

Montana State Library Commission Policy

Montana Talking Book Library Loan

The following policies govern the circulation of books, magazines and equipment to eligible blind and physically handicapped patrons who are registered with the Montana Talking Book Library. Eligible patrons who borrow materials from the library accept responsibility for using materials with reasonable care, returning them to the Talking Book Library according to established loan policies, and not losing or damaging them through negligence. Violation of this policy can result in suspension of some or all library services.

POLICY

ACTIVE STATUS:

To remain active, patrons must borrow at least one book per year OR subscribe to one or more magazines provided through the library.

CHANGE OF STATUS:

The patron must notify the library of changes of address, a desire to cancel the service, and temporary or permanent transfer of service to another state.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE:

Recorded books/magazines and specialized playback equipment will be loaned by the library to eligible registered patrons without charge. The library will keep records of all loans.

EQUIPMENT LOANS:

Equipment necessary to listen to the recorded materials may be borrowed on extended loan for as long as the patron is using it to listen to materials provided by the library.

If playback equipment ceases to function properly or needs repair, it must be returned to the library. A replacement will be provided, upon request. Under NO circumstances is the patron to attempt repairing the playback equipment, or replacing the battery.

MAXIMUM BOOKS LOANED:

The maximum number of books loaned to a patron is established on an individual basis. Once a patron reaches the maximum number of books, no additional books will be sent until books are returned. In special circumstances, a patron may request an increase in the maximum number of books they receive. Books are sent on a weekly, biweekly, monthly, replacement after return, or "request only" basis.

LOAN PERIOD:

The loan period for books is 2 months.

OVERDUE BOOKS:

No fines for overdue books will be levied. However, patrons are urged to observe the loan period so books can be made available for other patrons.

PATRON RETURNS:

The patron must ensure that books, magazines, and equipment being returned to the library by free matter are delivered into the hands of the United States Postal Service by being placed in a mailbox or delivered to the Post Office. Placing them on the doorstep of the patron's home for the mail carrier to pick up does not constitute delivery into the hands of the Postal Service. If problems arise by use of this method, the patron is responsible for lost or damaged books.

LOST OR DAMAGED MATERIALS:

The patron is responsible for replacing lost or damaged books that are not returned according to procedures provided in patron handbook.

NON ELIGIBLE READERS:

Patrons may NOT lend library books, magazines, or equipment to other persons.

SUSPENSION OF SERVICES:

If any of the above policies are violated, the patron's service may be suspended for a period of time, after being given a written warning and an opportunity to reply. If, after reinstatement of service, policy violations continue, service may be suspended again.

In the event of suspension, the following steps will be taken:

Suspension Procedure:

1. Library staff will first discuss the violation(s) with the patron by telephone or in person.
2. A warning letter will be sent to the patron that summarizes the discussion and the violation(s). The patron will be provided an opportunity to reply.
3. If policy violation continues, a second warning letter will be sent to the patron, citing the earlier warning letter and listing examples of subsequent violations. The patron will have an opportunity to reply by a certain date. The Library will then suspend service for a stated period of time (usually up to six months). A specific date to reinstate service will be included in this letter.
4. When service is reinstated, a letter will be sent notifying the patron of reinstatement of service and reminding the patron that further documented violations will result in another suspension of service.

In case of repeated verbal abuse of library staff by a patron, service to that patron may be suspended by the library supervisor, according to the above suspension procedure.