in question can meet the requirements for a card.

RENEWAL/REPLACEMENT OF LIBRARY CARDS

There is no cost to renew or replace lost or expired cards. Expired accounts are renewed for the time period corresponding to the type of library card involved, i.e. a standard adult card for another three (3) years, a non-resident who works in Norwalk for another one year, and so on. Unless expiration is imminent, a replacement for a lost card can be issued using the original expiration date.

- Charges exceeding \$20.00 must be paid before a renewal or replacement card is issued.
- Appropriate ID and proof of residency/employment/schooling must be verified again.
- For patrons under age 17, all parental information must be validated and updated before renewing card. Parent/guardian, or designated adult with photocopy of parent/guardian ID and required documentation must be present. **Temporary cards are an exception, please see the section above on YOUTH TEMPORARY CARDS.**

NON-CIRCULATING MATERIALS

Current issues of magazines office and reference collection materials may not be checked out unless the department's supervisor approves. If the department supervisor cannot be reached, then the item will not be checked out.

HOLDS/RESERVES

Card holders may place a maximum of 30 holds per account at any given time. DVDs, Blu-rays, and hardware items will be held for two (2) days. Because DVDs and Blu-rays are only held for two days, staff will alert patrons of their holds by phone if there is no email address listed on the account. If the patron is not available, a message will be left that items are available for pickup, but for patron protection and privacy the names of the items will not be revealed. All other items are held for seven (7) days. If there is no email listed on the account, staff will send a letter to notify patrons of items that are ready for pickup.

Museum passes, Chromebooks, WiFi hotspots and Dell Chromebook WiFi kits are not available for holds/reserves. These items are available on a first-come, first-served basis only.

RENEWALS

Circulating items may also be renewed a maximum of seven (7) times in person, by phone, or online unless another borrower has placed a hold on the specific item, or if library fees exceed \$20.00. Museum passes, Chromebooks, WiFi Hotspots and Dell Chromebook WiFi kits are not renewable. Once an item has reached BILLED status, it may be renewed as a one-time courtesy to allow the patron to find the item unless there is a hold placed on the item. A message should be placed on the account on top of other messages that may be there. Thereafter, the item must be either returned or paid for as lost.

The library will attempt to notify card holders via mail or email after a certain time of an item being overdue. The Library is not accountable for correspondence that does not successfully reach the intended recipient.

CHECK OUT ANYWHERE/ RETURN ANYWHERE

Borrowers may check out their materials anywhere in the system and return them anywhere in the system. A borrower holding both children's and adult materials can check them out all at once either in the Adult or Children's departments. Likewise, children's returns will be accepted in the adult department and adult materials in the children's department if this is what the patron finds convenient. Exceptions include museum passes, Chromebooks, and WiFi hotspot kits. Those items must be returned only at the point of distribution per the borrower's agreements.

FEE PAYMENT INFORMATION

Fees may be paid at Norwalk Public Library circulation desks or online. We accept cash, credit cards, debit cards, checks and money orders made payable to Norwalk Public Library. Payment may also be mailed to either library location by sending to the attention of the circulation department. Currently, the library does not accept American Express or Apple Pay.

PARTIAL PAYMENT PLAN

When accumulated charges exceed the \$20.00 limit, a stop is automatically placed on the borrower's card. In hardship cases, Circulation staff members may decide to allow special payment arrangements.

LIBRARY NOTIFICATIONS

The library attempts to communicate with patrons for a variety of reasons regarding borrowed materials. Some of them are listed below. The library is not accountable for correspondence that does not successfully reach the intended recipient.

COURTESY NOTICE

A courtesy email notice is sent one day before an item reaches its due date. The Library is not responsible for correspondence that does not successfully reach the intended recipient. When courtesy emails bounce back, a staff member will try to reach patron by phone.

OVERDUE NOTICE

Borrowers are sent overdue notices via email or regular mail. The timing of these notices depends on the type of item borrowed. The Library is not accountable for correspondence that does not successfully reach the intended recipient.

BILLS

Borrowers are billed for replacement of unreturned items. The timing of these notices depends on the type of item borrowed. The Library is not accountable for correspondence that does not successfully reach the intended recipient. Please see the table below.

