

C. Service Policy:

1. Use privileges:

- a. Within the library, the use of all reference and collection materials is free to all.
- b. Home use privileges are free to all residents of Central City, and residents of Merrick County. Persons owning property in Merrick County may have card fees waived by showing a copy of their tax statement each year.

Non-residents (those residing outside of Merrick County) may secure home use privileges by paying a fee of \$15 for 12 months/per family. This fee covers all immediate family members residing in residence.

Full Privilege Cards:

Age requirements:

Adult library cards are issued to patrons aged 14 or older. Patrons under the age of 14 may receive a youth library card as long as a parent or legal guardian signs as the responsible party on the application.

Identification requirements:

Adult applicants should provide photo identification if possible. Acceptable photo identification: current driver's license or photo identification.

Temporary Cards:

Temporary cards may be issued to people that are in Merrick County for only a short time. Such patrons may include racing, construction, or other seasonal workers; people who are visiting for a short time; etc. A \$25.00 deposit is required and check out privileges will be limited to five items at a time. Both temporary and permanent addresses must be provided. After three months, temporary cards expire and patrons may apply for permanent library cards. When all items are returned, and any fines accrued have been paid, the \$25.00 deposit will be returned.

- c. Service will not be denied or abridged because of religious, racial, social, economic or political status.
- d. The use of the library or its services may be denied temporarily for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return books or to pay penalties, destruction of library property, disturbance of other patrons, or other objectionable conduct on library premises.
- e. A specific policy has been adopted which allows suspension of borrowing privileges for any patron that does not return or pay for an item after a three-month overdue period. Privileges will not be reinstated until items are returned or paid for.

2. Hours of Operation:

a. After Labor Day-Memorial Day the hours of operation are as follows:

Monday - Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

b. After Memorial Day-Labor Day the hours of operation are as follows:

Monday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Tuesday - Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

c. **Library Closure Policy**

(Inclement Weather & Other Conditions)

The Central City Public Library recognizes that on occasion, inclement weather or other conditions may prevent the library from opening, postpone opening, or require early closing. The primary factor of any decision made will be the safety of staff and library patrons. However, maximum effort will be made to maintain regular library operating hours. The Central City Public Library Closure Policy is as follows:

In the event that conditions arise requiring a premature closing of the Library building due to inclement weather, the Library Director, following discussion with the City Administrator, Library Board President or other Board members as available, may close the library building to the public. Situations which may result in closing the building may include, but are not limited to: inclement weather, a power outage, and unsafe or unhealthy conditions.

Once a decision has been made to close the library building, the Library Director shall post a notice on the library entrances, and notify the public via social media if possible (eg: Facebook, library website, or email).

3. Holidays

*New Year's Eve	Close at 5:00pm
New Year's Day	January 1
Presidents Day	Third Monday in February
Arbor Day	Last Friday in April
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October

Veterans Day	November 11 (afternoon off)
*Day Before Thanksgiving	Close at 5:00pm
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday following Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day	December 24 (afternoon off)
Christmas Day	December 25

A holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday and when it falls on a Sunday it will be observed on Monday. Holidays indicated are per City of Central City Policies and Procedure Manual, with the exception of *New Year's Eve and Day Before Thanksgiving 5:00pm closures, which are specific to the library only.

4. Check-Out and Renewals

- a. All borrowers must have a current card in order to check out materials. Materials may be borrowed by temporary residents for a short time by accepting a cash deposit for the estimated value of the item. This deposit will be refunded upon return of the item in good condition.
- b. Books and audio books shall be checked out for a two-week period with renewal allowed for another two weeks. This applies to items classified as "new" also. Books should not be renewed by the patron if there is a reserve on the book.
- c. Reference books may not be issued for home use.
- d. Current issue periodicals may not be checked out. Non-current issues may be checked out for two weeks.
- e. DVD's may be checked out for two nights and must be returned the third day. Only one renewal is permitted on movies.

5. Fines

- a. .10 per day/per item shall be charged for books, magazines, and audiocassettes for each day they are overdue, until returned. One "grace" day is given to patrons on all materials.
- b. \$1 per day/per DVD shall be charged for each day they are overdue, until returned.
- c. Any person failing to return library materials due to their loss or destruction will be assessed a fine as indicated above. All lost materials shall

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charged their retail list price at the time of purchase.

d. **“Read Off Fines Program”**. The Read Off Fines Program is an ongoing program that enables library patrons that are ages 18 and under, to reduce library fines by coming into the library to read.

