

Somerville Public Library

POLICIES MANUAL

Somerville Public Library
POLICIES
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Somerville Public Library Collection Development Policy

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I. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

It is the mission of this policy statement to provide a general set of guidelines for the development and maintenance of the materials collections offered by Somerville Public Library.

II. LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

It is the aim of Somerville Public Library to meet the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of our patrons by providing library materials and information sources in a variety of formats and reading levels in accordance with the mission and goals of this Library, the varied interests of our patrons, and budgetary constraints.

Somerville Public Library exists to serve as a center for current, reliable and appropriate information and as a resource for the continuing, lifelong education of all members of the community. The Library seeks to stimulate reading interests of both children and adults by placing special emphasis on enrichment programs for all ages.

In compliance with our constitutional rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, the Library will attempt to provide the widest range of viewpoints based on the quality, cost, and availability of the materials for purchase.

Somerville Public Library will strive to satisfy the diverse information needs and interests of our community through selection, acquisition, organization and preservation of Library materials and to provide skilled guidance in their use.

III. INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

Somerville Public Library began as a private library in 1994. The Library became a department of the City of Somerville in 2006 and is affiliated with the Alabama Public Library Service. Somerville Public Library is governed by the Somerville Public Library Board of Trustees consisting of five members appointed by the Mayor and Somerville City Council.

The Library is located within the City of Somerville which, according to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, has a population of 347. The median household income for Somerville is \$26,250 with 13% of the Somerville population having incomes below the poverty level. The Library also serves eastern Morgan County, a rural portion of the county with a population of 111,064. The median household income is \$37,803 with 9.7% of the county population having incomes below the poverty level.

Our Library offers computer learning programs designed to improve skills needed for passing the GED, ACT, U.S. Citizenship, Adult Basic Skills and numerous other tests. Also offered online is a Basic Skills Learning program to improve language and math skills in both English and Spanish. These computer programs are available for use within the Library and off site.

Each summer Somerville Public Library sponsors a Summer Reading Program offered through Alabama Public Library Service. Story Hours are offered year round for pre-school and elementary age students. Off-site Librarian visits are made to local private pre-school programs, child care centers and Head Start.

Somerville Public Library went into full automation in November, 2008 as the result of an LSTA grant from the Alabama Public Library Service. Somerville Public Library began serving our community with the ATRIUM automation system in November, 2008. Our Library houses a collection in excess of 12,000 items. Annual circulation averages 15,000 with 6,500 library visits annually. Registered patrons number 300.

IV. MATERIALS SELECTION

Materials are selected by trained staff in an effort to maintain a well-balanced, up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection of materials that will meet the needs of the community as a whole. Factors affecting materials selection include suitability of a material's format for Library purposes, availability of funds, availability of new materials in needed subject areas, replacement of outdated and worn materials (weeding), and space.

The final responsibility for selection is granted by the Somerville Public Library Board of Trustees to the Library Director, who considers the reviews in professional journals such as *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, and *Publisher's Weekly* as well as patron and staff requests via completion of a "Recommendation of Material for Purchase" form, during the selection process.

V. COLLECTION OBJECTIVES

The permanent book collection should reflect a strong, accurate, and up-to-date reference collection, a broad fiction selection of classics, as well as standard and popular items, and basic non-fiction titles covering a wide range of subject areas for the researcher and the recreational reader. If determined necessary by the Library Director and/or Board of Trustees, specialized collections may be developed to meet specific research, information, or recreational needs of the community.

Materials are selected and retained on the basis of their content. Somerville Public Library collections represent diverse points of view. The library collections, as much as possible, reflect the community and its diversity of interests, perspectives and backgrounds. The Library also seeks to bring awareness of those cultures, traditions and ideas not represented in the local community. The selection principles promote the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read Act*, *Freedom to View Act*, and *Intellectual Freedom Statement* and *ALA Guidelines for Access to Electronic Information*. (See Appendices).

VI. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

In selecting materials for the library collections, the Director and Staff use the following criteria:

- Appropriateness to library's mission and service roles
- Relationship to existing collection and other titles available
- Availability elsewhere or more in keeping with other institutions roles
- Availability to purchase or access
- Requests by patrons, advisory groups, and staff
- Suitability of format for user's needs and subject
- Community interests and needs
- Relevance to the experiences and contributions of diverse populations
- Levels of funding and cost of item
- Anticipated use

- Physical quality of material
- Value of resource in relation to its cost
- Authority, accuracy and accessibility of presentation
- Currency of information
- Reputation of author, publisher or issuing body
- Attention and response of critics, reviewers and general public
- Subject matter and scope
- Historical significance
- Quality and style of writing
- Inclusion of work in bibliographies, recommendations lists, indexes

VIII. ADULT COLLECTION

A. Fiction

The collection focuses on twentieth century literature including classics and standard titles, diverse genres and special interests. There is no single standard for inclusion in the fiction collection. Because of the large volume of fiction published, it is possible to purchase only a representative selection with emphasis on major authors and the most popular examples of a genre.

Patron requests for fiction are purchased whenever possible and influence the addition of more copies. (Ratio of 5 patron requests per copy.) Genre fiction such as mysteries, romances, espionage, horror, thrillers, science fiction, fantasy and westerns are purchased in proportion to demand and use statistics. Efforts are made to complete series, purchase award winning titles and to represent local authors, publishers and subject matter.

