

Main Library Alliance Policy Manual

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Introduction & Overview

Main Library Alliance (Main) is a group of member libraries and branches that have formed together in a consortium, in order to enhance the services they provide to their patrons and to share resources through reciprocal borrowing and intra-library loan.

Each member library's Board of Trustees must vote to abide by the Main Bylaws. The most recent edition of the Main Bylaws is available on the Main staff website.

This Main policy manual expands on the ideas set forth in the Main Bylaws. It is not intended to infringe on the right of any member library to create its own internal policies. Instead, this manual enumerates policies that govern the interactions between member libraries (or between a member library and a patron from another library). By following these policies, the best possible shared services can be provided to all member libraries and their patrons.

In order to remain a member in good standing of Main, each member library must agree to abide not only by the Main Bylaws, but also by the policies set forth in this manual.

For more on the structure of Main, please refer to the bylaws on the Main staff website.

Borrowing Policies

Types of Library Service

A goal of Main member libraries is to issue one library card to each prospective patron with the highest level of service possible. The different types of library cards issued at member libraries are as follows:

1. Full-Service Patron

Any resident, property taxpayer, library staff member, K-12 student, or K-12 teacher located in a Main member library's designated service area can be issued a full-service library card at no charge. This card may be used at any Main member library and entitles the user to full use of the patron online request system. Member libraries may only issue full-service cards to individuals located within the library's designated service area who are residents, property taxpayers, the library's own staff members, K-12 students, or K-12 teachers.

2. Morris County Library Card

The Morris County Library issues library cards to individuals who live in Morris County but do not live in a community served by another Main member library. Patrons with a Morris County Library card may request materials through the patron online request system for pick-up at Morris County Library only. Member libraries may restrict the items they will loan to Morris County Library cardholders.

3. Courtesy Card

An individual who works in a member library's service area but who does not reside in a community served by a Main member library, and who is not eligible for Open Borrowing, may be eligible for a courtesy card. Patrons with a courtesy card are eligible for in person service and may request materials through the patron online request system for pick-up at the issuing library. Individuals who work in Morris County may choose to apply for a courtesy card from the public library which services the town in which they are employed OR at the Morris County Library. Member libraries may restrict the items they will loan to other libraries' courtesy cardholders.

4. Main Pay Card

Individuals who do not reside in a service area serviced by a Main library, including Boonton Township, Mine Hill, Netcong and Victory Gardens, may be eligible for a Main pay card. This card will be issued by any Main member library. Stickers will be affixed to regular library cards in order for staff to

readily identify these patrons. Patrons with this library card are entitled to all of the rights and privileges of a “Full Service Card” (see above), but all cards expire after one year. The annual fee for this card will be \$250 per person and \$225 for patrons 65 years of age and older. The Main Board of Directors will determine changes to the annual fee for this card. Revenue collected for these cards will be kept by the selling library.

5. Open Borrowing

Main participates in the Open Borrowing Program with other library systems and consortia in New Jersey. These patrons do not have access to the patron online request system. For a current list of systems and consortia that participate in the Open Borrowing Program, visit the Open Borrowing website.

6. Temporary Card

Individuals residing temporarily at a facility such as a hospital, rehabilitation center or shelter located within a Main member library’s service area, may be eligible for a Temporary card. Patrons with a Temporary card are eligible for in person service, but may not themselves request materials through the patron online request system. Library staff may place holds on their behalf.

7. College Student Card

Students who are enrolled at an institution of higher learning located within the Main service area, may be eligible for a College Student card. Patrons with a College Student card are eligible for in person service, but may not request materials through the patron online request system.

8. Interim Card

Individuals eligible for a Full-Service Card at a Main member library may be issued an interim card to facilitate immediate loaning, one time only. Patrons shall be directed to their home library for the issuing of the proper Full-Service Card. Individuals eligible for a Morris County Library Card are not eligible for an Interim Card.

9. Institutional Card (As of 11/1/2022)

Institutions located within a library’s service area, such as schools, nonprofit organizations, or healthcare centers, may be eligible for an Institutional card. Patrons using an Institutional card are eligible for in person services but may not request materials through the patron line request system.

Patron Expiration Dates & Renewing Library Cards

The default expiration date in the integrated library system (ILS) is three years, but some local libraries may choose to renew their own patrons for longer amounts of time at their discretion.

