



Vancouver Public Library

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: October 17, 2019
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VanDocs#: DOC/2019/264545
Meeting Date: October 23, 2019

TO: Library Board
FROM: Rhonda Sherwood, Chair, Services, Finance and Human Resources Committee
SUBJECT: **Vancouver Public Library Cards Policy**

SUMMARY

This report presents a proposed Board Policy for Library Cards and recommends that the Board delegate authority for setting fines, fees, and charges for library cards and lending services to the Chief Librarian.

PURPOSE

This report is for decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A) That the Board adopt the Library Card Policy.
- B) That the Board grant the authority for setting fines, fees, and charges related to library cards and lending services to the Chief Librarian.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Committee inquired about the history of policy for library cards and fines, and discussed the need for transparency in library fees and for the Board to maintain awareness of changes that affect the public. Following discussion, the Committee members concluded that since the fees are published on the website, the policy will be reviewed every five years, and the public can

directly contact the Board with complaints about changes in fees, they are confident that they will have sufficient awareness to maintain their oversight responsibilities if authority for lending fees are delegated to the Chief Librarian.

POLICY

The Chief Librarian and the Director, Corporate Services and Facilities are delegated authority to manage all operating revenues and operating expenses undertaken by the Vancouver Public Library through the [Operating Budget Policy](#).

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Vancouver Public Library demonstrates a commitment to the patron experience by removing access barriers and increasing ease of use, and applies this in decisions about library cards. Under the current strategic plan, this commitment falls under: Access and Equity - Patron-Centred Experience - Increase Ease of Use and Reduce Access Barriers.

BACKGROUND

Library Card Policy

VPL has a number of policies and service statements related to our lending services but does not have an overarching public policy on library cards and lending services. This information is currently communicated through staff memos and contained within a procedure manual for circulation staff, but it is not publically accessible.

Fines, Fees, and Charges

The Director, Corporate Services and Facilities, with input from the Directors Group and staff, has historically determined the rates for room rentals, InfoAction, historical photographs sales, and book sale prices. These are based on market rates, reviewed annually, and amended periodically.

The Director, Corporate Services and Facilities and Director, Library Experience, also review the Limits, Holds and Charges schedule annually and recommend adjustments to the Board. The Board last reviewed the Limits, Holds and Charges schedule in November 2018. They approved changes to consolidate the replacement charges for different types of ukuleles into a single category, and introduced a new replacement charge category for small hand instruments that was consistent with our other charges.

DISCUSSION

It is appropriate for organizations to regularly review business practices and delegated authorities and adjust them for efficiency and better service. Staff are recommending that the

Board establish an overarching Library Card policy that describes VPL card types and establishes policy statements about library use, and that authority for setting individual fines, fees and charges be delegated to the Chief Librarian.

Library Card Policy

The attached policy in **Appendix A** describes eligibility for VPL library cards, VPL's authority for issuing cards, and roles and responsibilities of our patrons, staff and the Board. This will clarify our practices for the public, demonstrating transparency to our patrons, and support consistent application by staff.

Fines, Fees and Charges

In reviewing changes to the schedules for the previous 10 years, it is clear that any adjustments are modest, such as increasing the rates for subscription cards from \$76/year to \$78/year, and have minimal impact on revenues. Events that trigger changes include the introduction of new formats, the need to add inflationary increases, changes in pressures on the collection or services, and efforts to improve clarity.

The recommendation to delegate approval of fines, fees, and charges for VPL's library cards and lending services to the Chief Librarian, who will consult with the Director, Corporate Services and Facilities, aligns with current practice for establishing the rates for room rentals, InfoAction, historical photographs, and book sale prices. It is consistent with the delegated authority set within the Operating Budget Policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no anticipated financial implications in relation to Recommendation A, the adoption of the Library Card Policy.

The Chief Librarian and the Director, Corporate Services and Facilities currently have delegated authority to manage all operating revenues and operating expenses undertaken by the Vancouver Public Library through the Operating Budget Policy. Fines, fees and charges for lending have been treated as an exception from this historically.