B. Non-Fiction

The non-fiction collection emphasizes timely, accurate and useful informational materials to support individual and community interests. It emphasizes materials that are current and in high demand. Resources are available for all ages and reading levels in a variety of formats. Materials are selected to represent a continuum of opinions and viewpoints when available. Titles with sustaining value and those of current, accepted authority are part of the library collection. As a new field of knowledge emerges, the library responds with timely additions.

Somerville Public Library emphasizes non-scholarly materials. For more in-depth research, patrons are directed to use the Alabama Virtual Library and other available search engines. Some priority areas for Somerville Public Library include; computer books, general religion, job-search and resumes, personal finance, law for lay persons, test study materials, home repair, crafts, holidays, pets, gardening, health, cookbooks, popular biographies, travel and books on contemporary issues.

C. Reference

Reference materials are for in house use. They provide quick, concise and up-to-date information. Included are indexes, encyclopedias, bibliographies, biographical resources, dictionaries, almanacs and directories. Readers' Advisory materials include a selection of bibliographic books to assist readers in selecting recreational materials in various genres.

Additional selection criteria for Reference Materials:

- Ease of use
- Format

- Authoritativeness
- Frequency of use
- Scope and depth of coverage
- Demands on subject areas which circulating collection cannot meet

D. Electronic Resources

Somerville Public Library makes access to global electronic resources available to all library patrons. The Library recognizes that the development of electronic information and networking poses new challenges as well as new opportunities for patrons, board and staff. The Library believes that these challenges and opportunities are best addressed by adherence to the fundamental principals of traditional library use and the principles of a free society.

1. Internet Access

The Internet enables the library to provide information resources beyond the confines of its own collection. The Internet allows access to ideas, information and commentary from around the globe. Currently it is a voluntary and unevenly regulated medium. While the Internet offers a wealth of materials that are personally, professionally and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enable access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal, inaccurate or incomplete. The Library provides filtered free access to the Internet to card holding patrons. The responsibility for what minors read or view on the Internet rests with parents or guardians. In support of parental responsibility, Somerville Public Library requires children under the age of 17 to have parental/guardian permission to obtain a library card. Parents or designated guardians who wish to deny Internet access to the children for whom they are legally responsible are able to do so by placing a restriction on those minors' library cards. Computer use requires an Somerville Public Library card.

2. Web Links

Professional staff will identify and recommend interesting and useful Internet destinations and resources from the Library's home page, which support the Library's Mission and service roles, as we do for the in-house library materials collection. Links to information resources are based on staff's judgment of the best resources available and do not imply endorsement. Users should recognize, however, that the Library is not responsible for the content of linked sites, or for the content of sources accessed through subsequent links. The library cannot control or monitor material that may be accessible from internet sources because the Internet is a vast and unregulated medium with access points that can and do change rapidly and unpredictably.

Questions considered when evaluating whether to link to a remote website:

- Is the subject matter and information useful for our patrons?
- Is the remote site easily accessible?
- Is it relevant to the overall mission of the Library?
- Is it a local resource?
- Is the resource of sufficient quality to merit a link?
- Who has established the page? (Authority)
- Is there a sponsor?
- Is the information accurate?
- Is there discernable bias?

- Does the page have a posting and/or revision date?
- Is the site regularly maintained?

3. Electronic and Online Databases

The State of Alabama offers all citizens of the state access to its premier Database collection, the Alabama Virtual Library. The AVL is a collection of 56 databases encompassing all age groups and a vast range of topics. The AVL is accessed by using an individual AVL card. The card is free and is obtained from any Alabama public library. The Alabama Virtual Library may then be accessed from any online computer with the individual access code.

E. Periodicals and Newspapers

Periodicals are an important source of new ideas, current topics, and consumer information and are in high demand as recreational reading material. Somerville Public Library subscribes to a broad range of approximately 25 periodicals and newspapers. Periodicals are generally retained for one year and newspapers are generally retained for three months. The periodicals collection is reviewed annually for additions and deletions.

F. Audio/Visual Materials

As with print materials, the audio/visual collections are selective rather than comprehensive in scope. All materials selected will contribute to the fulfillment of goals of the Library as a whole, and criteria for the selection of audio and video materials are much the same as those used in the selection of other collections.

1. Audio Books (Cassettes and CD's)

Audio materials are considered an adjunct to the print collection; this collection is not intended to mirror development of literature or to systematically cover non-fiction topics. A balance is maintained between abridged and unabridged titles with preference to unabridged if a choice is available. Fiction is emphasized over non-fiction. As patrons move from cassette players to CDs the ration of these materials will also change over time.

2. Videos/DVDs

The goals of the video collections are:

To provide basic information on a variety of subjects of interest to patrons. The video collection is considered an adjunct to the print collection, with emphasis placed on purchases in which the nature of the medium adds substantially to the viewer's understanding.

To provide children with a quality selection of preschool learning and entertainment ideas: film versions of children's literature; selected non-fiction videos that reflect areas of interest across generations and award winning children's films.

To provide patrons with entertainment videos including feature films with an emphasis on family entertainment and literature based material. The focus of the entertainment video collection is towards quality productions from such entities as PBS, BBC and A&E and for classic television series.

The focus of the Library video collection is on materials not easily available locally from video stores. Videos are protected by copyright and are for home use only.

Additional selection criteria for Audio/Visual Materials

- Technical quality of audio and visual reproduction
- Presentation or experience that is unique to format and provides an alternative to print
- Significance of performance or diversity in interpretation
- Critical acclaim as demonstrated in awards, nomination for awards, and/or reviews
- Suitability to be circulated or housed in a sturdy, safe and convenient manner.