Any Main library may choose to renew any full-service, Open Borrowing, or college student library card if the patron can prove identity and residence to the satisfaction of the library.

Updating Patron Information

If a patron requests a PIN, email address or phone number change, if they present their library card and a valid ID, any member library may make that change. Patrons should be encouraged to change their own PIN via My Account when possible.

Patrons Moving Between Communities

If a patron moves to another Main community, the patron must apply for a library card at the new library. If the patron's previous library card is in good standing (no fines, fees or overdue items):

- the barcode of the new home library should be overlaid onto the user's current record;
- the patron's demographic information should be changed (as applicable);
- the patron's address, phone number and email address (as applicable) should be updated;

As a courtesy to the patron's previous home library, a printout of the patron's old library card information screen should be sent to that library, along with a note saying that the patron has moved and providing their new barcode. The patron's old library card should be collected and either destroyed or sent back to their previous library.

The Morris County Library serves patrons moving to a community in Morris County that is not served by a Main local library (currently Netcong, Victory Gardens, Boonton Township or Mine Hill).

Patron Confidentiality

Main libraries operate in compliance with the New Jersey Confidentiality of Library Records Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:73-43.1).

In accordance with Main's mission and vision, the purpose of Main is to promote and enhance access to library materials and information resources for its member libraries.

Lending Policies

Standard Patron Checkout Limits

- Library patrons have a checkout limit of 100 items.
- There is a limit of 25 concurrent active holds on a patron's account at any one time.
- Library patrons whose accounts have generated fines or fees greater than \$10.00 are blocked from borrowing additional items.
- Main will enable the auto-renew function in the integrated library system during Q1 of 2021.

Digital Patron Checkout Limits

- Library patrons have a checkout limit of 10 items in the Main eBook/eAudiobook platform.
- There is a limit of 5 concurrent active holds on a patron's account at any one time in the Main eBook/eAudiobook platform.
- Library patrons whose accounts have generated fines or fees greater than \$10.00 are blocked from borrowing additional items.
- Library patrons may check out items for 14 days at a time on the Main eBook/eAudiobook platform.

Overriding Owning Library Policies

No member library or staff person should override renewal limits or loan periods on materials that are owned by other member libraries. If a patron requests an exception, a library staff member may call the owning library and ask for one, but the owning library reserves the right to restrict the exceptions that they allow.

Reciprocal Borrowing

Member libraries may withhold select special collections from reciprocal borrowing (see Bylaws section IV.C). Examples of such special collections include museum passes, equipment and unique historical documents. Collections of ordinary books or audio-visual materials may not be withheld from reciprocal borrowing.

At the owning library's discretion, to accommodate local demand for new items, member libraries may make newly released items non-holdable or local holds only for up to two months after the First Availability Date of the item. Thereafter, at least one copy of each title must be made available to fill holds within the consortium.

If a library patron requests an item from another library that has exceeded the non-holdable time limit, the patron's home library may contact the owning library and request either that the item be modified to holdable, or that the owning library place a copy-level hold for the requesting patron.

Response Time for Loan Requests

Member libraries must generate a Pick List at least five days per week. If a member library cannot fill a request from the Pick List, they should check to see whether their library holds the only copy of the item. If they are the only holder and unable to fill the request, they should notify the requesting patron's home library.

Bulk Loan Requests

Occasionally, libraries may wish to request multiple copies of a book for a library book club. In order to distribute the load among multiple libraries, these bulk requests should be made at the copy level, not at the title level. The requesting library may choose to use one library card to place all holds, then check the copies out to individual patrons when the copies arrive in delivery.

Overdues

- Libraries have the right to charge overdue/replacement fines in accordance with preconceived rate codes.
- Libraries have the right to not charge overdue fines to their own patrons for their own items.
- Libraries who choose to not charge overdue fines to their own patrons for their own items shall not waive overdue fines for items owned by other libraries.
- The maximum overdue fine is \$5.00 per item. Individual libraries may set a lower limit on their own materials, at their discretion.
- For all items, the overdue fine policy of the owning library prevails, regardless of the fine policy that is in effect at the library where an item is returned. The library where an overdue fine is collected keeps the fine money.

