



Fees

Policy Number: LS 1510

Effective: May 2018

Purpose

Library Services establishes a fee schedule in order to encourage timely return of library books and materials and to recover costs associated with providing specific services

Policy

Library Services will maintain a fee schedule that enumerates various fees charged to encourage timely return of loaned materials and to recover costs associated with specific services. The Fee Schedule is reviewed biannually or as often as necessary by Library Administration and the Library Board. The Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners is the approval authority over the Fee Schedule and any modifications. It is the responsibility of Library Services staff to implement the Fee Schedule as approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

Library Supervisors or their authorized designees may, at their discretion, authorize a waiver of lost or damaged materials fees on a customer account if the fees were improperly assessed by the Library, or if the customer establishes a hardship as the result of an event beyond the customer's control. Such hardship claims must be supported with appropriate documentation. The reason for each waiver will be documented on each customer's account and on the Waiver Log. Customers may make partial payments of any amount. Customers who dispute fees on their own account or a dependent account may appeal as specified below. If that does not resolve the dispute, the customer may appeal in writing, with pertinent documentation attached, to that library's Public Service Regional Manager. If the Public Service Regional Manager does not resolve the dispute, the customer may make a final appeal to the designated Manager delegated by the Library Director, the authority to make final decisions in any customer dispute of fees.

A new account will be created for adults who wish to renew an expired card that has fines or fees that were incurred as a juvenile. Staff will put a note in the Juvenile record to ignore the fees and create an association between the old Juvenile account and the account of the parent/guardian of the Juvenile. The old fees will not be waived.

Procedure

The following are acceptable methods of payment: check, money order, debit/Credit card. A receipt will be provided for any payment.

Staff may, at their discretion, authorize a waiver of lost or damaged materials fees if the charges were improperly assessed by the Library, or if the customer establishes a hardship as the result of an event beyond the customer's control. See Attachment B, Fee Waiver Guidelines for details. Staff must check the customer record for prior waivers before determining whether or not to authorize any waiver. Staff must document the basis for granting the waiver in the customer record noting any supporting police reports, insurance claims, etc. All Waivers must be recorded on a Waiver Log (Attachment A) for each site. The entry will include a brief description of the qualifying event with notation of the documentation provided. **Medical records may be provided by customers as supporting documentation but no copies of such records are to be made or retained by library staff due to HIPAA privacy rules and regulations.** The Waiver Log will be kept on file electronically for 5 years to provide an audit record for Waivers.

The customer account appeal process will begin by discussion with staff, who will investigate the customer's circumstances in accordance with this policy, and take appropriate action. If the customer is not satisfied with that decision, they may appeal to the Public Service Regional Manager for that location. The customer will complete a Fines and Fees Appeal Form (Attachment C), attach the relevant documentation, scan, and send to the Public Service Regional Manager. The Public Service Regional Manager will verify the customer's circumstances, review the account history and usage, interview the customer and/or staff, etc. and make a decision to grant or deny the appeal within five (5) working days. If the customer is not satisfied with the Public Service Regional Manager's resolution, the customer may ask that the appeal be sent to the designated Manager.

The designated Manager will review the appeal and the documentation provided by the customer and Public Service Regional Manager, consult appropriate staff, discuss the circumstances with the customer, and make a final decision to grant or deny the appeal as delegated by Library Director. The customer will be notified of the Manager's decision within five (5) working days. Both the Public Service Regional Manager and the designated Manager will respond to the customer in writing.