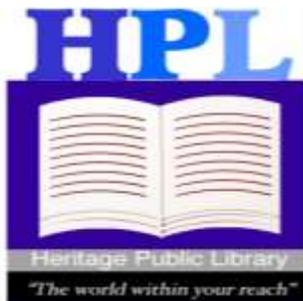


Heritage Public Library Policy Manual

Effective: September 16, 2013



HERITAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY
POLICY MANUAL

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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. History

Heritage Public Library (HPL), the public library for the counties of Charles City and New Kent, opened its doors to the public on August 4, 1981. It was the working entity of the Charles City-New Kent Heritage Foundation, Inc., which was organized as a non-stock corporation under the provisions of chapter 2 of Title 13.1 of the Code of Virginia and operated within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Articles of Incorporation were issued by the State Corporation Commission on June 11, 1981 and the 501 (c) (3) status was first determined by the Internal Revenue Service on June 7, 1982.

On May 20, 1985 the counties of Charles City and New Kent contracted with the Foundation “to establish, maintain and operate a free public regional library serving the participating localities...” Also in 1985, HPL was officially recognized by the State Library as the public library for the two counties.

In 2003 some legal anomalies in the original incorporating documents were brought to the Board’s attention. The Board decided to remedy the problem by amending the original Articles of Incorporation to dissolve the Foundation and make the Library, itself, the corporate legal entity under the name Heritage Public Library, Inc. Nothing else was affected by this change.

B. Library Governance

Heritage Public Library is governed by a Board of Trustees that is legally responsible for administering the Library in accordance with the Code of Virginia (section 42.1 – 43), the Articles of Incorporation, the Contractual Agreement, and the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees (which spells out the composition, duties, and responsibilities of the Board and its members).

II. MISSION AND ROLES

A. Mission Statement

The mission of the Heritage Public Library is to promote the development of independent, self-confident, and literate citizens through the provision of open access to cultural, intellectual, and informational resources.

III. OPERATIONS

A. General Services

HPL was founded and exists to provide public library service to the citizens of Charles City and New Kent counties. Library materials and services should be selected to reflect the interests, needs, and enlightenment of all members of the community, and all members of the community should be made to feel welcome and comfortable at the library. HPL offers its resources and services equally to all residents of Charles City and New Kent counties.

A. Censorship

All members of the Board of Trustees and all employees should accept the responsibility as appointed guardians of the people's freedom to read, to uphold the First Amendment to the Constitution by vigorously contesting any encroachment or assault upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large. Should anyone object to books or other materials offered by the Library, he or she should be encouraged to follow the "Request for Reconsideration of Materials" policy statement outlined later in this manual.

The Library adheres to the policies and principles as outlined by the American Library Association's *Code of Ethics* and *Library Bill of Rights*.

B. Library Cards

- a. Registration for a library card is required to borrow material. Applicants must furnish in writing their current, correct Charles City or New Kent home mailing address and telephone number. If the applicant has no phone number available for this purpose, or refuses to give one for privacy reasons, the Library Director may use personal discretion in waiving this requirement. Library cards will be issued and borrowing privileges extended at the time of application upon presentation of a valid driver's license, or other photo identification card showing the applicant's address.
- b. No fee shall be charged for the initial card; however, two dollars (\$2.00) will be charged for replacement of the card. Those people who own and pay taxes on property in Charles City or New Kent counties, even though their primary residence may be located elsewhere, are considered residents as long as they provide proof of ownership.
- c. Residents of other counties who work in Charles City or New Kent Counties are eligible for library cards.
- d. A \$5.00 fee will be charged for people wishing to obtain a library card if they do not live or work in Charles City or New Kent Counties. A valid driver's license or other photo identification showing the applicant's address is required.
- e. Applications for children under eighteen (18) years of age must be countersigned by a parent or guardian.
- f. A patron shall be responsible for all materials charged on his card even if he lends that card or materials to another person. Lost or stolen cards will be replaced for a fee of two dollars (\$2.00) when reported to the circulation desk.