Purchasing Policies

Physical Materials Purchasing

Member libraries are empowered and encouraged to make purchases for their collections that are reflective of their communities.

eBook/eAudiobook Purchasing

Due to the per unit costliness, high patron demand, and comparatively low supply of one-copy-one-use (OCOU) eBooks and eAudiobooks, each member library is expected to make at least minimum purchases in their respective “private collection” of the shared service to ensure all patrons have equitable access to these materials.

The annual total purchasing thresholds require libraries to purchase whichever of the following figures is greater:

Fiscal Year	Minimum Spending % Threshold of Physical Materials Budget	Minimum Spending Threshold
2021	5%	\$1,000
2022	7.5%	\$1,250
2023	10%	\$1,500
2024	12.5%	\$2,000

Beginning on July 1, 2021, a quarterly report will be run to track how much OCOU content each library has purchased year to date. Price per Unit (PPU) purchasing and purchasing in services not shared with the consortium does not count toward the aforementioned minimum thresholds.

If a library does not meet minimum purchasing thresholds, the following progressive actions will take place:

1. After one quarter of missing target thresholds, the library director will be notified.
2. After two or more consecutive quarters of missing target thresholds, the library will be billed the annualized difference in the amount of purchases that were not made.

Any funds collected in this fashion will be used to add content to the Main “central collection.”

1. If a library does not pay this invoiced amount after 30 days, the library director will be notified that their “private collection” will be removed from the Main eBook/eAudiobook system in another 30 days.
2. If a library does not pay the invoiced amount after 60 days, the library’s “private collection” will be removed from the Main eBook/eAudiobook system. The library will then be responsible to pay for any annual platform fees charged by the vendor.
3. Removed libraries may reapply for readmission into the Main eBook/eAudiobook system if:
 - a period of at least one year since removal has taken place;
 - all previous invoices have been paid;
 - the minimum threshold for the time period while disconnected has been paid.

Lost, Damaged, Claimed Returned Policies

Lost or Damaged Items & Claimed Returned

All lost or damaged items, or items claimed returned, must be handled through the owning library. A Main damaged/missing form should be filled out and enclosed with the item upon return to the owning library. The form can be found in the Main Circulation Manual.

- Fees for lost items must be remanded to the owning library.
- Replacement copies may be accepted at the owning library's discretion only. Patron's home library should not accept a replacement copy in lieu of lost fees without checking with owning library first.
- The owning library is responsible for contacting the borrowing patron and sending a bill.
- If a patron recovers a lost item that has already been paid for, lost fees may be refunded at the discretion of the owning library.
- The fee for a lost item is set by the owning library at the time the item was added to the system (otherwise, the default price is used).
- If a bill for a lost item is not resolved, the owning library may opt to send the library patron who is responsible for the lost item to the owning library's collection agent.

If an item is returned damaged and it belongs to another library, do not discharge the item. It should stay on the patron's record.

If a patron claims to have returned an item, the patron's home library may contact the owning library to negotiate a solution. Only an owning library can mark its own materials claimed returned.

Amendments

The Policy Manual may be amended at a meeting of the general membership by a two-thirds vote of those Voting Representatives present. The amendment must be sent to the membership in writing at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

Appendix A: Member Libraries

Below is a list of Main members. For additional information about member libraries, their hours of operation, and contact information, please visit the Main staff website.

Bernards Township Library
 Bernardsville Public Library
 Boonton-Holmes Public Library
 Butler Public Library
 Library of the Chathams
 Chester Library
 Denville Public Library
 Dover Free Public Library
 East Hanover Public Library
 Florham Park Public Library
 Hackettstown Free Public Library
 Hunterdon County Library
 Kemmerer Library (Harding Township)
 Jefferson Township Public Library
 Kinnelon Public Library
 Lincoln Park Public Library
 Long Hill Township Library
 Madison Public Library
 Mendham Borough Library
 Mendham Township Library
 Montville Township Public Library
 Morris County Library
 Morris Plains Public Library
 Morristown/Morris Township Library
 Mount Arlington Public Library
 Mount Olive Public Library
 Mountain Lakes Public Library
 Mountainside Public Library
 New Providence Memorial Library
 Parsippany-Troy Hills Public Library
 Pequannock Township Public Library
 Randolph Township Public Library
 Raritan Public Library
 Riverdale Public Library
 Rockaway Borough Public Library
 Rockaway Township Free Public Library
 Roxbury Public Library
 Washington Township Public Library
 Wharton Public Library
 Whippanong Library (Hanover Township)