IX. COLLECTIONS FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN

The range of users served by Young Adult and Children's collections include preschool children significantly those in day care and preschools; home schooling families, private and public school students; and university students of Education, especially Children's Literature.

The primary collections include:

- Picture Books – board books, wordless books, simple concept and informational books, classic and contemporary preschool stories and folklore; audio cassette book packages.
- Readers – books specifically designed for the emerging reader with controlled and/or progressively constructed vocabularies
- Easy Fiction – very simple chapter books and sophisticated picture books.
- Juvenile fiction – quality contemporary and historical fiction for readers from ages 7/8 to 11/12 years as well as genres (fantasy, science fiction, mystery), fiction series and paperbacks.
- Juvenile Nonfiction – informational books for youth up to age 12 (grades 5/6) with an emphasis on mythology and folklore; physical and natural science; arts and crafts; sports; poetry; biography; and the culture, customs and history of people from regions of the U.S. and countries of the world.
- Juvenile Reference and Reader's Advisory – a highly selective collection of bibliographic resources for readers' advisory assistance and encyclopedias for key areas of research by youth.
- Young Adult Collection – selected hardback collection of standard fiction with multiple and ephemeral titles in paperback, for the recreational reading of youth ages 11/12 – 16/17 (6th – 11th grades); highly selective collection of nonfiction resources for the personal interest of these youth, focusing on issues of adolescent development and self-identity.

Additional Selection Criteria for Materials for Youth

- Age and interest appropriate content and presentation
- Emphasis on quality, critically acclaimed materials as demonstrated in awards, specialized bibliographies and/or reviews.
- Quality and aesthetics of illustrations to stimulate the imagination
- Awareness of curriculum-based needs of public, private, and home school students, and secondarily university students of children's literature.
- Information and stories, which represent a spectrum of family styles, values and interests.
- Materials, which represent the richness and diversity of young people's local and world community.
- Materials which meet the particular developmental need of youth at different stages.

X. SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Somerville Public Library maintains a few special collections, for which the development and management differ somewhat from the general collections.

A. GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY

OPL maintains a growing collection of local history and genealogical materials. This collection is considered Reference Materials and as such does not circulate. Gifts to the collection are encouraged.

B. PROFESSIONAL COLLECTION

A small collection of specialized materials pertaining to the management and development of public libraries is kept for use by OPL staff. These materials are shelved in the Reference Collection and may be used in house by all patrons. The library staff reserves the right to request the surrender of materials from the Professional Collection if the need arises.

A small collection of materials is also maintained for the use of the Director for Story Hour and library presentations including: selected picture books, pop-up books, “Big” books, professional journals and resources for librarians working with young people. These materials are non-circulating, but may be made available to patrons upon request.

C. BEACH BOOKS

A collection of paperback books are made available during the summer months for adults and young adults. This collection is made up entirely of donated materials and receives minimal processing. Because the cost of the collection is slight, replacement fees for lost or damaged materials are a flat \$5 fee.

XI. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Somerville Public Library recognizes the need for ongoing evaluation of its collections to assure currency and visually inviting and accessible collections. This ongoing maintenance includes weeding, replacement, repair, restoration and review of standing order agreements. The most cost-effective option is selected when making replacement versus repair decisions.

A. Weeding Guidelines

Discard:

- Materials with obsolete content
- Materials which are used infrequently
- Materials that have no anticipated use
- Materials in poor or irreparable physical condition
- Older editions of encyclopedias, almanacs, directories, yearbooks and standard texts
- Materials which are incomplete sets in which items missing seriously impair their usefulness
- Works containing information that has been superseded or presented in newer, more comprehensive or more accessible formats

B. Retention Guidelines

Retain:

- Materials with regular and on-going use
- Works containing useful local information
- Primary works in particular disciplines or topics
- Works representative of an era, trend or movement which provide unique coverage
- Works listed in standard or authoritative up to date bibliographies regularly used by staff and public
- Placement of desired item is not possible

C. Censorship and Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Somerville Public Library Board of Trustees believes that the only acceptable censorship is self-censorship, therefore, it is the intent of the Board that no challenged library material shall be removed from the collection except upon court order, and after adversary proceedings in which the Somerville Public Library Board defends inclusion of the material, unless said material was placed in the collection in violation of this policy.

The Library director will devise and implement appropriate procedure for patrons to register complaints concerning materials, which must include appeal to the Somerville Public Library board of Trustees. See appendix for the "Request for Reconsideration of Specific Library Materials" form.

D. Gifts

The Library may accept gifts of materials and monetary donations to purchase materials. Often gifts are given in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special event. Donated items will be carefully reviewed for their overall contributions to the Library's mission, service priorities and relevance to the collection. Materials donated to the Library will be added to the collection if they meet the criteria for materials selection and are in good physical condition. No materials from anonymous sources will be considered for inclusion in the library collection. Once given, all gifts are the property of Somerville Public Library and will be treated on an equal basis with purchased materials with regard to the inclusion, display, housing, circulation and disposition of material.

Somerville Public Library

COMPUTER USE/INTERNET POLICY

Somerville Public Library is dedicated to providing the community with a wide variety of information on all topics. In keeping with the mission and vision of the Library, free limited use of the Internet is available to all library users, upon signature of the “Acceptable Internet Use Policy” agreement.

The Internet, as an information resource, enables the Library to provide information beyond the confines of its own collection. It allows access to ideas, information and commentary from around the globe. Currently, however, it is an unregulated medium. As such, while it offers access to a wealth of material that is personally, professionally, and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal.

