



7.0 | Policies & Procedures – Circulation

Mission Statement

The mission of the Circulation Department is to provide the quick and efficient access of materials to the greatest number of people in a welcoming, interactive environment that respects diversity and ensures privacy of patron information.

7.1 | Applying for a Library Card

Library cards are available free of charge when an Online Borrower Registration Form is filled out, then verified in person with the required documentation. A parent or legal guardian must verify the account of a juvenile cardholder, 17 years or younger.

To get a library card:

- Fill out and submit the Online Borrower Registration Form, available on the Library's website at <https://mcallenlibrary.net/services/borrowing/>.
- Upon submission of this form, visit any McAllen Public Library location and present a government-issued identification to complete the registration process.
- Account verification requires that you present both your government-issued photo ID (U.S., Canada, or Mexico), and proof of your current U.S. mailing address, such as a utility bill, mailed envelope, or rental agreement.
- You must register a PIN # and an email address for all new card registrations and card renewals.
- Borrowing privileges must be renewed annually with a government issued ID. Account parameters, such as address, phone number, and email address, will be updated annually.
- All patron cards must be renewed annually with a government-issued ID and proof of your current mailing address.
- Cards not used for three years will be considered inactive and will be purged from the patron database.
- Children's accounts will be linked to their parent's or responsible adult's patron account. All linked accounts will be blocked if any one account in the linked accounts is not in good standing.
- Cardholders whose patron accounts are not in good standing will be blocked from logging into any public computer station using their library card. Either your library card or government-issued photo ID is required for all transactions concerning library books and materials. Your photo will be taken and saved to your account at the time of registration or renewal to protect you from unauthorized use of your library card. Each registered borrower assumes full responsibility for the materials and fines charged to the card.

Card Fees

- Address change and name change: no fee
- Replacement card(s): \$1.00

7.2 | Loan Guidelines

Borrowers may have a total of up to 25 items on their card at one time. There is a maximum of 10 audio/visual items you may have on your card at any one time in any combination of the following, with a limit of three (3) renewals.

- Books (hardbacks or paperbacks) - 25 per card
- DVDs & Blu-Rays - 6 per card
- CDs & Audio Books - 4 per card

- eBooks – 6 per card
- Video Games – 2 per household (Borrower must be 17 years & older and have a library card in good standing from any library that is part of the Hidalgo County Library System.)
- Book Club Kits (Lit Kits) – 1 per card

7.3 | Fines and Loan Periods

Fines apply as listed below. Overdue notices are sent via email for items 14 days overdue at intervals of 14 days, 28 days, and 42 days. Borrowing privileges will be blocked if fines equal \$3.00 or more. Patrons will be billed for items not returned. If an item is not returned in 30 days, the item is considered lost and the full replacement cost will be charged to the patron. The patron will be notified of the full replacement cost. Delinquent accounts may result in legal action.

| <u>Type of Item</u> | <u>Loan Period</u> | <u>Fine (per item)</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Circulating books | 3 weeks | \$0.10 per day |
| CDs, audiobooks | 2 weeks | \$0.10 per day |
| DVD/Blu-Ray | 1 week | \$0.50 per day |
| Video games | 2 weeks | \$1.00 per day |
| eBooks | 2 weeks | no fine |

7.4 | No Late Fines for Children's and Teens' Materials

At McAllen Public Library, we believe in promoting a nurturing and accessible environment for children to foster a love for reading and learning. To support this mission and ensure that all children have equal opportunities to explore the vast world of literature, we have implemented a fine-free policy for children's and teens' materials. Effective March 23, 2023, the following guidelines shall govern the borrowing of children's materials from our library:

All materials designated as "Children's," "Juvenile," or "YA" will be exempt from accruing late fines. This policy applies to books, audiobooks, DVDs, and any other items specifically designated for children's, juvenile, or YA.

7.5 | Payment of Fines

The Library will accept the following forms of payment for fines accrued:

- Credit cards and debit cards.

7.6 | Returning Items

Items checked out from any McAllen Public Library location may be returned to any of our three locations (Main Library, Lark Branch, and Palm View Branch).

