

Vernon Free Library – General Operations

VISION

Walk in our door; open the world!

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Vernon Free Library, as a vital hub of our community, is to enrich the lives of all ages through:

- Lifelong Learning
- Cultural Exploration
- Creative Expression
- Social Interaction
- Leisure Activity

HOURS OF OPERATION

The library is normally open the following days and times:

- Monday: 1:00 – 6:00 pm
- Tuesday: 9:00 am – 12:00 noon and 1:00 – 6:00 pm
- Wednesday: 1:00 – 6:00 pm
- Thursday: 1:00 – 6:00 pm
- Saturday: 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Holiday Closings

The Library may close on the following legal holidays, conforming to their observance in the State of Vermont:

New Year's Eve
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
Presidents' Day
Saturday before Memorial Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Saturday before Labor Day
Labor Day
Indigenous Peoples Day

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Thanksgiving Eve
Thanksgiving Day
Saturday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

Sunday Holidays

The Library may observe any legal holidays falling on Sunday on the following Monday.

Emergency Closings

At the discretion of the Library Director or the chair of the Board of Trustees, the Library may close when weather or other emergency conditions exist. In the event of an emergency closing, the Library Director or chair of the Board of Trustees will notify the local radio station and post on library social media platform(s), and will notify the Board of Trustees and staff by email and/or phone.

GENERAL POLICIES

Patron Responsibilities

Patrons are responsible for any items checked out on their cards; any materials that are lost or damaged will be billed at the current price. Service and loan privileges will be denied, at the discretion of the Library Director, only for due cause, such as consistent failure to return library materials or deliberate mutilation or damage to them. An appeal of this decision may be made to the Trustees.

Supervision

The Vernon Free Library encourages visits by young children and it is our desire to make this important visit both memorable and enjoyable for the child. Library staff are not expected to assume responsibility for the care of unsupervised children in the library. Therefore, it is library policy that all children under the age of 9 years must be accompanied by an adult while in the library. Also, if the young child is attending a library program, an adult is required to remain in the library with the child throughout the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Patrons should feel comfortable borrowing or using public library resources and receiving library services without having to fear the consequences for doing so.

Definition of Patron Records

The term *patron records* refers to records in any format related to any activity of the library (such as, but not limited to, registration, circulation, interlibrary loan, reserve

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requests, and computer use) containing any identifying information about individual patrons.

Confidentiality Policy

Vernon Free Library patron records are confidential. Patron records shall not be made available to any third party or any law enforcement agency of a local, state, or federal government except:

- with the written permission of the library patron to whom the records pertain;
- to officers, employees, volunteers, and agents of the library to the extent necessary for library administration purposes;
- when a court order in proper form, issued by a court of competent jurisdiction after a showing of good cause is presented to the library by a law enforcement agency or third party seeking the records;
- to custodial parents or guardians of patrons under age 16 years of age.

Statistical records pertaining to the patronage, circulation activities, and use of any service or consultation the library provides, provided that they do not contain the names of patrons or any other personally identifying information, shall be exempt from the provisions of this policy.

Procedure Regarding Patron Records

No library employee or volunteer may release patron records to any third party or law enforcement agent. Requests for such information will be referred to the Library Director who will, on advice of legal counsel, adhere to the policy outlined above.

PROBLEM PATRONS

- The Library Director or staff person in charge should inform the patron of the consequences of his or her behavior and refer the patron to the Library's policies.
- The Library Director or staff person in charge should call for staff back-up. Back-up is not only desirable for personal safety, but also ensures a witness to the situation.
- If necessary, the Library Director or staff person in charge should call the police.
- The Library Director or staff person in charge should be firm and stay focused on the issue. They should not be drawn into arguing and should continue to repeat their message.
- The Library Director or staff person in charge should try to position any confrontation in a place that allows the offender a route to withdraw and leaves him/her space to withdraw in the face of serious threat or violence.
- The Library Director or staff person in charge should remain courteous and remember politeness defuses problem situations.
- The Library Director or staff person in charge may ask the problem patron to leave.

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- The Library Director or staff person in charge should write up the incident.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The library proper will not be used for the following activities:

- Meetings of non-library organized groups except at the discretion of the Library Director and the meetings meet the buildings usage policy.
- Political advertising;
- Cash donation boxes of any type;
- Sale of commercial products, excepting library materials specifically authorized by the Trustees;
- Petitions, except those relating to library interests and specifically authorized by the Library Director or a member of the Board of Trustees.

Smoking

The Library shall be smoke free and free of illegal drugs.

Cell Phones

The use of cell phones in a disruptive manner is prohibited in the Library.

REVISION OF POLICIES

The Vernon Free Library policies are to be reviewed annually, with revisions being made as needed.

CIRCULATION

Registration

All borrowers must be registered and must have a valid library patron card to borrow library materials.

Patrons must fill out an application form to register for a new library card. New members must have a picture ID and a current piece of mail (e.g., a utility bill) at the time of registration. There is no cost for a library card to patrons who reside within the Town of Vernon.