Library employees may provide basic introductory training concerning Internet or personal computer use as time permits but do not provide in-depth Internet assistance. Staff can locate books and other library resources dealing with computer-related topics and can provide referrals to area computer classes.

FILTERING

The Library offers both unblocked and blocked access to the Internet. Full (unblocked, unfiltered) access is available to Adults. Adults use the Internet at their own discretion, and the Library has no control over and is not responsible for the content on the Internet. Not all sites provide accurate, complete, or current information. Some access points carry information that a user might find controversial or inappropriate. We encourage our patrons to be sensitive to the fact that they are in a public setting.

Just as the Library does not restrict access to other material forms and formats, we cannot refuse access to Internet content that someone else may deem objectionable. The principles of intellectual freedom that apply to the traditional print library also apply to the modern electronic access library. All patrons using the Internet must read and sign the Internet Users Agreement before use. Patrons under the age of 17 must have a parent or legal guardian sign the agreement.

INTERNET ACCESS BY MINORS

Minors (up to age 17) can have full (unblocked, unfiltered) access to the Internet, with the signed permission of a parent or guardian. (The parental permission form will be kept on file, and a child’s library card will contain information about their permitted access.) Limited Internet access is also available for minors on machines with commercially available blocking software that is intended to prevent access to visual materials of an obscene or sexually explicit nature that would be considered legally “Harmful to Minors.” The Library cannot guarantee the effectiveness of the software in use, nor can the Library be responsible for any failure on the part of the software to block offensive or inappropriate materials. The Library is also not responsible for the inadvertent restriction of access to desirable, necessary or appropriate information that may result from use of the blocking software. With or without blocking

software, children who use the Internet without parental guidance may encounter material that is beyond their maturity level or otherwise unsuitable. We strongly urge parents to discuss the use of the Internet with their children, to determine its most appropriate use.

As with other library materials, restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian. Parents or guardians, not the Library or its staff, are responsible for the Internet information selected and /or accessed by their child/children.

COMPUTER USE

Internet computers will not be used for illegal activity, to access illegal materials, or to access materials which by local community standards would be obscene.

- Library staff may limit use of computer equipment which has been purchased from grant funds, according to the terms or intent of the grant agreement.
- Installation, downloading, or modification of software is prohibited.
- Users will respect copyright laws and licensing agreements.
- Users will not make any attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files or networks, or to damage or modify computer equipment or software.
- Prompt payment is required by users who incur charges for printing or other authorized fees.
- Terminals will not be "reserved."
- Access sessions will be limited to thirty minutes, unless otherwise authorized by the Librarian in Charge. Access sessions are limited to a maximum of 2 hours in length with a 30-minute timeout period between sessions. During the timeout period the user is denied access to library computers except for the "catalog and database only" workstations.
- Users must end their session and leave the terminal when asked to do so by authorized Library staff.
- Upon completion of an Internet access session, a user may be required to wait 30 minutes before signing up for another session.
- The number of access sessions available per day, per user, may be established by the Librarian in Charge: such limitations will be dependent on facility-specific demand in order to provide access for the majority of users.
- Users will respect the privacy of other users, and will refrain from attempting to view or read material being used by others.
- By mutual agreement, two persons may share one access session as long as their behavior or conversation does not disturb other users or Library staff.

COMPUTER USE TERMINATION

When a library employee observes that a user has failed to comply with the Library Internet policy, they are authorized to terminate that user's access session or to prohibit that user from future sessions for up to two weeks from the date of informing the user of that action. After a meeting with the Library Director, the customer may be permanently barred from Internet access from the library.

Internet users whose access session has been terminated or prohibited will be given information concerning the process to protest the action and/or request that Internet access privileges be reinstated.

- First inappropriate behavior incident shall result in termination of the session and formal warning. Note is placed in user's personal library account.
- Second inappropriate behavior incident shall result in termination of the session and prohibition of access to library computers for two weeks. This incident will be noted in user's personal library account. The patron must make an appointment with the Library Director to request a hearing to reinstate computer privileges.
- This meeting will determine whether access to the Internet will be reinstated or permanently denied.

Somerville Public Library SAFE CHILD POLICY

Children age six and under must be accompanied by a responsible adult (age 18 or older) at ALL times while in the library. The library cannot assume responsibility for the safety of young children.

Children ages seven through ten must have a responsible adult present inside the library. All patrons will be expected to display appropriate behavior, conducive to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere while in the building.

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS, NOT LIBRARY STAFF, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIONS AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN VISITING THE LIBRARY.

Somerville Public Library

SAFETY PROCEDURES AND POLICY

No person shall engage in inappropriate conduct on the premises of the Somerville Public Library or when participating in Library programs.

Inappropriate conduct shall include any individual or group activity which is disruptive to other person's lawfully using Library premises or otherwise inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying, proper use of library materials, and other similar conduct normally associated with a public library.

Support of Staff Members Actions

Library staff acting on their best judgment in confronting a person will be supported by their supervisor, the person in charge, and the Library director.

Any staff member who observes or receives complaints of inappropriate behavior may:

- Handle the problem directly with the patron. Staff should use their judgment as to whether the situation requires assistance from another staff member.
- Immediately telephone the police if the situation is of a severe / violent or emergency medical situation.
- Contact the supervisor in charge if the situation is of a nature that staff member chooses not to confront patron.
- At any time contact police if the patron is not responding to staff requests to conform to the Library Rules.

In all cases the Library Director should be notified as soon as possible when the staff member confronts a library user who violates the Library rules. The Director will be responsible for notifying the Library Board of Trustees if necessary.