There is a book drop accessible from the exterior of all library locations. Library patrons are encouraged to use the drive-up book drop at Main Library, located on the north side of the building (Orchid Street). The 24-hour drive-up book drop is programmed to receive and check in library materials when items are inserted one at a time. Children's items that circulate in oversize bags may not be returned in the 24-hour drive-up book drop. Patrons must return those items inside the building.

7.7 | **Managing the Library Account**

Patrons have access to their personal library account by clicking "Login" on McAllen Public Library's online catalog. Enter the Library ID, which is the 6-digit library card number (starts with a "P"), and PIN. Patrons who forget their PIN may visit the Circulation Desk of any library location. Library staff may not assign a PIN by phone. Patrons may review items currently checked out on their library card, overdue and lost items, and outstanding fines. (Fines will not be posted to your online account until items are returned or renewed.) A subset of the "My Account" functionality is available through the LS2 Mobile Android and iPhone apps.

- Items checked out are automatically renewed, as long as they are not overdue and not on hold for someone else.
- Patrons may review the status of titles they have placed on hold and cancel holds on items they no longer need.

7.8 | **Renewing Items**

Most items will be renewed automatically or by the following means:

- By accessing the account through the online catalog before the due date.
- By bringing them in person to the Library.
- By telephone (during operating hours) with your library card number.
- By accessing the account through the Library's app.

Materials may not be renewed if there are pending holds or reserves. A fine will post to the account after renewing an overdue item.

7.9 | **Requesting Items**

Patrons may place a hold on an item by logging into their account through the online catalog.

- Select the library location where they want the item sent.
- Patrons will be notified by text or email when the item is available for pick-up.

7.10 | Confidentiality

The policy of McAllen Public Library is to preserve the privacy of its patrons' circulation, borrower registration, and usage records, and to treat them with confidentiality. Such records include patron registration data, circulation records, overdue and reserve records, and any data that contains information linking a specific patron to materials or services used. Each patron has individual control over his or her borrower's card. Presentation of the card permits access to information about the borrower's current circulation record. Any employee or volunteer who discloses information in violation of this policy commits an offense and is subject to disciplinary action.

7.11 | In-House Laptop Lending Program

The aim of the In-House Laptop Lending Program is to provide patrons with access to technology resources that support their educational, informational, and research needs. The program offers temporary access to laptops for on-site use, empowering patrons to engage in digital learning, research and communication while at the Library's premises. This initiative aligns with the Library's commitment to promoting information access and technological literacy within the community it serves.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for the In-house Laptop Lending Program at any McAllen Public Library location, an individual must:

- Have a McAllen Public Library card in good standing.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Present a valid Texas Driver's License or Texas ID, which will be held with the signed Borrower's Responsibility Agreement for the duration of the loan. (The Driver's License or ID will be returned upon check-in of the borrowed laptop.)

Borrowing Guidelines:

- Laptops can be borrowed for four (4) hour increments with the possibility of one renewal. Upon check-in and check-out, the laptop is inspected, and all files are erased after the computer is shut down to protect user data.
- Laptops must not be left unattended and should be handled with care to avoid damage or theft.
- Borrowers are prohibited from installing software or altering the laptop in any way. Any changes to the hardware or software configuration of the laptop may result in charges or suspension of borrowing privileges.
- Upon return, laptops will be inspected for any damage or unauthorized alterations. Borrowers are responsible for any damage incurred during the loan period and may be charged for repair or replacement costs.
- Any technical problems or damage to the laptop discovered during the loan period should be reported to Library Staff immediately.

- Renewals may be allowed if no other patrons are waiting to borrow a laptop, but this is subject to library discretion based on demand.
- Borrowers must sign a Borrower Responsibility Agreement acknowledging these terms and their responsibility for the laptop during the loan period.

Laptop Return and Late Fees:

- Borrowers must return laptops to a designated Service Desk at the end of the borrowing period.
- Ensure that all accessories, such as power cords and mice, are returned with the laptop.
- An hourly late fee of \$2.00 will be applied for every hour the laptop is overdue.