

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

Thanksgiving Eve

Thanksgiving Day

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

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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 12 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.

Surveillance cameras

The library has security cameras outside and inside. Video footage is kept for 10 days. Video is only available to view by supervisory staff. A valid subpoena, national security letter, or warrant is required to view footage from indoor cameras.

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

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PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The library property 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.
- Photography or video recording within the library of patrons or staff without advance written permission of the legal guardian or Library Director

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.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

In accordance with 22 V.S.A. § 69, the Vernon Free Library adopts this collection development policy which includes both a materials selection policy and procedures for the reconsideration and retention of library materials.

Introduction & Purpose

The Vernon Free Library (the library) maintains collections of resources to help library users pursue their intellectual interests and educational objectives, including material for leisure time enjoyment and practical problem solving.

The library strives to build a collection representing multiple points of view that reflect the community's diverse people and history, including a diversity of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, and political beliefs and a diversity of authors, creators, and media.

The library's collections reflect a commitment to intellectual freedom. Compliance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Vermont laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation shall underpin the practices and practical processes of maintaining the library's collections.

The library remains committed to securing professional services, including legal counsel, as necessary to ensure that its collection development activities comply with the above-identified State and federal laws.

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Materials Selection Policy

Multiple factors determine what materials are included in the library's collections: funding, space, staffing, and ongoing maintenance needs. Library staff weigh the following criteria when making collection decisions:

- Alignment with the library's mission and strategic plan
- Review in a standard reviewing source (e.g., *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *Kirkus Reviews*) and/or reviews and discussion in national newspapers and magazines, local publications, broadcast media, and reputable online sources.
- Community interests, demand, and suggestions
- Representation by and of diverse individuals and groups
- Significance and relationship to the local community and State of Vermont
- Authority and qualifications of the creator(s), publisher(s), and/or producer(s)
- Price and availability
- Accessibility of format and content
- Anticipated viability and/or longevity of the format

The library encourages Library Users to recommend items for inclusion in the collection and accepts donated materials. Suggested and/or donated materials will be evaluated by library staff prior to being included in the library's collection and must meet the library's selection criteria.

The library may provide access to subscription databases and shared online collections. The library may not have direct control over the inclusion or exclusion of specific titles within those shared collections.

Materials Retention Policy

Materials that no longer meet the needs of the community and/or no longer support the library's collection will be withdrawn from the collection. This may include materials that are damaged, that include obsolete information, or that have not been used within a reasonable length of time. Items withdrawn from the collection will be disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and municipal policies.

Procedures for the Reconsideration and Retention of Materials

- An individual (Library User) with a concern about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director).
- If speaking with the Director does not resolve the concern, a Library User may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from the library collection or relocated within the library collection by completing a Request for Reconsideration form and submitting it to the Director.
- The item in question will remain in circulation; it will not be relocated or removed from the library collection during the review process.
- The library will review only one request for reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received.

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- The Director will notify the Library User that their Request for Reconsideration form has been received and will inform the Library User when they anticipate processing the form (based on the number of other requests that have been filed).
- The Director or their delegate will review the Request for Reconsideration form and the material in question. They will read, listen to, or view the item and will read reviews of the item in professional journals when available. They will evaluate the usage of the item by the public (circulation) and evaluate whether the selection of the item conforms with the library's Materials Selection Policy.
- The Director will notify the Library User of the library's decision regarding the request within 15 library business days of receipt of their Request for Reconsideration form, stating the reasons for the decision to the Library User who submitted the request.
- If the Library User is not satisfied with the library's decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of the library within 10 library business days of receipt of the decision letter.
- The Board will notify the Library User if their appeal will be heard by the Board. If the Board plans to address the appeal at a meeting, the Library User will be notified of when and where the next regular meeting of the board will be held.
- The decision of the Board is final. Once an appeal has been considered by the Board, it will not be reconsidered.

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Vernon Free Library Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form

The Vernon Free Library (the library) has established a procedure for the reconsideration of an item in the library collection.

Requests for reconsideration may be discussed publicly by the library's Board of Trustees and may be subject to public records requests.

Any individual (Library User) with concerns about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is encouraged to discuss their concern with the library director (the Director).

If speaking with the Director does not resolve the Library User's concern, the Library User may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from or relocated within the library collection by completing this form and returning it to the library or mailing it to:

Vernon Free Library
567 Governor Hunt Rd
Vernon, VT 05354

The library will review only one request for reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which requests are received.

A. Library User Information (All fields Required)

1. Name: _____
2. Address: _____
3. City: _____
4. Zip: _____
5. Phone: _____
6. Email: _____

B. Format of Material (Required)

- Physical
- Electronic

C. Material Type (Required)

- Book
- eBook
- Movie/DVD
- Movie/Streaming
- Audio/CD
- Audio/Streaming
- Magazine/Newspaper
- Electronic Database
- Game
- Other: _____

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D. Material information (All fields required)

1. Title, Author:

2. Where in the library is the material located now?

3. Material barcode number: _____

4. Please describe your concerns regarding this material:

5. Have you examined the entire work? If not, what specific sections did you review?

6. Do you have a suggestion for an alternate title for the information contained in the material?

7. What would you like the library to do with the material?

- Remove the material from the collection entirely
- Relocate the material to another area of the collection, specifically:

- Other: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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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 proof of current address (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.

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 12 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.

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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.

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.

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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.

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 12 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 12 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 12 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

If a holiday falls on a normal work day, then staff will be paid the number of hours they normally are scheduled to work.

LIBRARY PERSONNEL POLICIES

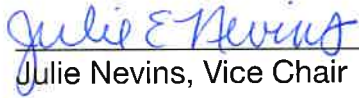
The Vernon Free Library will follow the Town of Vernon's personnel policies, as well as any additional personnel policies approved by the Board of Trustees.

APPROVAL OF GENERAL OPERATIONS AND POLICIES

Reviewed and Adopted on 12 June 2025, by the Trustees of the Vernon Free Library.



Cassie Sailsman, Chair



Julie Nevins, Vice Chair



Nikki Deyo, Secretary



Kristin Bratton, Clerk



Wendy Shumway, Trustee