If Recommendation B is approved, all financial implications resulting from the setting of future fines, fees, and charges related to library cards and lending services will be made within the context of the overall VPL operating budget.



BOARD POLICY

Appendix A

SUBJECT: Vancouver Public Library Cards	
CATEGORY: Circulation & Collections	POLICY CODE: VPL-BD-CC-001-2019

Objective

This policy outlines eligibility for Vancouver Public Library cards, the authority for issuing library cards, and describes the roles and responsibilities for the Library Board, staff and VPL patrons related to lending services.

Scope

This policy applies to VPL patrons, staff and the Library Board.

Definitions

Care Centre - means senior centres, residential treatment centres, service agencies, and societies or licensed individuals operating child care programs such as daycares, family child cares, preschools, out-of-school or childminding centres, and family places.

Fines - means monetary charges imposed as a result of breach of Library policies, such as overdue fines.

Fees - means monetary charges imposed to generate revenue or cover the costs to the Library for damaged or lost materials and specific goods and services.

Patron – an individual who holds a library card to use Vancouver Public Library services.

Public Library InterLINK - Public Library InterLINK is a federation of eighteen autonomous public libraries operating according to the *Library Act*, RSBC 1996, c.264,s.49. The service area includes Bowen Island, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Fraser Valley Regional, Gibsons, New Westminister, North Vancouver City, North Vancouver District, Pemberton, Port Moody, Richmond, Sechelt, Squamish, Surrey, Vancouver, West Vancouver, and Whistler

Service Agreement – means an agreement that allows for the provision of library services to individuals or communities that would otherwise not be eligible for service.

Policy Statements

The Library is a community focused institution. Library systems, services and policies are developed and regularly reviewed to ensure they are patron and community centered.

The ability to borrow items from the Vancouver Public Library's collections and access our other resources and services is the core of excellent library service.

The Library aspires to meet the needs of the residents of Vancouver and to share resources with other residents in the province through InterLINK and other resource sharing and service agreements when the resources are not in use by Vancouver residents.

The Library strives to provide Vancouver residents with the fullest level of access to VPL collections and services possible, while helping patrons limit their potential financial risk to meet their individual circumstances.

Some non-resident library card types have service restrictions. The Library strives to provide as much access as is allowed within the limits imposed by license and service agreements.

Patron registration information and borrowing records are handled in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, RSBC 1996, co. and the Library's *Protection of Privacy Policy*.

Roles and Authorities

The *Library Act*, RSBC 1996, c.264, legislates the authority of the Library Board to make rules for managing its business and for regulating the use of its facilities and services by the public. The Act defines free basic public services and allowable charges, and assigns authority for the enforcement of library rules. The Library Act permits the Library Board to enter into written agreements to cooperate in the provision of library services.

The Library Board has control over the expenditure of the revenue derived from any source, including fines, fees, monies recovered for damage or loss of library materials, and all money received by the Library Board under an agreement to provide library service.

The Chief Librarian approves the fines, fees and charges related to library cards and lending services. These are outlined in the *Limits, Holds and Charges schedule*.

The Director, Library Experience sets the Loan Periods and Limits for lending services. These are outlined in the *Limits, Holds and Charges schedule*.

The decision to waive fines and fees or extend borrowing limits is delegated to library staff, with consideration of the circumstances of individual patrons.

Library patrons who feel that they have been charged fines or fees unfairly may request a review by a supervisor, manager, or a director. The final decision regarding the charging of fines and fees rests with the Chief Librarian.

Eligibility for Library Cards

Library cards are free to:

- All people who live or own property in the City of Vancouver

- All people who live within the InterLINK area
- All people who live within a designated service agreement area and provide the required services card if specified by the relevant service agreement
- All BC residents not covered by the Public Library InterLINK Agreement, who possess a valid library card from their local BC municipality or regional library.(BC OneCard)
- All daycares, family child centres, preschools, out-of-school or childminding centres, and family places in the Interlink area
- All Care Centres in the InterLINK area who wish to obtain a library card to borrow materials for the benefit of their residents, patients or social service/health residential clients (e.g. half-way house, residential treatment centre, etc.)