Patrons who do not reside in the Town of Vernon may purchase a library card annually. The cost is \$25 for a family, \$15 for an individual, \$5 for a student 12 years and under, and \$5 for seniors 65 years and older. Students attending the Vernon preschool are free.

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The following statement will be printed on the registration form for the patron's information and acceptance:

I agree to obey all the rules and regulations of the library, to pay promptly all fines charged against me for the damage or loss of any library materials, and to give immediate notice of a change of address or phone number.

Applicants under 16 years of age must have a parent or guardian give his or her permission on the application form before a new card can be issued.

Loan Periods

- Two (2) weeks for books, audio books, and CDs.
- One (1) week for DVDs.
- Generally, reference books do not circulate. Upon request, some reference materials may be checked out overnight at the librarian's discretion.
- Interlibrary loans have a two (2) week loan period.
- New books may not be renewed. Books other than "new" may be renewed if there is not a waiting list for the title.
- Current issues of periodicals do not circulate.
- Non-current periodicals may be checked out for two (2) weeks.

Limits

The Library Director may establish the loan period for special collections, materials that are temporarily in great demand, such as for student projects, or materials added to the collection that are in a new format (e.g., computer software).

A patron may borrow a maximum of 20 items at one time.

Reserves

Reserves (also known as *holds*) may be placed by patrons either in person, over the phone or by email. Patrons will be notified by email or telephone when the materials are available. There is no charge to the patron for placing a reserve or for interlibrary loan services, however.

Overdue Policy

If an email address is on file in the patron's record, a first notice will be sent 3 days before items are due. A second email notice will be sent when the items are 1 week overdue. A third email notice will be sent when the items are 2 weeks overdue. If there is no email address in the patron's record, notices will be sent by USPS mail when the items are 1 week overdue and again when the items are 2 weeks overdue. If the items have not been returned after 3 weeks overdue, a letter from the staff requesting payment for the items will be sent by USPS mail.

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Borrowing privileges will be restricted under the following conditions:

- Patrons who receive a third notification by email or a second notice through the postal service concerning overdue items will have their borrowing privileges suspended until all items are returned or paid for.
- Going forward, these patrons will be restricted to borrowing no more than two items at any one time. This restriction can be removed at the Library staff's discretion.

Damaged Materials

If materials are so damaged as to be judged by the library staff as being unsuitable for the collection, the patron must pay the replacement cost. A notice of these charges will be sent to the borrower. A sample of the notice follows:

Dear _____,

Whenever 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 card were returned to the library damaged beyond the point of being usable 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 is necessary in order to retain your borrowing privileges.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this matter.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES

Philosophy

Access to electronic resources, including the Internet, is provided as an additional information resource and to enhance the existing collection.

The Vernon Free Library does not monitor, has no control over information access through the Internet, and cannot be held responsible for its content. Library patrons use the Internet at their own discretion and/or risk. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information.

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All Internet resources accessible through the library are provided equally to all library users. As with all library materials, parents or guardians, not the library staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected/accessed by their children. Parents—and only parents—may restrict their children—and only their children—from access to Internet resources. **Parents are advised to supervise their children's Internet sessions.**

Guidelines

- Use of library computing resources to display or disseminate sexually explicit or sexually suggestive (obscene/pornographic) material in the library building is prohibited. Violators of this policy will be removed from the library building and will have their library privileges revoked.
- All patrons are allowed full access to the Internet. There is no age level requirement to use the computers, but our experience has been that very young children benefit from using computers with a parent or older sibling to guide them. If parents/guardians are concerned about which Internet sites their child visits, they should sit with their child and surf the Web together.
- Children younger than 16 years must have a completed *Internet Use Waiver*.
- You may sign up to use the library's computers for a half-hour time slot any time the library is open. After your half-hour is finished, you may continue using the computer, for an additional 30 minutes, or one hour total, as long as no one else is waiting for a turn.
- Absolutely no eating, drinking, or gum chewing is permitted in the area of the computers. Noise level around the computers must be kept to library standards.
- You may have a few friends share your computer time with you if you choose. By the same token, you may choose to work alone. Privacy can be important.
- Personal programs may not be run on the computers.
- Do not download anything from the Internet. If there is something you need, please ask the librarian.
- If you need some one-on-one help with the computer, you may schedule time with the librarian.
- Computers will be shut down 15 minutes prior to the closing of the library.

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Wireless Internet Access

Limitations and Disclaimers

The high speed fiber optics WiFi Internet access we offer is unfiltered. By choosing to use this free service, you agree to abide by the Vernon Free Library's Internet Public Access Policy. This policy states the limitations of Internet access, as well as your responsibilities for using that access, and provides examples of acceptable and unacceptable uses. The library's wireless network is not secure. Information sent to and from your notebook/laptop computer or other wireless device may be captured by anyone else with a wireless device and the appropriate software. Library staff are not able to provide technical assistance and no guarantee can be made that you will be able to make a wireless connection. The library assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or for notebook/laptop computer or other wireless device configurations, security, or data files resulting from connection to the library's wireless access.