Incident Reports

Incident reports must be filed in all cases when it was necessary to call for outside help and in other situations in which the Director and staff should be informed because of possible repercussions. A log of incident reports, patrons banned and problem patrons will be available for staff and police to review in case of repeat offenders. A calendar will be used to keep track of dates of offenses and the time period a patron is banned.

In addition to written reports, staff members are encouraged to talk through upsetting incidents to share their knowledge of possible problems with other staff who might be involved.

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT - MINOR OFFENSES

The following shall be deemed "inappropriate" and considered to be minor offenses:

Sleeping; excessive and disruptive conversations; eating or drinking in a public area of the library; monopolizing unreasonable numbers of library materials at any given time; unauthorized canvassing, selling, soliciting, or engaging in any other commercial activity; violating Internet and computer policies ; excessive

staring at patrons or staff; preventing staff from normal, reasonable, clean-up, reshelving activities, especially 10 minutes before closing; being in a state of intoxication; smoking; bringing any animal into the library, except working animals which assist the disabled; other activities (not listed as Major Offenses) which are inconsistent with activities such as reading, studying, use of library materials, and other similar conduct normally associated with the use of public library facilities.

TREATMENT OF MINOR OFFENSES

- 1 warning for first infraction of any offense.
- Second infraction within 30 days results in removal from the Library premise for 1 day. Parents of children under 17 will be notified in writing when their child commits a second infraction and has been removed from the library.
- Third infraction within 60 days or continuous repeat infractions may result in banning from the Library premises for not less than 2 weeks or more than 6 months.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR – MAJOR OFFENSES

Any persons violating the following rules will be immediately removed from the building. The patron may be banned from any further Library use at the discretion of the Library Director, depending on the nature and the seriousness of the offense which required removal, the extent of damage or disruption caused, any history of prior infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.

Stealing, defacing or damaging library property; abusive, indecent, profane or drunken conversation and/or behavior; committing any crime, misdemeanor, or violation of a municipal ordinance, not covered under MINOR OFFENSES, on the premises of the library; knowingly entering non-public areas of library.

BANNING PROCEDURE

After staff consultation regarding repeat or major behavioral problems, and it is determined that the person should be banned:

- a. Supervisor in charge will make a recommendation to the Director detailing the reasons for the proposed banning;
- b. Director will consult with supervisor and provide written decision;
- c. The written decision shall set forth the period during which the patron shall be banned from the library and shall specify the reasons for the determination. The patron may be banned for a period from 2 weeks to 6 months at the discretion of the Library Director, depending on the nature and the seriousness of the offense which required removal, the extent of damage or disruption caused, any history of prior infractions of library policies and other relevant circumstances.
- d. The patron and all staff will be notified in writing of the reasons for and length of the banning. A copy will also be sent to the police and to the Library Board President.
- e. The Director may review or reconsider the decision upon written request of the patron and may shorten or terminate the banning period if information submitted by the patron warrants such modification. The Director will respond in writing and notify the individual of the appeals process.

REPEAT OFFENDERS

Any person who enters or remains on library premises after having been notified by an authorized individual not to do so, and any person who enters or remains on the library premises during the period in which he or she has been banned from the library, will be subject to arrest and prosecution for trespassing.

After the banning period has elapsed, the patron may re-apply for readmission through administrative channels. However, he or she will need to be prepared to show evidence that the offending behavior will not re-occur. In the absence of valid documentation (from a social worker, doctor, or police) application may be denied.

In the event that a person is granted readmission and then exhibits any of the behaviors described earlier, they will be denied access with no further possibility of reinstatement.

SPECIFICS TO LIBRARY RULES

UNATTENDED MINORS:

Children six years of age and under must be closely accompanied at all times by an older responsible person. The child's parent will be contacted if the child is left unattended. The library reserves the right to turn over to the proper authorities minors (under age 17) left unattended for extended periods of time or left after library hours.

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

If an adult in Children's Services is not involved in appropriate use of children's library materials and is observed by staff to be spending an unnecessary and unusual amount of time in Children's Services, such person shall be asked to use other areas of the library. If the person does not comply or repeats, consequences will follow those under "TREATMENT OF MAJOR OFFENSES/ INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. "

INAPPROPRIATE PERSONAL HYGIENE

Patrons whose bodily hygiene is so offensive as to constitute a nuisance to other persons shall be required to leave the building. When the problem is corrected, patrons may re-enter the library.

THEFT AND VANDALISM / ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

The police will be called when a patron attempts to steal or maliciously destroy library and/or personal property (belonging to staff and/or patrons). The library will prosecute anyone who steals or maliciously destroys library property. When other illegal activities (e.g., indecent exposure) are committed by a patron, the library will prosecute.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

An emergency situation can be defined as any situation in which a person's actions present an imminent danger to the life or safety of him/herself, others or to Somerville Public Library property. Such incidents may include assault and other crimes of violence, or the threat or attempt to commit such crimes. Call the police immediately if such behavior should occur.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SITUATIONS

If the person is conscious, offer help and try to get identification. Remain calm, supportive, sympathetic, and see that the person is comfortable. Keep other people away. Call 911 and meet rescue squad to direct them to accident. A person who wishes to leave the library, obviously not well, cannot be stopped by a staff member.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, such as tornadoes, or hurricanes, staff will alert public over the PA system and direct them to the back hallway. The Circulation desk will close. In case of unattended children, staff assumes "loco parentis," and directs them to shelter . Any patron not wishing to follow safety procedures must leave the Library.