OVERDUE AND BILL NOTICES

Description	Loan Period	Renewal Period	Renewals Allowed	Overdue sent	Bill Sent
Audio Books	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Blu Ray disc	7	7	7	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 7 days overdue
Board Games	7	7	7	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 7 days overdue
Board Games - In House	1	0	0	1 at 1 day overdue	1 at 6 days overdue
Book	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Book Discussion Kit	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
DVD	7	7	7	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 7 days overdue
GNLV	56	56	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Grab Bags	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Hardware	14	14	7	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 7 days overdue
Hardware - in house laptops	1	-	-	1 at 1 day overdue	1 at 6 days overdue
ILL Material	21	0	0	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 14 days overdue
Kiosk Laptops – In House	1	0	0	1 at 2 hours overdue	1 at 9 hours overdue
Kit	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Magazine	7	7	7	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 7 days overdue
Museum Pass	3	0	0	1 at 3 days overdue	1 at 6 days overdue
Music/Misc. CD	21	21	7	1 at 37days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Paperback	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Playaway	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Software	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
Summer Reading Books	21	21	7	1 at 7 days overdue	1 at 21 days overdue
WiFi Hotspots	7	0	0	1 at 1 day overdue	1 at 3 days overdue

INCOMPLETE RETURNS

It is the card holder's responsibility to make sure that each case contains all items before returning audiovisual materials. If an item is returned missing one or more pieces, the item will not be removed from the borrower's account. Circulation staff will try to contact the patron. If the problem is not resolved, the item will eventually be billed for replacement. Borrowers are charged either for the missing piece(s) or, in some cases, the entire item in question.

The City of Norwalk allows the Library to reimburse funds paid for lost items, if the items are returned in useable condition, with receipt, within thirty (30) days of payment. Credit card payments may be reimbursed to the original credit card used. All other forms of payment will be reimbursed by check from the City of Norwalk.

REPLACEMENT COSTS

Card holders are responsible for paying the replacement cost based on the type of material lost or damaged beyond repair. **Please note that the library does not accept replacement items for lost or damaged materials.** The library sets the standard replacement costs and processing fees for items. Payments made for items paid for and then returned in usable or workable condition within thirty (30) days of payment will be reimbursed. No refunds will be offered for materials returned after the 30-day grace period following payment of replacement cost.

DEFAULT REPLACEMENT COSTS FOR MATERIALS

The library does not accept replacement items provided by patrons for lost or damaged materials. If no replacement cost is indicated on an item's record, items will be charged as follows:

- Kit bag (children's department) - \$10
- DVD, Blu-ray CD cases - \$1
- Audiobooks - \$50
- **NOTE:** The library does not source single replacement discs. A replacement charge for the entire audiobook will be charged if any of the discs are lost or damaged.
- CD (compact disc) - \$18
- DVD, Blu-Ray – Adult Dept. \$25, Children's Dept. \$10
- Hardcover book – Adult Dept. \$25, Children's Dept. \$15
- Paperback book – Adult Dept. trade paperback \$15 Mass market \$8, Children's Dept. \$8
- Board book (Children's Dept.) - \$6

PAYING FOR LOST ITEMS

Fees for lost items may be paid at Norwalk Public Library circulation desks or online. We accept cash, checks, credit cards, debit cards and money orders made payable to Norwalk Public Library. Payment may also be mailed to either library location by sending to the attention of the circulation department. Currently, the library does not accept American Express or Apple Pay.

CLAIMS RETURNED

When a borrower firmly believes an item has been returned, but the computer shows it as outstanding, reference staff will check the shelf for the item. If the item is not found, the circulation staff may offer to renew the item(s) if possible, to give the patron more time to search at home. As a last resort, staff may use the claims returned function in the library circulation system. This is generally considered a one-time option for each borrower. The system keeps track of how many times this option is executed.

NON-NORWALK RESIDENTS

Non-Norwalk residents can have their hometown cards registered in the Norwalk Public Library by bringing in a current (unexpired) library card from their hometown, a photo ID, and proof of residency. No further proof of residence is necessary if the residence is shown on the photo ID. If not, additional residency proof will be required. See GETTING A LIBRARY CARD section. The expiration date is set by the hometown library. For this initial registration process, an original library card is necessary. Key fob cards often do not show the patron's name or the card's expiration date. In the absence of a specified expiration date, staff will provide a courtesy extension of three weeks from the date of the transaction and record this courtesy in a message on the borrower's record. This gives patrons time to renew their library cards or to bring in the physical library card with a non-expired expiration date.

Non-Norwalk residents who work in Norwalk may be issued a library card for use only in the Norwalk Public Library System. **The term "For Use in NPL only" is added to the name label on the card.** A photo ID and proof of current employment are required for applicants employed in Norwalk. Acceptable proof of employment are a recent pay stub or a current work-based email. Business cards and undated work photo IDs are not sufficient proof of current employment in Norwalk. This card expires on the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.

Non-Norwalk residents who attend school in Norwalk may be issued a full-privilege library card with a current, valid Norwalk school ID, official school paperwork, or online documentation confirming an applicant's current enrollment, along with proof of current home address. This card expires on the last day of the month, one (1) year after the card is issued.