

A. Registration

All borrowers must be registered to check out materials. Library accounts are issued immediately to those with a photo identification and proof of current residential address at the time of application. A post office box is not a sufficient address. Mail may be used as proof of address if it has been postmarked within two weeks of the current date.

Persons eligible for library cards must be a resident of Melbourne, Rhodes, or unincorporated Marshall County. Also, persons living within the service area of an Iowa library, approved for reciprocal borrowing through the Open Access Program (check at the Front Desk for confirmation).

Children who fit the residence requirements and are at least 5 years old are eligible for a library card according to the discretion of their parents or legal guardian. Parental signature is required for persons under age 14. Responsibility for a child's selection and return of materials, and any fines or charges accrued on the child's card, is held by the parent or guardian of the child.

The Library requires a probationary period of 6 months on new accounts. New accounts have a limitation of items for checkout within those 6 months (see section B).

Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library account. The following statement will be printed on the registration form for the patron acceptance:

My signature on this card indicates my agreement to follow the Library's rules and policies in exchange for access to the Library's collections and services. I accept responsibility for all the materials charged to this account, including fines and fees assessed to it. I will report as soon as possible a change of address or telephone number.

Account Holder Signature _____ *Date* _____

Materials cannot be checked out until an account is issued. Parents/guardians may check out materials for their children under their account, understanding that they are responsible for damage, loss, or late fees. Siblings and unrelated patrons may not use each other's accounts. This reduces the number of damaged, lost, and late materials that go unresolved.

All library accounts expire after 2 years. In order to renew a library account, patrons must produce identification and must clear all outstanding fines and bills.

Programs, computers, WiFi, and other services/resources remain open to all visitors with or without an account.

B. Materials for Loan & Loan Periods

Materials	Loan Period	Renewals Allowed	Holds Allowed	Overdue Fines
Books	3 weeks	2	y	Replacement
Audio	3 weeks	2	y	Replacement
Periodicals	1 week	2	y	Replacement
Movies	5 days	2	y	Replacement

New account holders are on a probationary period for 6 months to limit material loss. During this time, new patrons may check out up to 5 items, including 1 movie, with standard renewals; no inter-library loans allowed.

Each item checked out, when overdue, is fined at the cost of replacement and processing unless the item is returned. Return of overdue materials will remove fines. Library staff may nullify or forgive fines as they see fit. For example, fines may be nullified in the case of staff error, in return for volunteer work, or one time only for excessive fines.

The director may establish the loan period for special collections, materials which are temporarily in great demand, such as for student projects, or materials not specified above.

There is a 15 item checkout limit per account: up to 12 books and 3 videos. Special exceptions may be made at staff discretion, such as for homeschoolers. Please ask the Director for approval of homeschooler account status.

Reference books & special materials are available for use only in the Library.

C. Reserves/Holds

Patrons with valid library accounts may place a hold on circulating items on which reserves are allowed. The patron will be notified when a reserved item is available. No renewals are placed for items on hold or reserve by another patron.

D. Returning Materials

Items are to be returned by closing time of the due date. You can return your library materials to the library Circulation Desk, or to the book return drop box located in the front wall of the library, left of the main entrance door.

Items returned to the book drop must be inserted fully into the slot and the slot must be closed securely. This protects materials from weather and animal activity.

Only Melbourne Public Library materials may be returned here. Please bring donations and non-library items to the front desk during open hours.

E. Suggestions for Purchase

Patrons may suggest items to be purchased for the Library's collections. Patrons recommending materials will be notified when the item is available for check-out. If the item will not be purchased, the item may be requested through InterLibrary Loan.

F. InterLibrary Loan

If an item you want is not available at the Melbourne Public Library, library staff can Interlibrary Loan (ILL) the item for you, i.e. borrow the item from another library. To use ILL, patrons must be in good standing (no outstanding fines) and outside of the probationary period of new membership. You may either ask staff to input the request at the front desk with the title, author, format, and/or other publication info, or may enter a request themselves by creating an account at the ILL website: <https://ill2.silo.lib.ia.us>.

G. Overdue Notice & Theft

- 1 week overdue – reminder by patron-preferred method of contact (phone call, email, text)
- 2 weeks overdue – reminder by patron-preferred method of contact (phone call, email, text)
- 1 month overdue – certified letter sent to patron
- 2 months overdue – Melbourne Police hand deliver letter to address

Materials not returned after 2 months of being overdue are subject to criminal action in accordance with **Iowa Code 714.5**.

H. Damaged Materials

If materials are damaged so as to be judged by the library as being unsuitable for the collection, the patron must pay the replacement cost. If the patron does not resolve this issue after verbal warning in person or by phone, a notice of these charges will be sent to the borrower.

Delinquency notices will be sent first as a letter, then as a letter delivered by Melbourne Police.

A sample of the notice follows:

Dear _____,

At the time a library patron borrows materials from the public library collection, the patron assumes the responsibility for the care and timely return of the materials. Recently materials checked out on your library account were returned to the library damaged beyond the point of being useable in the Library's collection. The titles and costs of these materials are listed below:

_____ § _____

Your assistance in clearing this matter promptly will be appreciated and will be necessary in order to retain your borrowing privileges. Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this matter.

*Sincerely,
(Director)*

I. Restricted Borrowers

A patron with a valid Library account is restricted from borrowing any library materials if he/she has outstanding fines.

Restrictions may also be placed on users that violate the Patron Code of Conduct or users that are habitually late returning materials at the staff's discretion. We recommend all users review the policy. Questions or requests to remove restrictions may be brought up with the Director.

J. Open Records & Confidentiality

As specified in Iowa Codes 22.2 and 22.7.13, "Every person shall have the right to examine and copy public records... (however) the following records shall be kept confidential unless otherwise ordered by the court, by the lawful custodian of the records, or by another person duly authorized to release such information... The records of the library which, by themselves or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron..."

The Melbourne Public Library adheres strictly to all sections of this Statute regarding the protection of the confidentiality of its users.

K. References

This policy has been developed in concert with the following:

- **State Code of Iowa, Section 702.22**, which defines library materials & equipment;
- **State Code of Iowa, Section 714.5**, which relates to the theft of library materials;
- **State Code of Iowa, Section 22.2**, which relates to the right to examine public records with exceptions;
- **State Code of Iowa, Section 22.7.13**, which relates to the types of public records to be kept confidential;
- Melbourne Public Library policies on Patron Code of Conduct Policy and the Internet & Computer Policy.

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