1. The amount of the fine owed will be reduced by \$1 each half hour, that the patron reads.
2. The reading must take place in the library, so that the library staff can monitor the amount of reading time and adjust the fines accordingly. Library staff will note: patron’s name and beginning and ending times on a slip of paper when patron arrives. Fine will be adjusted by staff immediately once the patron is finished reading.
3. The Read Off Fines Program may only be used to remove fines owed, not to remove the cost of lost items charged to patron accounts.
4. The Read Off Fines Program is only valid for the library card holder’s own account.

6. **Privacy and Confidentiality**

The Central City Public Library is committed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of patron records. The library avoids creating unnecessary records, avoids retaining records not needed for library business purposes and will not engage in practices that might place information on public view.

Information the library may gather and retain about library users includes the following:

- a. Information required to register for a library card or use the library. (e.g. name, address, telephone number, email address, etc.)
- b. Records of material checked out, charges owed, payments made.
- c. Requests for interlibrary loan or reference service.
- d. Sign-up information for library classes or programs.

Staff will confer with the City Attorney before determining the proper response to any request for records. Library records will not be made available to any state, federal, or local government agency unless a subpoena, warrant, court order or other investigatory document is issued by a court of competent jurisdiction, showing good cause and in proper form.

7. **Services of the library**

The library provides materials and resources for information, entertainment, intellectual development, and enrichment of the people of the community. The library should endeavor to:

- a. Select, organize, and make available necessary books and materials.
- b. Provide guidance and assistance to patrons.
- c. Sponsor and implement programs, exhibits, displays, book lists, etc., which would appeal to children and adults.
- d. Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations.
- e. Secure information beyond its own resources when requested. (Using interlibrary loan and other resource sharing methods provided through the system and state.)
- f. Lend to other libraries upon request.
- g. Develop and provide services to patrons with special needs.
- h. Maintain a balance in its services to various age groups.
- i. Cooperate with, but not perform the functions of, school or other institutional libraries.
- j. Provide service during hours which best meet the needs of the community, including evening and weekend hours.
- k. Regularly review library services being offered.
- l. Furnish a meeting room for the public as outlined in the meeting room guidelines.
- m. Use media and other public relations mechanisms to promote the full range of available library services.

8. Reference Service Policy

In order to serve Merrick County as the best provider of guided access to quality resources for information, education and leisure, the Central City Public Library is committed to providing quality reference service. Quality reference service is courteous, accurate, prompt, proactive, impartial, and confidential.

a. Definition of Reference Service

Reference service is assistance to patrons in finding information and effectively using Library resources and services. Reference service includes locating answers to questions of varying complexity; assisting patrons in searching the Library catalog, print sources, and electronic resources such as research databases and the Internet; providing reader's advisory, referrals and individual/group instruction; and assisting with the interlibrary loan process.

Reference service does not include performing mathematical calculations or filling out any form under another's name except those related to the Library. While staff assist students in finding resources to complete homework assignments, homework is ultimately the student's responsibility.

b. Reference Service Availability

With few exceptions, patrons do not need to be Central City Public Library cardholders to use Library reference materials and services. Library cards may be required to access Library databases remotely.

Reference service is provided on a nondiscriminatory and nonjudgmental basis without regard to age, race, gender, appearance, disabilities, or personal views of patrons. The amount of time staff can spend assisting a patron is limited by the needs of other users. Time limits vary according to the complexity of the inquiry, the number of other patrons needing assistance, and the number of staff available.

c. Priorities of Service Delivery

Library staff respond to requests for reference service in the following order of priority:

1. Requests from patrons present at Library locations
2. Telephone requests
3. Email requests
4. Mail and fax requests

d. Service Delivery and Question Complexity

Ready reference questions will be answered quickly by staff using sources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, directories, and Internet databases to provide brief, factual information. Examples include spellings, definitions, business and residential addresses and phone numbers, and library holdings information (for instance, "Do you own Hamlet?").

Search questions require more than a quick answer and often involve staff consulting several sources. An example of this type of question would be "How many rose windows are there in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris?" If the question cannot be answered quickly, staff may take the patron's contact information to provide an answer or referral after additional searching.

Research questions require the gathering and synthesis of extensive information from various sources. Term papers and other reports engender this type of question. Rather than conducting the research, staff guide the patron in his/her search, suggesting strategies and sources and explaining the use of appropriate reference and indexing tools. Patrons may be encouraged to come to the Library for assistance with questions that require extensive research.

Medical and Legal Questions

Staff members assist patrons in the use of library materials and resources to find medical and legal information. Staff do not offer interpretation, advice, opinions, or personal experience. They caution patrons about the completeness and timeliness of information in printed materials and databases; and they suggest that patrons consult medical or legal professionals for information that applies to their specific needs. Staff members may read brief information from authoritative sources over the telephone.

