



Merri-bek
City Council

Library Use Policy

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Responsible Department	Community

This policy has been authorised.

Cathy Henderson
Chief Executive Officer

01.02.2024

1. Introduction

The resources and services of Merri-bek Libraries are for the benefit and use of the whole community. The Library Use Policy is to ensure that Merri-bek's libraries operate efficiently and effectively and that the behaviour of library patrons is reasonable and does not infringe upon the rights of other patrons and staff.

The Library Use Policy applies across Merri-bek Libraries and will be available for consultation by library patrons online.

2. Context

This policy updates the Library Use Policy dated January 2017.

The conditions by which library members may borrow materials from Merri-bek's libraries are detailed in the *Library Loans Policy*.

Detailed loans procedures are contained within the Merri-bek Libraries Policy Procedures and Guidelines Manuals, which are kept at each library service point.

Procedures and conditions relating to the use of computers, Internet, wireless, printing and photocopying facilities are detailed in the *Library Services - Computers, Internet, Wireless, Printing and Photocopying Conditions for Public Use Policy*.

Library fees and charges are detailed in the [Library Fees and Charges](#).

Guidelines for the selection, acquisition and withdrawal of materials are contained in the [Library Services - Selection and Collection Development Policy](#).

Display of any material within the library, including advertisements and notices, must comply with the *Library Display Facilities and Notice Boards Policy*.

The implications of the Library Use Policy have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

3. Objectives

The Library Use Policy aims to clarify the expected behaviour of people when in the libraries and outlines the conditions associated with being a member of the library.

4. Policy details

i. Admission to the library

Merri-bek libraries are committed to being child safe and has zero tolerance for child abuse. We believe all children and young people have the right to be safe and feel safe.

All patrons entering the libraries are expected to behave appropriately with and around (or in the presence of) children and young people.

A responsible person such as parent or guardian is required to supervise children under the age of 10.

If you are a child over the age of 10 and are deemed to be at risk, appropriate measures to ensure your safety will be explored including, if relevant, contact and consultation with services that support the safety of children.

You will need to have the permission of an authorised staff member if you wish to attend the library outside of the usual opening hours.

You must not enter the library if you are intoxicated or under the influence of prohibited drug(s).

You must not bring any animals into the library except for assistance animals. Library staff may ask to see your [Assistance Animal Pass](#).

You may bring cold food and non-alcoholic drinks into the library, but you must not consume them near the computers.

You must not enter restricted areas of the library without the permission of an authorised staff member.

ii. Membership of the Library

You must have a current Merri-bek Libraries membership to borrow materials and use the internet on library computers.

You may apply to become a library member using the online application form together with proof of current address (a recent bill, health card, rates notice, driver's licence or student card which includes a current address).

If you do not have proof of your current address, your membership card will be issued by mail. You will not be able to borrow physical items until you have received your membership card but may access electronic resources, computers and the Internet at the library.

If you want to join the library but do not have a fixed address, memberships with limited borrowing conditions are available.

If you are under 18 years of age, your application for membership must be approved by an adult guarantor. The adult guarantor will need to provide proof of current address (unless they are already a member) and will need to determine whether you will have access to the internet on library computers. If you are between 16 to 18 years of age without access to an adult guarantor, your membership may be approved with limited borrowing conditions.

On becoming a member of Merri-bek Libraries, you agree to comply with library policies. Failure to do so may result in suspension of membership.

If you lose your library card, please let us know as soon as you realise it is missing. If you change your address let us know within 7 days. You are responsible for all items borrowed on your membership card.

Conditions relating to the loan of materials are detailed in the [Library Loans Policy](#).

Conditions relating to the use of Internet, wireless and printing/photocopying facilities are detailed in the [Library Services - Computers, Internet, Wireless, Printing and Photocopying Conditions for Public Use Policy](#). The [Library Fees and Charges](#) document details charges applicable for printing and photocopying. Fees are payable by card only; if you cannot pay via card, small amounts of printing or photocopying will be provided at no charge with the approval of the senior staff member.

iii. Conduct within the Library

You must:

- Behave in a responsible and reasonable manner whilst in the library and treat library staff and other members of the public with respect.
- Provide proof of identification, such as a current library membership card, when requested by an authorised staff member.

You must not:

- Damage any library materials, furniture, equipment or facilities.
- Interfere with others' enjoyment of the library by making excessive noise.
- Run or throw items within the library or endanger other users or staff in any manner.
- Put a child or young person at risk of harm or abuse
- Consume alcohol or illicit drugs in the library.
- Smoke or vape within the library or within five metres of an entrance to the library.
- Sell any items or collect money within the library.
- Bring skates, bikes or other wheeled devices into the library, except wheelchairs, prams or mobility devices.
- Distribute handbills, advertisements, petitions or other notices within the library.
- Conduct any form of gambling within the library.
- Remain in the library after having been lawfully directed to leave by an authorised staff member.

The following behaviours may result in Library staff taking action, including instructing you to leave:

- Assaulting
- Shouting
- Swearing or using abusive language

- Insulting
- Inappropriate interaction with a child or young person
- Threatening
- Damaging property
- Making sexist, homophobic, transphobic or racist remarks
- Being affected by alcohol or drugs
- Entering staff-only areas

In addition:

- No canvassing may be undertaken within the library
- You must have all relevant individuals' consent to take photographs or videos in the library. No photography or videoing is permitted at events for children and young people. It is illegal to broadcast or publish images without consent.

iv. Enforcement of the Policy

You must immediately cease an unacceptable behaviour and must immediately leave the library if requested by an authorised staff member.

Failure to comply with the conditions of the Library Use Policy may result in referral to Security Services, suspension of library privileges or, if appropriate, referral to the police for further action.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Merri-bek Libraries aim to

- provide services and collections that meet the needs of our diverse community
- offer programs tailored to engage, educate and entertain
- provide safe and inviting community spaces

As a visitor to the library, you should

- be able to easily take part in activities and access resources & spaces at the libraries
- feel safe and welcome
- treat others with respect

6. Monitoring, Evaluating and review

This Policy will be reviewed by the Library Leadership Group 6 months prior to the expiry date, or earlier if monitoring determines that changes are required.

7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Council	Merri-bek City Council
Library	A library belonging to or under the control or management of Council and includes the buildings, rooms, offices, passages, staircases, foyers, meeting rooms, adjacent entrances and sanitary facilities and includes the Brunswick, Campbell Turnbull, Coburg, Fawkner and Glenroy libraries.
Patron	Any person, whether or not a member, who visits a library for the purpose of using any Library resources and/or facilities.
Member	Any user who has fulfilled the requirements for membership of the Library and has a current membership card.
Authorised staff member	Any person officially employed by Council in the library
Canvassing	The act of conducting surveys, opinion polls or interviews within the library to gather information about a topic or to spread information of a political nature to garner support for a cause or political party.

8. Associated Documents

[Computer, Internet, Wireless, Printing and Photocopying Conditions for Public Use Policy](#) - (D23/219584)

[Library Fees and Charges](#)

[Library Loans Policy](#) (D21/282744)

[Library Selection and Collection Development Policy](#) (D15/30685)

Library Display Facilities and Notice Boards Policy (D15/36082)

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (D22/568631)