- g. Borrowing privileges may be suspended, revoked, or limited to anyone whose current or previous record as a library borrower reveals willful or habitually careless disregard for the protection and return of borrowed material or for the evasion of payment for assessed damage to Library property.
- h. A patron's account will be blocked, and borrowing privileges suspended, once fines reach \$5.00.
- i. In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.1-342(8), patrons' records shall be treated as confidential.

C. Circulation

- a. Only registered patrons with valid library cards may borrow materials. When an item is borrowed, the patron assumes full financial responsibility for its damage, loss or late return.
- b. Videos and DVDs circulate for one week; all other materials circulate for three weeks. Reference materials do not circulate.
- c. Renewal of library materials is limited to two additional borrowing periods.
- d. High-demand materials, or materials that have been reserved may not be renewed.
- e. New or recently added material is limited to 5 items per patron and may not be renewed.
- f. At no time may a patron have more than 20 books checked out. At no time may a patron have more than four videos, two DVDs, or five recorded books checked out.
- g. Family limit for DVDs is 6 per family.
- h. Patrons are limited to checking out three books on a subject that is being used for a school project or report.
- i. Parents (or guardians) are legally responsible for materials checked out by their children.
- j. The fine for overdue books and recorded books is ten cents per day; the fine for overdue videos and DVDs is \$1.00 per day. The maximum overdue fine on any book is ten dollars. The maximum overdue fine on audio-visual materials is the cost of replacing the item.
- k. Electronic materials are to be played on compatible machines only.
- l. HPL assumes no responsibility for any damage to a patron's machine while using materials from the library's collection.
- m. Patrons must comply with applicable copyright laws pertaining to each library-owned item borrowed.
- n. The library is not responsible for monitoring the suitability of materials checked out by minors. This responsibility lies with parents or guardians.
- o. Upon request, books may be available to patrons through the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Service. There is no charge for requesting an item; however, a \$3.00 per item fee will be charged for shipping. The overdue ILL charge is the cost charged by the lending library plus one dollar per day per item.

D. Overdue Materials

- a. Overdue Notices, Fees and Administrative Costs
 - 1) See III. D (i) (above) for overdue fine schedule.
 - 2) The first notice is mailed to the patron after a three (3) day grace period following the due date. This notice will carry a charge for the fine beginning on the day it was first overdue.
 - 3) Second notices are sent thirty (30) days after the first notice is mailed.
 - 4) The library reserves the right to take a patron to Small Claims Court or to utilize a debt collection agency to recover overdue items if the items have not been returned, or the patron has not responded to the notice, within thirty (30) days after the second notice has been sent. The legal fee that this involves shall be paid by the patron.
 - 5) The maximum overdue fines on audio-visual materials is the cost of replacing the item.
- b. Suspension of Borrowing Privileges
 - 1) Borrowing privileges are suspended from the time of the first mailed notice until the books have been returned or paid for, and any charges have been paid.
 - 2) Borrowing privileges may be suspended indefinitely for patrons whose materials have been repeatedly found on library shelves without having been checked in, whether found by that patron or staff.
 - 3) Borrowing privileges may be suspended until payment has been made if library materials are returned damaged. If the damaged item is still in print and payment of replacement is made, the patron may keep the damaged item.
 - 4) Borrowing privileges are suspended indefinitely for patrons who have to be taken to Small Claims Court in order for the Library to retrieve its property. In such cases, limited borrowing privileges may be reinstated if the patron makes a request in writing to the Library Board of Trustees to have his/her privileges returned.
- c. Lost Items and Replacement Charges
 - 1) The Library does not accept substitutes of other titles or editions for lost or damaged materials.
 - 2) The patron may replace lost materials with a new copy of the same title plus \$5.00 processing charge and any administrative charges due. Replacements or payments are made in lieu of returning the book and are therefore due at the time the book is due.
 - 3) The replacement cost for lost or damaged library materials is the cost of replacing the materials plus \$5.00.
 - 4) When a lost or damaged item cannot be replaced, restitution to the library shall be the original cost to the library plus five dollars.
- d. Claims Returned
 - 1) When a patron claims that he has returned or never checked out materials for which he received an overdue notice, his record will be appropriately marked.

