

Section:	Operational	Chairperson's Signature:	
Board Motion Number:	16-2022	Date Approved:	July 11, 2022
Pages:	7	Revision Dates:	March 18, 2025, February 17, 2026

MEMBERSHIP AND CIRCULATION POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Oxford County Library provides a wide variety of lending material available in both physical and digital formats. These items are freely available to all those who hold an Oxford County Library card.

The Library ensures fair conditions and equitable access for library membership and borrowing privileges, while protecting resources in a responsible manner and in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44.

Oxford County Library Board eliminated the collection of overdue fines for materials in 2018.

PURPOSE

This policy serves to provide parameters for membership, borrowing of materials and all other related services at the Oxford County Library.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Library Membership

- 1.1 Oxford County Library provides free membership to all Oxford County residents. Staff will request identification with the applicant's current address (photo ID preferred).
- 1.2 By obtaining a library card, members agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the Library. Members are responsible for any items borrowed on the card, until a card is reported lost or stolen.
- 1.3 Oxford County Library participates in reciprocal borrowing agreements with other libraries in Southwestern Ontario. Libraries included in this agreement are:
 - 1.3.1 Brant County Public Library
 - 1.3.2 Elgin County Public Library
 - 1.3.3 Middlesex County Library
 - 1.3.4 Norfolk County Public Library

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1.3.5 Region of Waterloo Library

1.3.6 London Public Library

1.3.7 St. Mary's Public Library

1.3.8 Stratford Public Library

1.3.9 Woodstock Public Library

1.4 Residents of communities in the reciprocal borrowing agreement are welcome to apply for an Oxford County Library card. Residents of Oxford County who hold an Oxford County Library card may also visit any of the above listed libraries with identification and their Oxford County Library card to obtain a membership at that location. Proof of library membership at the individual's local library system will be required.

1.5 Non-residents who do not live in areas with reciprocal borrowing privileges may apply for a library card by presenting proof of home address and of library membership at their local system.

1.6 Children and teens are eligible for an Oxford County Library card.

1.6.1 Parents/Caregivers may apply on behalf of their child, up to and including the age of 13.

1.6.2 Teens, 14 years old and over, may apply for a library card without parental consent, provided they can provide their own identification. Examples of identification include a student ID card, a bill or recent piece of mail with name and address, a report card.

1.6.3 Library card applications may be made available for teachers and/or care providers to have cards prepared for children in anticipation of class visits and/or tours. Applications for children ages 13 and under must be signed by a parent/caregiver in order for the card to be issued.

1.7 Employees of Oxford County daycare centres, institutions, schools, agencies, organizations and supportive housing facilities may apply for a community card. Community card applications require the signature or letter of intent of an administrator, manager or principal of the organization who is authorized to accept financial responsibility for the organization. The employee seeking a community card must present proof of affiliation with the group or institution.

Community cards carry additional conditions for use:

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1.7.1 Community cards cannot be used for personal use.

1.7.2 Oxford County Library reserves the right to impose limitations on the amount and type of material available, or to shorten/extend the loan period.

1.7.3 Library media and digital collections are for personal use only, unless otherwise stated. Organizations that wish to make use of Library media and digital collections must obtain a public performance license to use these collections in a public setting.

1.8 Library cards expire two years from the date of registration and may be renewed with verification of the card holder's current address. A card may not be renewed if the account status is Blocked or Barred.

1.9 A replacement fee may be charged for any lost or damaged card.

2.0 **Borrowing Privileges and Responsibilities**

2.1 Equal access to library services and materials depends on the reasonable use of such services and materials by all members.

2.2 **Conditions of Membership**

2.2.1 Library members shall:

2.2.1.1 Present a valid Oxford County library card when borrowing material or requesting account information;

2.2.1.2 Report any changes to their and/or their dependent's information as soon as possible. Lost or stolen cards should be reported to any branch immediately;

2.2.1.3 Pay any fees incurred for damage or lost material.

2.3 **Borrowing**

2.3.1 Loan periods and lending limits are posted on the Library website.

2.3.2 Extended loan period requests may be granted, subject to staff discretion, and is based on the number and types of material available.

2.3.3 The Library reserves the right to limit the loan period and/or number of items borrowed based on local demand and material supply.

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2.3.4 Materials may be returned to any Oxford County Library branch.

2.3.5 The Library automatically renews all eligible materials until items reach their maximum renewal limit. Members may opt-out of this service.