Genealogical Questions

Staff members provide assistance and guidance in the use of the genealogical and local history materials available at the library. Staff conduct genealogical research only for very specific information that may be requested. **Our library will answer telephone/mail/email requests for a fee, if the queries are clear and specific. (refer to **Genealogy Research Assistance policy** in Library Operations section of policy manual for more information).** Staff do not compile family histories for patrons. Staff may do a preliminary survey of the collection to help potential visitors determine whether our library has materials relevant to their research interests.

e. Confidentiality

Library staff members do not discuss a patron's information requests in a way that identifies that individual without his/her permission except with persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the Library System.

f. Sources

In order to provide information that is accurate and current, staff use reputable and authoritative sources chosen in accordance with the Library's Collection

Development Policy in providing reference service. Staff cite the source of the answer; personal opinions and advice are not given.

As appropriate, staff go beyond the reference collections to use the resources of the Library as a whole. To provide the information needed, staff also reach beyond in-house collections by utilizing external information sources, including authoritative Internet websites.

g. Referrals

Questions that are beyond the resources of the staff may be referred to other agencies (e.g. Nebraska Library Commission), organizations, experts, or libraries.

9. Policy on Acceptable Behavior

The Central City Public Library is supported by taxes of the people of the City of Central City and Merrick County who expect our facility to be clean, comfortable and safe places for selecting materials, reading, researching, studying, writing and attending Library or community sponsored programs and meetings. To this end, the Library is responsible for establishing rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of Library patrons, volunteers and staff, and for protecting the Library's materials, equipment, facilities and grounds.

Enforcement of this policy will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. Library staff will intervene to stop prohibited activities or behaviors in one of two ways: by progressive enforcement or by immediate suspension and/or permanent ban, depending on the severity of the infraction. Progressive enforcement shall consist of the following:

- a. Verbal warning
- b. Suspension from all library grounds for remainder of day
- c. Suspension from all library grounds for one month
- d. Suspension from all library grounds for one year and/or permanent ban

Warnings and suspensions for the remainder of the day may be imposed by any library staff member. The Library Director or Library staff are authorized to enforce this policy through more serious penalties, and in cases of minors, all reasonable efforts will be made to notify parents, guardians or another responsible adult.

Reporting Conduct

Any patron who witnesses or is a victim of unacceptable behavior should immediately inform staff so that this policy can be enforced by library staff or, if necessary, the police. In some cases, witnesses or victims will be asked by library

staff for detailed accounts and identifying information, or will need to be available for interviews with the police. (see **Appendix I** for an example of the “Code of Conduct Incident Report Checklist” and **Appendix J** for an example of the “Incident Report Checklist”).

Appeals

Appeals of one month suspensions may be made to the Library Director who is authorized to reverse, modify, impose temporary restrictions or affirm the original decision. In cases involving suspension for one year or a permanent ban, the affected person has the right of appeal to the Library Board. Upon receiving a request for reinstatement at a regular meeting, the board shall establish a date for a hearing on the matter. Notice of such hearing will be delivered to the affected person by U. S. Mail. The hearing shall be conducted informally. The affected person and the Library Director shall present oral or written statements or reasons supporting or opposing the request for reinstatement. Statements shall be limited to ten minutes or less. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Library Board may reverse, modify, impose temporary restrictions or affirm the original decision. Notice of the determination of the Library Board shall be mailed to the affected person by U. S. Mail within 7 days of the hearing.

10. Patron Complaints

While the Central City Public Library endeavors to provide the highest levels of satisfaction and library services to its patrons, we recognize that occasionally, patrons may wish to raise a complaint pertaining to an issue which interferes with their use and enjoyment of the Library.

A Library patron initially may choose to raise his or her complaint on an informal, verbal basis with the Library’s staff. In the event that the patron elects not to do so, or that the complaint proves not susceptible to informal resolution, the patron should request and complete a Patron Complaint Form (see Appendix N). The Library Director will review promptly all completed Complaint Forms, and where appropriate, attempt to resolve the complaint directly.

If the patron is not satisfied with the response provided, and/or if the Director identifies the situation as one in which Board input is warranted, either or both parties may bring the written complaint to the attention of the Board of Trustees. Patrons desiring to do so may also request an opportunity to address the Board at one of its monthly meetings.

The Board will promptly review all complaints presented to it, provide a verbal and/or a written response to the complainant, and take any further remedial action warranted by the particular circumstances.

The decision of the Board of Trustees with respect to a complaint shall be final.