



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

12.

**Circulation & Collection Use (including Fees & Fines)
Policy – 2007 Recommendations**

Date:	October 15, 2007
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend changes to the Circulation and Collection Use Policy. Recommended changes arise from three elements: the introduction of the new integrated library system in early 2008; a review of strategies for increasing access to collections; and the increased costs to provide some services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. Approves the revised Circulation and Collection Use (including Fees and Fines) Policy (Attachment 1).

Implementation Points

Appropriate notification to borrowers, including bookmarks, flyers and online publicity, will be available six weeks prior to the implementation of changes. All staff will be informed of the revisions and an updated Circulation & Collection Use Policy will be distributed to all locations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The costs associated with the implementation of this Policy will be included in the Library's existing operating budget. Increases in fee charges are not expected to result in a substantial revenue increase.

The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

The Toronto Public Library Board last approved revisions to the Circulation and Collection Use Policy at its meeting of April 4, 2005.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Circulation and Collection Use Policy applies to all users of all Toronto Public Libraries. It covers activities relating to the registration of Library users and the borrowing and use of Library collections and services. It sets the conditions and use of the library card; the borrowing privileges, responsibilities and restrictions; and a schedule of fines and fees.

The Policy is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that its component policies continue to provide an effective and relevant mechanism for making materials widely available to the community, for maximizing the use of collections and services, for facilitating requests for materials and for retrieving overdue materials.

COMMENTS

The Library is replacing its current automated library system which is scheduled to be available to the public in the first quarter of 2008. The new system's parameters have been set to meet the Circulation and Collection Use policies wherever possible. However, the system's current technology cannot enable all of the Library's prescribed limits for suspending borrowing privileges. Moreover, the capability of customers whose borrowing privileges have been suspended, to fully access library services will be more restricted than at present. It is anticipated that the vendor, Sirsi/Dynix, will be able to satisfactorily address these issues within the first year of implementation. To reduce the impact on customers until then, the following are temporary recommendations:

- The current threshold based on maximum length of time a user may have an overdue item or unpaid fines before service is blocked, be withdrawn. Under the current system, borrowing privileges are suspended when items are overdue more than six weeks.
- The threshold for the amount of fines or fees a borrower may owe the library before service is blocked includes both unpaid fines on returned materials and fines accruing on items not yet returned, as prescribed by the vendor. Currently, service is blocked only on fines assessed on returned materials. Therefore, it is recommended that this threshold be increased to \$30 in order to reduce the impact of the foregoing on customers.

In order to provide most customers with uninterrupted access to TPL services both remotely and in branch, the annual expiry date of customers' records will be extended to eighteen months. The vendor has confirmed a permanent satisfactory fix to this issue in 2008.

Public libraries across North America are reviewing circulation policies and parameters to find new and creative approaches to increasing access to collections within the finite resources available to them. Two strategies are recommended:

- a holds exempt with no renewals new release Feature DVD collection in all branches:
 - feature DVD's are very popular when they are newly released and well suited to browsing. The holds exempt, no renewals status provides customers with the opportunity to find popular releases on shelf at all locations and still provides the holds and renewals options after one year in the system.
- a 7 day loan period for circulating periodicals:
 - currently periodicals circulate for three weeks with two renewals giving customers the opportunity to have these materials on loan for nine weeks. The vast majority of periodicals used for reference and research are available electronically. Print periodicals, for the most part, have a short shelf life since customers are usually interested in current issues. A one week loan with two renewals for all print periodicals provides customers with the opportunity to borrow periodicals and have them on loan for a maximum of three weeks.

The following changes are recommended to update the wording of the Policy and accurately reflect the current situation:

- all references to the withdrawn Rocket e-books collections and associated devices be removed;
- the general term “eContent” be used to denote electronic collections;
- “current retail price” be changed to “invoiced price” as the replacement charge for lost or damaged items;
- the Interloan Policy statement include external libraries to acknowledge their customer status.

The Fines and Fees Schedule is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that all rates are reasonable, effective and in line with other large urban Canadian public libraries and in particular with other libraries in the GTA. This year the recommended changes to fees are intended to cover rising costs to provide services, to simplify and clarify the nature of the charges and to maintain parity with other libraries and institutions offering similar services.

- actual Interloan charges, if any, applied by the lending library be passed on in full to the Toronto Public Library borrower rather than the current flat fee of \$10.00;
- charges for Intellisearch services:
 - i. research fee - \$100/hr, minimum \$25 plus applicable Access copyright licence fees and/or actual database supplier charges;

- ii. document delivery, patent, trademark and obituary flat fees be subsumed into the general research fee category;
- iii. the rush fee, if applicable, be added to the research cost.

Adult fine rates were last increased on January 1, 2004 from \$0.25 to \$0.30 per overdue item per day. A separate teen fine rate of \$0.15 per overdue item per day was successfully introduced in September 2005. Currently, Toronto's fine rates are comparable to those of other GTA libraries. Adult fine rates range from \$0.25 in Vaughan and Brampton, to \$0.30 in Mississauga.

As the Library continues to undertake initiatives designed to increase circulation, it is recommended that, except for the Interloan and Intellisearch fees as detailed above, no further changes to the Fines and Fees Schedule take place this year.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Revised Circulation and Collection Use (including Fees and Fines) Policy