- 2) A patron may accumulate three (3) claims and will lose borrowing privileges until restitution is made. At the time he places the third claim, he loses all borrowing privileges until he pays for all of the books claimed lost or not returned on three claims, plus the administrative costs involved in sending overdue notices for those books.
 - 3) In accruing claims, each DATE counts as a single claim. The patron may, for example, state that he returned 3 books on July 8, and have all 3 count as a single claim.
 - 4) If the patron later finds materials which he claimed he had returned or never checked out, he may bring them to staff to have the claim for those particular items removed from his record. A \$1.00 administrative charge is due if the items are returned within 2 months; \$5.00 is due if later.
 - 5) The system maintains a record of materials with a claims returned status.
- e. **Damage Assessments and Replacement Charges**
- 1) Pages torn: fifty cents per page if repairable, otherwise replacement cost of the book plus \$5.00.
 - 2) Pages missing: replacement cost of the book plus \$5.00.
 - 3) Audio-visual materials : if individual discs in a set can be replaced, then the cost of each replacement disc plus \$2.00 per disc is assessed.
 - 4) Audio and video storage cases: replacement costs.

F. Collection Policy

- a. **Selection Criteria**
- 1) Responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director or his/her designee. Suggestions from staff members and Library patrons are encouraged and seriously considered.
 - 2) The Library collects books, magazines, videos, DVDs, recorded books in CD format, and sound books (books with tapes or CD). The Library subscribes to local, area, and regional newspapers.
 - 3) Although the Library is sympathetic to the needs of students, the Library does not add to its collection textbooks used by area schools except when necessary to supplement a subject area in the collection.
 - 4) Selection will be based upon:
 - a) The recommendation of professional reviewing sources and the needs of the collection in specific areas.
 - b) Patron usage patterns.
 - c) An awareness of the materials available through the Library's Interlibrary Loan service.
 - d) Expressed or anticipated interest in the title or subject within the community.
 - e) Contemporary significance and/or permanent value of the title to the collection.
 - f) Available funds and space, and
 - g) Availability of resources through area libraries.
 - 5) Whenever possible, materials on controversial subjects will reflect all sides of an issue as presented by qualified, knowledgeable authors.

- 6) No author's works will be excluded from the collection solely because of his/her personal history, political affiliation, race, sex, or cultural background.
 - 7) The Library maintains a local history collection with emphasis on Charles City and New Kent counties. Items are added to that collection when available.
 - 8) The Library usually acquires one copy of each title. If an author or a book proves popular, then additional copies are purchased. Works by popular authors are automatically purchased in multiple copies (usually 2 to 6).
- b. Donations of Books and Periodicals
- 1) Donations of books and periodicals to the Library are welcomed as space permits. The Library Director reserves the privilege of deciding whether to add donated books and periodicals to the Library collection on the basis of regular book selection criteria. Donated books and periodicals not added to the collection may be sold, offered to other institutions, or used in any way the Library Director deems proper.
 - 2) Books or periodical subscriptions donated in memory of a person will be acknowledged by a bookplate in the front of the book.
- c. Requests for Reconsideration of Materials
- 1) The Library subscribes fully to the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights: and the "Freedom to Read" statement (Appendix I and II).
 - 2) All requests for reconsideration of materials will be handled in the following manner:
 - a) The staff member receiving the complaint will ask the patron to fill out the appropriate form (Appendix III).
 - b) When the completed form has been received, it will then be submitted to the Library Director. The Director will acknowledge in writing receipt of the form to the complainant. The material in question shall remain in the collection and available to patrons during the reconsideration period.
 - c) The Library Director will locate as many professional reviews of the title as possible and review the title against the selection criteria outlined in this policy.
 - d) The Library Director will consider all factors and come to a decision. This decision will be communicated to the complainant in writing within 14 days of the date that the reconsideration form was submitted. A copy of the response shall be given to the Library Board.
 - e) If the complainant is not completely satisfied with that decision, he or she may then submit a letter regarding the complaint to the library Board of Trustees for consideration at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board will acknowledge the letter and make a final decision based on its endorsement of the "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read" statement, and in consideration of the Library Director's decision.