FIRE

Staff will follow fire safety procedures . In case of false alarm, all patrons and Library staff will exit the building and remain outside until the facility is deemed safe to enter by Fire Department personnel. Repeated false activation of the fire alarm will result in the patron's suspension of Library access.

Somerville Public Library GIFTS and DONATIONS POLICY

MONETARY GIFTS

The Library accepts monetary donations without conditions on their use for projects previously approved by the Library Board of Trustees. Such money is deposited in the Library Operating Account for future expenditure by the Board.

Memorials/Honoring

The Library actively encourages donations as memorials and as tributes to living individuals on special occasions. Such acts provide the Library with an opportunity to add materials or equipment which it might not otherwise be able to afford. In addition, it is felt that such donations provide individuals with a rich opportunity to honor loved ones with a lasting statement of admiration and respect.

Except in rare circumstances, memorials and tributes are accepted in the form of monetary donations to Somerville Public Library. The Library will make every effort to honor the donor's wishes regarding the selection to be purchased. However, the final decision rests with the Library in accordance with its needs and selection criteria.

A bookplate will be placed in the item purchased with the memorial and tribute gift funds. The bookplate will record the honoree as well as the donor. The Library will send letters to notify all parties of this gift.

In those instances where an individual wishes to donate a memorial book from his personal library, the decision to accept the gift will be based on the principles described in the Library Collection Development Policy. If accepted, the bookplate and notification will be handled in a normal manner. If it is not accepted, the book will be returned to the donor.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Library gladly accepts the donation of books and other items with the understanding that the Library may do with them as it sees fit.

Gift materials will be added to the collection if they are needed and if they meet the selection standards that are applied to all materials added to the collection. Gifts accepted for the collection become the property of the Somerville Public Library. Gifts not added to the collection will be disposed of in a way that will be most advantageous to the Library.

Upon receipt of gift materials, a receipt is given to the donor acknowledging the gift items. Due to Internal Revenue Service regulations, the Library is prohibited from providing an estimate of monetary value of the donation.

Special Collections

Special collections of materials will be accepted if they meet the Library's selection criteria. The Library reserves the right to determine such issues as classification, arrangement and shelving of gift materials. The Library will not accept special collections of materials with any donor's stipulations that these be kept together as a special collection or entity, or restricted as to use in any way. Collections will be accepted only with the understanding that they will be integrated into the general collection with the Library determining location and usage of the materials.

The Library does not accept as a gift any printed or manuscript items or any objects if the condition of acceptance requires permanent exhibition since the Library believes all exhibits should be changed periodically to maintain interest. Such gifts will be referred to a museum or historical society.

FURNITURE/ART WORK/EQUIPMENT

Gifts of furniture, art work and equipment will be accepted only when, in the opinion of the Library Director, the proposed gift is of a type that is compatible with the Library's existing furnishings. Generally, it is recommended that donors contribute money for the purchase of such articles.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

The Library will ensure that each donor receives acknowledgement and to the degree that the donor is willing, public recognition. The following guidelines will be used in providing acknowledgement to and recognition for donors:

- A letter of acknowledgement for gifts of money and in-kind support will be sent to all sponsors and a copy will be placed on file.
- Any special recognition agreements will be stipulated in the letter.
- Public acknowledgement of sponsorship in the Library's promotional materials will normally be restricted to a statement of the sponsor's name and a display of logo. Such acknowledgement will not take precedence or have prominence over the Library's own logo or promotional material.
- For gifts and/or donations valued at over \$500, the Library may submit a press release to local newspapers and/or publish an article regarding the sponsorship in their own newsletter if the sponsor is willing.
- Acknowledgement of sponsorship may also take the following forms at the Library's discretion:
 - Sponsor's name on promotional materials.
 - Small standardized plaques may be placed on donated furniture or equipment.
 - Library bookplates.

Somerville Public Library
Notification and Gift Form

Donor Information _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address, City, State, Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Gift/Memorial Information

Individual /Group Being Recognized/Memorialized _____

In Memory Of/ In Honor Of _____

Special Event _____

Program _____

Special Instructions _____

Item Donated and Estimated Cost _____

Donation Amount _____

Somerville Public Library

SURPLUS LIBRARY MATERIALS, FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Somerville Public Library to dispose of library materials, furniture and equipment that is no longer functional or useful. The Library Director shall be responsible for the sale or disposal of all library furniture and equipment that is no longer of any use to the Library. When an item no longer has value to the Library, it will be removed from inventory and disposed of:

- Books and other materials, no longer deemed appropriate for the collection, will be placed on the used book sales shelf.
- Computer equipment, no longer of use to the Library, may be donated directly to a local school district for use in their educational programs or to a community non-profit organization. Computer equipment may be sold to a technology recycling company if local school districts do not accept donations.
- Furniture no longer of use to the Library, the value of which is less than \$300.00, may be donated by the Library to a non-profit, charitable organization.
- Items not covered by the above will be sold through auction or publicly advertised sale with any proceeds from such sale being deposited to the Operating Fund of the Library. Prior to such sale, the Director will prepare a list of those items to be included in the sale for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- If an item is determined by the Director to have marginal or no resale value, or it does not sell through auction or publicly advertised sale, it may be sold or discarded in the best interest of the Library.
- The Director is authorized to accept trade-in allowances on any item of equipment being replaced or upgraded for which a trade-in allowance is offered.

In an instance where an item of surplus inventory is determined by the Director or Board of Trustees to have unusual, historic or artistic value such items may be referred to the Board for determination of value which determination may include the services of a professional appraiser or outside expert opinion.

