

## **Borrower Rights and Responsibilities**

*Mission: The Amesbury Public Library, under the authority of its Board of Trustees, provides safe space for lifelong exploration and learning, public understanding, freedom of expression, and experiencing beauty and wonder through the best possible resources, facilities, and services for our community.*

*Vision: The Amesbury Public Library fosters connection in the community through learning, inclusivity, respect, responsible stewardship, kindness, and joy.*

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All residents of Massachusetts are entitled to borrowing privileges in any public library in the Commonwealth. The Amesbury Public Library is a member of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC), which has its own policies that inform this policy. A person is not required to have a library card to attend programs or use the building including the public computers and other public technology resources.

### **Borrower Rights**

The Amesbury Public Library issues library cards to both individuals and local institutions. A library card or picture ID is required to check out materials at the library. The library card must be presented physically or accessed through the library app where a scannable version is available. The exception being children under the age of 18; in lieu of their library card they may be asked for their contact information to be looked up on demand. The library assumes a card in hand as consent by the cardholder to use that card. The library does not have access to the borrowing histories of any patron, no matter if a patron chooses to enact this feature or not through their online account. Patron account information is protected by MGL Chapter 78, Section 7.

#### *Residents of Amesbury*

An Amesbury Public Library card is free to residents of Amesbury at any age. Patrons younger than 14 years of age must have a parent or legal guardian present to receive a library card. To obtain a physical card, a patron must present verification of name and address at the library. An electronic card may be obtained using the online application. Those who receive an electronic card must bring proof of address to the library on their next visit to complete the card registration process.

Amesbury Public Library cards expire three years from the date of issue. To renew the card, proof of address must be presented in person at the library or via an online renewal form. Those renewals submitted online must bring proof of address to the library on their next visit to complete the verification.

An Amesbury Public Library card entitles the user to off-site access to a selection of online resources curated by the library, such as e-books, research databases, and more.

#### *Residents of Other MVLC and Non-MVLC Communities*

Library cards from all other Massachusetts communities with certified public libraries may be used at the Amesbury Public Library. Alternatively, with proof of address, a general MVLC library card may be issued.

Other MVLC library cards are subject to the renewal dates governed by their home library.

Non-MVLC library cards expire three years from date of creation. Proof of address is required for renewal.

### *Out of State Residents*

The applicant must meet one of the following qualifications:

1. Own property in Amesbury. The card will have a one-year expiration date and may be renewed. A current property tax bill must be presented at time of application and renewal.
2. Own a business in Amesbury. The card will have a one-year expiration date and may be renewed. Proof of ownership must be presented at time of application and renewal.
3. Student of Amesbury High School who is a South Hampton, N.H. resident. The card expires upon the graduation date of the student. Proof of attendance at Amesbury High School must be presented at the time of application.
4. Employed by the City of Amesbury. The card will have a one-year expiration date and may be renewed. Proof of employment with the City must be presented at time of application and renewal.

### *Institutional Cards*

Nursing homes, businesses, daycare centers and schools located in Amesbury may have an Amesbury library card with a one-year expiration date. A signed letter from the institution on letterhead or from an email address associated with the person in charge of that institution must be presented in order to obtain an institutional card. The same privileges apply to these cardholders as all other borrowers.

### **Borrower Responsibilities**

- Cardholders are responsible for all materials checked out on their card.
- Cardholders agree to return items on or before their due dates.
- Cardholders are responsible for lost or damaged items.
  - If an item is not returned before 49 days have passed after the due date, the item is assumed to be lost and a bill is sent to the cardholder. If the item is subsequently returned in acceptable condition, the bill will be removed from the account.
  - When deemed appropriate by the Assistant Director or staff acting on their behalf, a replacement of brand-new items may be accepted in lieu of payment for an item that is lost or damaged.
  - Charge for a replacement is at discretion of the Library Director or staff acting on their behalf.
  - Bills for damage to another library's item are subject to the owning library's rules.
- Cardholders agree to notify the library of any changes to their address, phone number, or other contact information.

### **Borrowing Rules**

- Items remain on hold for seven days. If they are not picked up within those seven days, they are returned to the owning library.
- Most materials are eligible for renewals. Some collections may be exempt from renewal.
- There are no limits to the number of items that a person can check out for most materials.
- The Library went fine free in 2023. No items accrue overdue fines.

### **Delinquency Thresholds**

If a patron owes more than the \$20 on their account as a result of fines, replacement charges, or other fees, borrowing privileges will be suspended until the charges are paid to be below the MVLC threshold. Borrowing privileges will also be suspended if a patron has more than 20 overdue items.

### **Decertified Libraries**

The Amesbury Public Library upholds the importance of maintaining the minimum standards of public library service required for a community to be certified by the Massachusetts Board of

Library Commissioners (MBLC). Communities that do not meet MBLC standards and are not granted a waiver are decertified. The Amesbury Public Library does not lend to cardholders of municipalities with decertified libraries, however, those cardholders do have access to the Amesbury Public Library materials for use in the library as required by 605 CMR 4.01(I), which states that all residents of the Commonwealth shall have access to its reading and reference rooms under the same conditions as residents of the community.