The following Internet Use Waiver is to be signed by parents/guardians of children younger than 16 years indicating their understanding and acceptance of the library's Internet use policy.

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INTERNET USE WAIVER

Access to the Internet at the Vernon Free Library is provided as an additional information resource. The same standards of intellectual freedom expressed in the Vernon Free Library mission statement, selection policy, and the American Library Association Electronic Bill of Rights applies to the library's access to the Internet.

In keeping with its purpose and with advances in information technology, the library provides users with access to the Internet. The Internet is a global electronic network that provides dynamic resources and facilitates communication. Library staff cannot control access points that often change rapidly and unpredictably. Users are hereby notified that they are responsible for the choice of sites they visit.

Restriction of a child's access to the Internet, as with all other library materials, is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

The Vernon Free Library makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy, or usefulness for a particular purpose of information accessed via the Internet.

Users must comply with United States copyright laws and all other applicable laws.

Users of library work stations must adhere to the library's Internet guidelines. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the loss of the right to use the work station(s):

I have read and understand this policy's guidelines:

Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature if less than 16 years of age

Date

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EQUIPMENT USE

A copier/printer/scanner/fax machine is available to patrons who wish to copy, print, scan, or fax materials at the rate of 10 cents per page and 50 cents per page for color copies. Faxing is free of charge for faxes sent to toll free numbers and a \$1 charge for 5 pages or more for faxes sent to long distance numbers. Received faxes are 10 cents per page.

Staff are available to assist with making a reasonable number of copies.

- Copy machine users are advised that there are restrictions on copyrighted materials. Any violation of copyright is the responsibility of the copy machine user.
- The Historians and the Scouts are permitted to make up to 500 copies per year at no cost.

DISPLAYS AND BULLETIN BOARD

Displays

Displays of an educational, attractive, and cultural nature are welcome, but must be displayed at the owner's risk.

Permission

Permission for use of the bulletin boards must be requested in advance. Under special circumstances, the Library Director may allow unscheduled displays.

Trustee Approval

The Library Director may refer to the Trustees for decisions regarding exhibits that may adversely affect the library and its operation.

Right of Appeal

Individuals or groups denied permission for display have the right to appeal to the Trustees. Within two weeks after a written request, the Trustees will meet with the individual or not more than three representatives of a group.

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EMERGENCIES

Bomb Threat

1. Try to obtain specifics about the bomb location and note any characteristics about the caller.
2. Notify librarian.
3. Call local law enforcement.
4. Evacuate the building.

Power Outage

1. Locate any flashlights.
2. Turn off computer equipment.
3. If power outage is inside building, check circuit breakers.
4. If power is off for ½ hour or longer, library may be closed.

STAFF DRESS CODE POLICY

The guidelines and specifications that follow illustrate what attire is appropriate and inappropriate. They are not all-inclusive: the Board of Trustees reserves the right to determine appropriateness. If there is any question about a garment, the staff member should confer with the Library Director before wearing the article of clothing.

- All clothing, including shoes must be clean and in good repair.
- Clothing should not be transparent, revealing, tight fitting, or provocative.
- Clothing should be void of inappropriate logos or advertising.
- Obscene, sexual, or violent tattoos must be covered.
- Hair, including facial hair, must be clean at all times.

Appropriate clothing includes:

- Slacks, capri pants, skirts, or dresses, shorts (no more than 3 inches above the knee)
- Blouses, sweaters, polo shirts, dress jackets, pullovers, knit shirts, dress or casual collared shirts
- Blue jeans that are clean, well fitting at the waist, free of ornamentation with no holes or tears

Inappropriate clothing includes:

- Sweatpants, low-rise pants
- T-shirts, “muscle shirt” tank tops, low-cut tops, strapless shirts, halter tops, spaghetti straps, cropped tops
- Anything that exposes the midriff, such as halter tops

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HOLIDAY PAY FOR STAFF

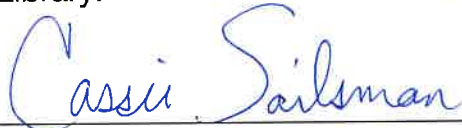
The Vernon Free Library Board of Trustees recommends that if a holiday falls on a normal work day, then staff will be paid the number of hours they normally are scheduled to work.

APPLICATION OF LIBRARY PERSONNEL POLICIES

The Trustees of the Vernon Free Library amend our personnel policies to say that we follow the Town of Vernon's personnel policies with the only exception being our policy of paid holidays for staff.

APPROVAL OF GENERAL OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Reviewed and Adopted on May 3, 2023, by the Trustees of the Vernon Free Library.



Cassie Sailsman, Chair



Doug Rosien, Vice Chair



Julie Nevins, Secretary



Kristin Bratton, Clerk

, Trustee