- d. Withdrawal, Mending, Replacement
- 1) Materials are removed from the shelves based on the same criteria used in selection. In general, materials that fall into the following categories should be removed and/or withdrawn:
 - a) Materials that are outdated.
 - b) Materials that have been superseded by a newer edition or by more current information.
 - c) Items worn beyond repair.
 - d) Duplicate copies of seldom used titles.
 - e) Fiction which has not been checked out within a five year period, unless judged to be a classic or appears on a standard list.
 - 2) Worn items that are still relevant to the collection may be mended within the Library.
 - 3) Lost items and items worn beyond repair will be replaced on the same criteria used in selecting them. Lost items that are out-of-print will not be replaced unless they are of extraordinary value to the collection and may be obtained through a source for out-of-print books at a reasonable price that is within the Library's budget.
 - 4) Popular magazines are kept for six years and then discarded.
 - 5) The Tidewater Review and the New Kent-Charles County Chronicle are kept indefinitely. The daily newspapers are kept for one month before being discarded.
 - 6) Disposition of withdrawn materials is at the discretion of the Library Director.

- e. Audio-visual Selection Policy
- 1) The Library will purchase audio and visual materials for the collection for the same reasons it selects and buys books and magazines. The Library endorses the American Library Association's "Freedom to View" Statement. (Appendix IV)
 - 2) Sources for selection will include vendor catalogs and standard library material review sources and patron requests. Gift materials will be accepted, with the understanding that donors may not place any special conditions upon the loan or handling of the items. They will be evaluated against the same criteria as purchased materials.
 - 3) Selection Management: Due to the broad needs of the collection, the library will usually purchase a single copy of a title unless demand warrants an additional copy.

Weeding by virtue of damaged, lost, or not returned items is continuous. Other factors to be considered are lack of use, physical playing condition, and accuracy and datedness of information.

Audio and visual materials will not automatically be replaced because of loss or damage. Replacement decisions will be based upon (1) demand for title, (2) existing coverage of a subject in the collection, and (3) availability of newer (more appropriate, more accurate or better presented) materials on the subject.

G. Proctoring

Heritage Public Library charges \$25.00 for up to 3 hours or \$40.00 for over 3 hours per exam for residents of Charles City and New Kent counties and \$50.00 for up to 3 hours or \$80.00 for over 3 hours for non-residents. Driving school exams are exempt from proctoring fees. Exams are proctored by appointment only.

H. Exhibits

At the Library Director's discretion, the library will accept materials for temporary exhibits and will endeavor to protect the loaned materials, but the Library shall not accept responsibility for loss, damage or theft. The owner must accept this responsibility when bringing the collection into the Library.

I. Schedule of Operation

- a. The library adheres to state regulations in determining the hours it is open to the public.
- b. Schedule for holidays shall be as follows:

January 1 st	New Year's Day
January (3 rd Monday)	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February (3 rd Monday)	President's Day
May (last Monday)	Memorial Day
July 4 th	Independence Day
September (1 st Monday)	Labor Day
November (4 th Thursday and Friday)	Thanksgiving Day and day after
December 25 th and either the 24 th or 26 th	Christmas Day

In addition, if the Library is open on December 24 or 31, it shall close at 5:00 PM.

- c. The Library Director is authorized to close the Library in the event of hazardous weather or emergency situations. He/she should be guided by the closing of governmental offices or the schools. If the Director is unavailable, then the staff member at work is authorized to close. Common sense should be the prevailing standard at all times. Deviations from the regular operating schedule of the Library for reasons other than approved holidays, hazardous weather, or emergency situations must be approved in advance by the Library Board.

I. Unattended Children

The Library Board and staff are concerned about the welfare of juvenile patrons, but cannot assume responsibility for the safety, care, supervision, or entertainment of unattended children in the Library. Children 13 and younger who are not attending a Library event or program must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Parents or caretakers are responsible for their children's behavior, safety, and welfare in the Library. They must remain in the Library with them, must supervise them, and must take them with them when they leave.