Somerville Public Library

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Somerville Public Library makes every effort to work closely with the schools and teachers in our service area.

- Teachers are encouraged to make use of the “Assignment Alert Form” which is provided for them annually at the beginning of the school year. The “Assignment Alert” allows the teacher to notify the Library, in advance, of upcoming assignments which will be given.
- When the Library receives an “Assignment Alert” from a teacher, the Library will: gather books from the Library’s collections to meet the needs of the assignment and place them on Temporary Reference or other libraries will be contacted in an effort to gather materials to support the assignment or librarians will request materials through the Interlibrary Loan process for individual students
- Teachers are encouraged to visit the Library to determine the scope of our collections so that assignments can be given with full knowledge of the resources available in the community. Teachers are also encouraged to visit the Library to choose titles which most closely fulfill the needs of the assignment.
- In the event that a student should use the Library and fail to find the materials necessary for the completion of an assignment, the librarian will provide him with a letter which verifies his effort and clarifies for the teacher the problem with the location of materials.

Somerville Public Library Assignment Alert!

Please FAX, e-mail or drop off ten days before start of assignment.

Name _____

School/Address _____

email _____

Grade _____ Telephone Number _____ Fax Number _____

Brief description of assignment / project *(Please attach a copy of student's assignment, if available.)*

Number of students working on this assignment _____

Assignment begins _____ and ends _____

Assignment begins _____ and ends _____

Somerville Public Library

PRIVACY OF PATRON RECORDS POLICY

Confidentiality

The information that Somerville Public Library requires a person to provide in order for that person to become eligible to borrow books and other materials, as well as information identifying the individual borrowing particular books or materials, are "confidential" in nature. Except pursuant to a court order, no person shall publish or make any information contained in such records available to the public. This restriction shall include the press and any agency of State, Federal or local government. The release of statistical information is permitted provided no individual is identified in the information released.

Procedure for Access

Library staff shall observe the following procedures:

On receipt of any legal process, order or subpoena, the Library staff member in charge will immediately consult with the Library Director or President of the Board of Trustees. All requests shall be referred to the Library Director for appropriate disposition. The Library Director will consult with the City Attorney to consider appropriate action. Until the legality of such process, order or subpoena has been affirmatively shown to the satisfaction of the City Attorney, the Library will resist its issuance or enforcement until any such defect has been cured.

**Somerville Public Library
CELL PHONE POLICY**

Cell phones must be silenced in the Library. Use of cell phones by library patrons while inside the Library is prohibited.

Somerville Public Library

CIRCULATION PROCEDURES

1. In order to get a library card, a patron will be asked to complete a membership application form. A form of ID, such as a Driver's License, will be asked for at the time of completing the membership application. If any changes are made in this information, Library must be notified. Proof of identification and residency will be required.
2. Children may have their own library card. A parent or guardian's signature will be required for persons age 17 and under.
3. Children aged 6 and under must be accompanied by a responsible adult (aged 18 or older) at **ALL** times while in the library. The library cannot assume responsibility for the safety of young children. Children aged 7 through ten must have a responsible adult present inside the library. All patrons will be expected to display appropriate behavior, conducive to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere while in the building.
PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS, NOT LIBRARY STAFF, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIONS AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN VISITING THE LIBRARY.
4. Each patron is responsible for materials checked out on that individual's borrower card. If a card is lost or stolen it must be reported immediately. Parents or legal guardians are financially responsible for any and all books that are checked out by their children that are returned damaged or are lost.
5. A replacement card will be required at a cost of \$3.00 if a card becomes lost, stolen, or becomes unreadable by computer.
6. Two items may be checked out the first time on a new patron card. Then a limit of 25 items may be checked out.
7. Books are checked out for a two-week period and may be renewed if no reserves or requests (holds) are placed on the item.
8. Books may be renewed by phone. The patron's barcode number and the barcode of item(s) to be renewed must be given.
9. Overdue charges are \$0.15 per day per item with overdue fines not to exceed \$5.00 maximum per item. This maximum does not apply to New/Reserve Books.
10. Patrons having lost or damaged books and/or library materials shall be charged current retail replacement price plus a \$5.00 library-processing fee.
11. Videos/DVDs are checked out to patrons aged 16 and older for 1 week with no renewals. Only 4 videos/DVDs may be checked out on a borrower's card. Videos/DVDs must be returned to the Main Desk. A fine of \$1.00 per item will be charged if video/DVD is placed in book return.
12. Audio books are checked out to patrons aged 16 and older for 2 weeks only, unless they contain 10 or more cassettes, which may be renewed one time only. Only 2 audio books may be checked out on a borrower's card. Audio books must be returned to the Main Desk. A fine of \$1.00 per item will be charged if audio books are placed in book return.
13. Overdue notices will begin after materials are one week late.
14. A limit of 5 items may be placed on request (hold) at any one time.
15. The Librarian may deny service to any person for failure to return borrowed items, or refusal to pay fines, for destruction of property, or objectionable conduct in the library. All circulation records and registration information are confidential and will be surrendered only by court order.

Somerville Public Library PATRON REGISTRATION POLICY

Somerville Public Library will serve all residents of Morgan County, persons working in Morgan County and others from the surrounding area who are frequently in our county.