Cards for non-residents, who do not meet the free card criteria, are available for a fee.

Library Card Types

Free library cards:

1. **Adult** – For people 19 years of age and older.
2. **Youth** – For people between 14 and 18 years of age inclusive. Youth cards expire on the patron's 19th birthday.
3. **Juvenile** - For people one day to 14 years of age. Juvenile cards expire on the borrower's 14th birthday
4. **Company card** – For businesses or other organizations operating in the City of Vancouver who wish to authorize certain employees to borrow books.
5. **Staff card** - For current and retired employees of VPL for personal use. Staff cards are administered under the *Cards for VPL Staff Policy*.
6. **Work unit card** and **professional card** – For staff at each work unit to check out items or access databases when required as part of a staff member's job.
7. **Access card** – A low barrier card for persons who may not qualify for a standard adult card due to insufficient identification, or for persons who may face difficulties paying overdue fines
8. **Internet access card** – For persons who only wish to access the wireless and/or hard-wired network.
9. **BC OneCard** – For BC residents outside of the InterLINK area who possess a valid library card from their local BC municipal or regional library
10. **Child/Senior care centre card** – For care centres who wish to borrow materials for the benefit of their residents, patients, or social service/health residential clients.
11. **Accessible Services card** - For people who are unable to easily leave their home and require home or mail delivery of library materials, or for people with print disabilities who wish to access Accessible Services' copyright protected audiovisual collection. Care centres that wish to receive materials delivered to them for use by their clients or residents may also register for this card type.
12. **Carnegie card** ** – For persons who only wish to use library services at the Carnegie Branch
13. **Britannia Only card***** – For staff of Britannia Community Centre.

**These cards are no longer being issued. Existing cards remain active until the expiry date or when the card holder has it replaced with a VPL card from one of the other categories.

***Issued in accordance with the Britannia Community Services Agreement.

Library Cards for a fee:

Rates for library cards for a fee are set by the Director, Corporate Services and Facilities and approved by the Chief Librarian, and are based on a cost recovery model.

1. **Visitor** – For people who are currently visiting Vancouver or any one of the InterLINK municipalities for less than 6 months. Visitor cards are issued for a 90 day period and expire at the end of that term.
2. **Subscription cards** – For people living outside of the InterLINK area and not covered by a service agreement or BC OneCard. Subscription cards are issued for a 182 day period and expire at the end of the term.

Responsibility for use of the Library Card

In signing their library card, the patron agrees to abide by the policies and procedures of the library.

The patron who signed the library card is responsible for all use made of the card.

A parent or guardian must sign a Juvenile card. The parent or guardian is responsible for all use made of the child's card and any charges incurred.

A parent's signature is not required on a Youth card. Parents are encouraged to support their teenager in learning how to use the library responsibly.

Individuals may only have one card, with the exception of patrons who are eligible for an Accessible Services Card or staff who require a Professional Card for their position.

Library cards are the property of the Library and the Library may require that a card be returned or presented to verify borrowing privileges.

Non-compliance Consequences

Non-compliance with the terms of use of a library card may result in the Library suspending or revoking library privileges, including the use of the card to borrow or use library materials or access library services.

Policy Administration Roles and Responsibilities

Director, Library Experience	Oversees and recommends updates to the policy as required.
Services, Finance and Human Resources Committee	Reviews policy as required and recommends changes to the Board.
Board	Approves policy and revisions to the policy.
Chief Librarian	Administers the policy

Related Policies

- Cards for VPL Staff (Board Policy)
- Collection Development (Board Policy)
- Operating Budget (Board Policy)
- Protection of Privacy (Board Policy)

Related Procedures

- Circulation Manual

Approval History

ISSUED BY:	APPROVED BY:	DATE:		NEW POLICY
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DATE OF NEXT REVIEW		REVIEW CYCLE	5 Years
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