

**Subject:** Library Membership  
**Effective:** October 2018  
**Revised:** *March 2024*

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

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This policy explains:

- Where you can use your province-wide library card
- How to apply for a library card
- Activating your library card
- Library cards for children
- Providing proof of address
- Keeping your library membership active
- How a family member, friend, or volunteer can pick up your library materials

Staff procedures for issuing library cards are found in the New Brunswick Public Library Service (NBPLS) [Circulation Services Manual](#).

For information on borrowing privileges and loan periods, see [Policy 1052 – Access to Library Collections](#).

For information about fees for lost or damaged materials, see [Policy 1055 - Library Fees](#).

For information about educator cards, see [Policy 1082 – Educator Services](#).

For information on Internet access, see [Policy 1073 – Internet Access](#).

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## 2.0 APPLICATION

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This policy applies to members of the public and NBPLS staff.

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## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

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**Public library** refers to public libraries and public-school libraries that are part of the New Brunswick Public Library Service.

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## 4.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

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[New Brunswick Public Libraries Act.](#)

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## 5.0 GOALS / PRINCIPLES

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Library cards are available at no charge to residents and visitors of New Brunswick. You need a library card to borrow materials, use public access computers and access online resources. Anyone can visit a library or look at materials in a library even if they do not have a library card.

The materials in New Brunswick's public libraries are a provincial collection that can be accessed from any library.

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## 6.0 REQUIREMENTS / STANDARDS

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### 6.1 PROVINCE-WIDE LIBRARY CARD

6.1.1 You can use your library card to borrow materials at any public library in New Brunswick. For locations and hours of operation, please visit the NBPLS website at <http://www.gnb.ca/publiclibraries>.

### 6.2 APPLYING FOR A LIBRARY CARD

6.2.1 In order to get a library card, you must meet one of the following requirements:

- have a temporary or permanent address in New Brunswick;
- own property or pay taxes in New Brunswick;
- live outside New Brunswick but in an area next to an existing library (you must provide proof of address);
- be a student attending a New Brunswick school, university or college for a full academic year; or
- be an exchange student attending a New Brunswick school, college, or university for less than a full year.

6.2.2 When you apply for a library card in person, staff will ask for the following personal information:

- your name and address (required);

- proof of your identity and address (required);
- the official language in which you wish to receive communications (required);
- your phone number (optional);
- your year of birth (optional); and
- your email address (optional).

6.2.3 Acceptable identification includes:

- identification issued by an employer or by a government department or agency;
- identification issued by a school, university or college;
- identification issued by a group home or shelter, and proof of address for the group home or shelter.

6.2.4 Unacceptable forms of identification include:

- Medicare cards, Social Insurance Numbers (SIN), and credit cards. These cannot be used as proof of identity to get a library card.

6.2.5 For information on how we manage your personal information, please see [Policy 1060 – Confidentiality of Personal Information about Patrons](#).

### 6.3 **ACTIVATING YOUR LIBRARY CARD**

6.3.1 If you apply for a library card at the library, staff will ask for identification and proof of address in order to activate your card.

6.3.2 If you cannot provide identity or proof of address, the library will give you a limited circulation library card. You can use it to borrow up to five items.

- The library will also mail you a *Letter to Confirm a Patron's Address*. When you bring the letter to the library, it becomes your proof of address.
- You will still need to provide proof of your identity before being able to get a regular library card.

6.3.3 If you apply for a library card through the NBPLS website, the first time you use the card at a library, staff will ask for identification and proof of address in order to activate your card.

6.3.4 You do not need to activate your library card to use the NBPLS online resources. You simply need to enter the barcode number.

#### 6.4 LIBRARY CARDS FOR CHILDREN

6.4.1 A library card for a **child 12 years of age or younger** must be signed by the child's parent or legal guardian.

6.4.2 By signing the card, the parent or legal guardian accepts responsibility for the child's use of the library and all library services and collections, including the use of library computers and the Wi-Fi network, in accordance with NBPLS policy.

6.4.3 If a child wants to borrow library materials as part of a class visit and does not have a library card, the child can get a **limited circulation library card** allowing them to borrow up to five items at a time. When the child's parent or legal guardian visits the library and completes the registration, the child will receive a regular library card.

6.4.4 In some situations, for example, if a parent refused to complete a child's registration, the child would be permitted to continue to use a limited circulation library card.

#### 6.5 CHANGES TO CONTACT INFORMATION

6.5.1 Library staff will verify each patron's address during every circulation transaction.

6.5.2 You are responsible to let library staff know about any changes to your contact information.

6.5.3 If NBPLS becomes aware that your address on file is not current, you will be unable to borrow physical library materials until your new address is updated and verified. You can still access online resources.

## 6.6 IF UNABLE TO PROVIDE PROOF OF ADDRESS

6.6.1 In certain situations, for example, if a person has insecure housing, they would be permitted to continue to use a limited circulation library card without being able to provide proof of a permanent address.

## 6.7 INACTIVE CARDS

6.7.1 Library cards that are not used will be cancelled after four years of inactivity, but you can request a new card. Library use includes: borrowing material, use of online resources and use of public access computers.

## 6.8 AUTHORIZING ACCESS TO ACCOUNT

6.8.1 A patron can authorize a family member, friend, or volunteer to pick up library materials on their behalf. This information will be added to the patron's account.

6.8.2 The authorized family member, friend, or volunteer will be asked to provide acceptable ID (see point 6.2.3) or their own library card to match their name to that listed in the account.

6.8.3 The authorized family member, friend, or volunteer can:

- Access the borrowing information
- Renew items
- Place holds
- Pay fees and obtain receipts
- Report a card lost/stolen
- Make changes to the borrower account information, except for juvenile cards where only the legal guardian can make changes.
- Pick up holds.

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## 7.0 GUIDELINES / RECOMMENDATIONS

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The NBPLS [Circulation Services Manual](#) provides detailed procedures for library staff.

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## 8.0 REGIONAL GUIDELINES

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None.

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## 9.0 REFERENCES

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[New Brunswick Public Libraries Act.](#)

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## 10.0 CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION

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NBPLS Provincial Office, (506) 453-2354

[NBPLS-SBPNB@gnb.ca](mailto:NBPLS-SBPNB@gnb.ca)