- a. If by any chance an unattended minor child (17 and under) remains at the Library after closing, the following procedure will be followed:
 - 1) Staff members will attempt to contact the child's parent or caregiver.
 - 2) If a parent or caregiver is contacted, those staff members on duty will wait inside the Library with the child for up to 30 minutes until the parent or caregiver arrives to pick up the child.
 - 3) If unable to contact a parent or caregiver within 30 minutes or if a parent or caregiver does not arrive within 30 minutes, the staff members will contact the Sheriff's Department.
 4. Under NO circumstances are staff members to leave the Library with the child.

J. Use of the Library Facilities

- a. The following groups are eligible to use HPL's meeting room for meetings and educational purposes;
 - 1) Groups under the sponsorship or direction of HPL or its Friends group.
 - 2) Non-profit, civic or charitable, tax exempt organizations serving Charles City or New Kent counties.
 - 3) Responsible individuals or organizations within the counties not charging an admission fee.
 - 4) For-profit enterprises that will use the facilities no more than four times per year and will pay \$100.00 for each use. If library staff time is required, additional fees may apply.
- b. Any organization, group, individual, or enterprise desiring to use the meeting room must complete the appropriate application forms. Applications will be approved, modified, or disapproved by the Library Director.
- c. Application for use of the meeting room must be submitted at least fourteen (14) days prior to the planned activity. The Library Director will grant use of the meeting room in the order in which the applications are received, so long as it does not interfere with already scheduled programs or meetings. Meeting room use is restricted to regular library hours, unless it is for a library-sponsored or Friends-sponsored event. For groups listed under (a.1) there shall be no written application nor limit on the frequency of reservations.

- d. Every applicant who receives permission to use the building shall, during the time of such use, be responsible for the preservation of law and order on the property and be responsible for damage to the building and its contents while using same. Any individual or organization who abuses the property or fails to comply with all rules and regulations will not only be financially responsible for any damage, but also may be denied further use of the facility. Children must be under the supervision of a responsible adult at all times.
- e. Smoking, the burning of candles, having an open flame, or the consumption of alcoholic beverages are all forbidden.
- f. The use of decorations is not permitted unless approved by the Library Director.
- g. Animals or pets are not permitted in the building unless approved by the Library Director.
- h. All events (including clean-up) must end fifteen minutes before the library closes.
- i. Room set-up, take-down, and clean up are the responsibility of the organization using the room.
- j. The Community Bulletin Board, located in the entrance way, may be used by patrons to publicize coming events available in our area that may be of interest to our patrons. Anyone wishing to post a notice must first get permission from the staff person at the front desk. Notices must be dated and any item that has been posted for more than two weeks may be removed at the Director's discretion. If an item advertises an event, it may not be posted any earlier than two weeks prior to the event.

IV. FINANCE

A. General

In Virginia, public libraries receive funds from the following sources: Local government appropriations, State Aid grants, Federal Aid grants, other funds such as endowments, gifts, income from fines and copying machines, and fund raising drives sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

B. Control

Fiscal control is vested in the Library Board. Day-to-day budget decisions are delegated to the Library Director. The Library Board controls expenditures within an overall budget that it approved. All library funds once approved and appropriated by the governing body shall be maintained in a Library account.

C. Gifts

Gifts to the Library are gratefully and willingly accepted as long as no restriction is placed upon their use. Gifts with restrictions placed on them may be accepted by the Library Director or the Library Board. All gifts requiring a single additional expenditure of \$25.00 or more and/or a yearly maintenance of \$25.00 or more must be presented to the Library Board for approval. Gifts of materials not added to the collection may be sold, offered to other institutions, or used in any way that the Library Director deems proper. The Library may not value patron gifts.

D. Credit Card

The Library maintains a credit card for library-related purchases only. The Library Director and the library staff (with the Director's approval) are authorized to use the card. Use of the card is limited to travel and purchases from companies that do not invoice.

E. Returned Check Fee

The Library reserves the right to charge a \$10.00 fee for returned checks.

Approved and adopted by the Library Board on September 25, 2001, with minor revisions approved on March 12, 2007, January 17, 2011, January 21, 2013, and March 21, 2013, April 16, 2013, June 17, 2013, August 19, 2013, September 16, 2013.