2.3.6 Items not eligible for renewal include:

2.3.6.1 Items with holds

2.3.6.2 Quick Picks

2.3.6.3 DVD Binge Boxes

2.3.6.4 Park Passes

2.3.6.5 Other specialty collections

2.3.7 The Library reminds members to return overdue materials through a series of mailed and/or emailed notices resulting in a bill for lost material after 12 weeks.

2.4 Holds

2.4.1 Members may place a hold on any item owned by the Library or on order.

2.4.2 Members may place holds via the Library's online catalogue, in person at any branch, or by telephone during open hours.

2.4.3 When a hold is available, the member will be notified by email, text message or auto phone service. Hold materials are held at the requested branch location for ten days. If items are not picked-up within the ten, the hold will be removed.

2.4.4 Members may cancel or suspend holds via the Library's online catalogue, in person at any branch or by phone during open hours.

2.5 Lost / Damaged Items

2.5.1 Members shall report lost or damaged items at the earliest possible opportunity.

2.5.2 Charges for lost or damaged items are based on the cost of each individual item. At the discretion of staff, a lost or damage fee may be reduced or waived depending on the age of the item and the circumstances of the situation.

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2.5.3 Repeated loss, damage or misuse of material will result in the suspension of privileges or exclusion from the Library.

2.5.4 Replacement copies or donations in lieu of payment will not be accepted unless approved by the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate.

2.5.5 Refunds will be issued for lost items returned to the Library in good condition within six months after the charges for the item have been paid. Lost and paid material charges will first be applied to any outstanding charges on the member's account and any remaining balance will be refunded.

2.5.6 Refunds of \$10 or less will be issued by branch staff in cash or as a credit on the member's account. Amounts over \$10 will be issued by cheque.

2.6 **Suspension of Borrowing Privileges**

2.6.1 Borrowing privileges will be suspended when cardholders have fees and/or overdue materials in excess of the maximum allowable amount.

2.6.1.1 Adult Card Maximums:

2.6.1.1.1 Ten overdue items

2.6.1.1.2 \$30 or more in fees

2.6.1.2 Child / Teen Card Maximums:

2.6.1.2.1 Twenty overdue items

2.6.1.2.2 \$50 or more in fees

2.6.2 Accounts suspended due to overdue items or outstanding balances will be reactivated when the total number of overdue items or balance owing falls below the threshold.

3.0 **Interlibrary Loans (ILLO)**

3.1 Oxford County Library is committed to resource-sharing with other Libraries in order to help meet members' educational and entertainment needs. To meet those needs, the Library participates in the Ontario Library Service's Resource Sharing Group.

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- 3.2 Oxford County Library members with a valid library card may request the loan of items not in the Library's collection through ILLO at any branch or online using the requested module.
- 3.3 The Library limits the number of requests per member in order to keep the service as cost effective as possible.
- 3.4 The Library may limit the formats available for lending/borrowing through this service.
- 3.5 The Library will not borrow items that have a financial penalty imposed by the lending institution.
- 3.6 Items borrowed for a member through the ILLO service will have a standard loan period, unless otherwise specified by the lending institution.
- 3.7 ILLO items are not available for automatic renewal. Renewal of borrowed items are at the discretion of the lending institution.
- 3.8 Members with overdue ILLO items will be subject to a suspension of borrowing privileges until the ILLO item is returned.
- 3.9 The loss of an ILLO item will result in the termination of ILLO borrowing privileges.
- 3.10 ILLO items not picked up within ten days after being notified may result in the loss of ILLO privileges.

4.0 Confidentiality of Personal Information

- 4.1 Oxford County Library respects the privacy of all members and will keep all information related to membership confidential in accordance with the Library's *Privacy and Access to Personal Information Policy*.
- 4.2 Identification documents are used to verify name, address and date of birth only when applying for a library card. No other information on the document(s) presented is kept or recorded.
- 4.3 Confidentiality of all personal information held by Oxford County Library in matters relating to lending services is governed by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, and related County of Oxford policies, including: *Anti-Spam Policy* and *Access and Privacy Policy*.

5.0 References and Related Documents

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5.1 Oxford County Library Policies

5.1.1 Oxford County Library. (2022, September). *Privacy and Access to Personal Information Policy.*

5.2 Oxford County By-Laws and Policies

5.2.1 County of Oxford. (2014, August). *Anti-Spam Policy.*

5.2.2 County of Oxford. (2019, November). *Access and Privacy Policy.*

5.3 Legislation

5.3.1 *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56

5.3.2 *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44