Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees
Policy Committee
July 12, 2023 at 9:00am
Program Room 1 – Hon. Karen B Johnson Central Library

Agenda

1. Proposed revisions to Lending Policy
2. Addition of American Library Association Bill of Rights Policy
3. Addition of American Library Association Code of Ethics
6.1 Lending
Issuance of Library Cards

Library cards may be issued to a person who:

1. presents current proof of identity and address;
2. is an adult or a child 13 years old and above;
3. has no outstanding financial or property obligation to the Library.
4. resides or owns property within Schenectady County or the service areas of the Mohawk Valley or Southern Adirondack Library Systems; or Resides or owns property outside of Schenectady County or the service areas of the Mohawk Valley or Southern Adirondack Library Systems and pays an annual fee to support this access to library services.
5. Non-residents of Schenectady county may apply for a library card and pay a fee.

Juvenile library cards may be issued to a child 5 - 12 years old who:

1. presents current proof of identity and address; or whose parent or adult caregiver provides proof of identity and address.
2. who resides within Schenectady County or the service areas of the Mohawk Valley or Southern Adirondack Library System;
3. has no outstanding financial or property obligation to the Library.

Library cards are non-transferrable.
Enforcement of the policy is the responsibility of the Director.

Approved 6/2019
Revised 3/24/2022 (New Borrower type discontinued)
6.1 Library Cards
Library cards may be issued at no cost to individuals who reside or own property within Schenectady County or the service areas of the Mohawk Valley or Southern Adirondack Library Systems.

Current proof of identity and address must be presented to obtain a library card. For minors who do not have their own current proof of identity and address, an adult caregiver may provide theirs on behalf of the minor.

SCPL card – issued to Schenectady County residents and taxpayers, those employed by Schenectady County, and those living in an unserved area of the Mohawk Valley Library System and provides full access to all SCPL resources.

Non-resident card – issued to individuals living outside the service areas of MVLS and SALS who pay a non-resident card fee. Provides full access to all SCPL resources.

MVLS/SALS card – issued to those who live in the service area of another Mohawk Valley Library System or a Southern Adirondack Library System library and provide the same level of access a card from the individual’s home library would provide.

Core card – Schenectady County residents or taxpayers who do not have current proof of address with them may be issued a card that allows limited access to some library services and provides time to bring in proof of eligibility. Upon presentation of current proof of address, these cards will be converted to a SCPL card.

E-card – issued to residents of the MVLS/SALS service areas at least 13 years of age and provides temporary, limited access to some library services, primarily digital collections.

Agency card – issued to agencies, businesses, organizations and schools located in Schenectady County and provides full access to all SCPL resources.
2.2 Library Bill of Rights

Schenectady County Public Library has adopted the following Bill of Rights as a set of guiding principles to support our policies and procedures:

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people’s privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

2.2 ALA Code of Ethics

Schenectady County Public Library has adopted the following code of ethics as a set of guiding principles to support our policies and procedures:

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.

II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.

III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.

IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.

V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.

VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.

VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.

VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted by the Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees July 27, 2023
IX. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; January 22, 2008; and June 29, 2021.