1. A patron will be asked to complete a membership application form. A staff member must witness the signature on the application form. If any changes are made in this information, the library must be notified. Proof of identification consists of a picture ID and one other form of proof of current mailing address.
2. A parent or guardian's signature will be required for persons age 17 and under applying for a library card.
3. Records of patrons with outstanding fines and/or materials not returned will be kept on record.
4. Each person will be responsible for materials checked out on that individual borrower's card. If a card is lost or stolen it must be reported immediately.
5. A replacement library card will be required at a cost of \$3.00 if the card is lost, stolen, or becomes unreadable by the computer.
6. The Librarian may deny service to any person for failure to return borrowed items or refusal to pay fines, for destruction of library property, or objectionable conduct in the library.
7. All circulation records and registration information are confidential and will be surrendered only by a court order.

Somerville Public Library VOLUNTEER POLICY

DEFINITIONS

A *volunteer* shall be considered as any individual, 16 years or older, who assists with work done at Somerville Public Library, without remuneration. Exceptions to the age requirement may be made by the Library Director.

A *student intern* shall be considered as any middle school, high school or college student who performs volunteer work, without remuneration, as part of an authorized school program to earn academic credit. Individual Boy Scouts working on advanced awards are also classified as student interns.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Somerville Public Library shall use the services of volunteers to:

1. Supplement the efforts of paid library staff in meeting demands for quality public service.
2. Serve as a method for encouraging citizens to become familiar with their library and the services being offered.
3. Staff or support fundraising activities sponsored by the Library.

Somerville Public Library shall make use of the services of interested volunteers to supplement and not replace the work done by library staff.

RECOGNITION

Recognition is an important component of a volunteer program and is often the only way in which the Library can say "thank you" to a volunteer. Although individual, informal recognition of volunteers should be ongoing, it is important that volunteers be recognized formally as a group on a regular basis, at least annually. The Library staff and Library Board shall find ways of recognizing volunteers throughout the year.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to create a contract between the volunteer or intern and the Somerville Public Library or City of Somerville. Both the volunteer and Somerville Public Library have the right to terminate the volunteer's association with the Library at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

Neither the City of Somerville nor Somerville Public Library will provide any medical, health, accident or worker's compensation benefits for any volunteer. Volunteers will not be eligible to receive any worker's compensation benefits for any injuries sustained while functioning as a volunteer.

Prior to engaging in any volunteer activity, each volunteer will be required to submit a Library Volunteer Application form for volunteer work, and visit with a supervisory staff member.

Volunteers may be asked to work on projects that are supportive of staff efforts. Examples include: shelving books, returning books, processing new materials, storytelling, helping to prepare for programs, assisting with maintenance of the vertical files, discarding materials, maintenance of periodicals, or public relations activities.

Hours of volunteer service will be determined by the supervisory staff member in discussion with the volunteer. Volunteers are expected to arrive at the library in time to begin work as scheduled or call the library if they will be absent. All volunteer work must be completed within normal library hours. Exceptions may be made by the Library Director.

RECRUITMENT AND SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be sought through a variety of methods (newspaper announcement, in-library publicity, requests through volunteer coordination organizations), to meet specific as well as general project needs. Recruitment shall be the responsibility of the Library Director.

Volunteers will work directly with library staff members to receive training and complete projects. All volunteers will be assigned one primary staff member to guide them in their work; however, staff members may offer guidance to any of the volunteers.

When appropriate and affordable, the Library may fund the cost of training for volunteers who have made a long-term commitment to the Library. Examples of appropriate training classes are: book mending classes at APLS. There will be no formal evaluation process for volunteers.

RECRUITMENT AND SUPERVISION OF STUDENT INTERNS

Student interns will be sought by the Library through educational contacts in area schools and colleges. A job description will be tailored for each school program that may offer student interns. The job description must stress the value of the project for both student and Library. A representative of the school or college will usually be involved in developing the job description and outline of the project.

The professional staff member who shapes an individual project will be responsible for the training and supervision of the student intern. Interns can be very valuable to the Library, but the Library must also offer a genuine educational opportunity. Because much staff time will be required, each project must be carefully planned and approved by the Library Director before the intern is accepted. Participation in student internship programs shall be considered a privilege which may be revoked at any time by Somerville Public Library or the student intern. All schedules will be worked out between the student intern and the supervising librarian and should not conflict with school schedules.

A method and schedule for evaluation will be agreed upon between the supervising librarian and the school or college representative before the student intern is accepted. The supervising librarian will follow this schedule and report student progress to the representative.

The following guidelines have been established to provide consistent information to volunteers and to assure that volunteers fully understand the commitment they are making:

1. A volunteer represents the Library to the community while actively serving as a volunteer.
2. A volunteer is expected to follow approved policies and procedures of the Library during the time of volunteering within library buildings and at library events elsewhere.
3. A volunteer is oriented, trained, and supervised on a continual basis concerning those policies and procedures necessary for the activities carried out.
5. In light of the time and expense involved in training and supervising volunteers, the Library may decide to discontinue or change a volunteer's service assignment, which it determines is not beneficial.
6. Volunteers fill out an information form, which is used by the Library to assure that the volunteers are involved in activities appropriate to their skills, experience, and interests.

ORIENTATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Introduction of person doing orientation and introduce volunteers.
2. Review volunteer policy, Library Bill of Rights, and confidentiality.
3. Discuss specific job description and parameters of that job.
4. Inform volunteers of dress code.
5. Inform volunteers about breaks.
6. Discuss with volunteers the seriousness about the Library Bill of Rights, confidentiality, and policies and procedures and what constitutes dismissal.

Example of dismissal:

- a. Giving out a patron's address or phone number to another person.
 - b. Not letting a person check out a book of their choice.
 - c. Discussing with anyone what someone else has checked out.
 - d. Violating Library policies.
7. Hand out volunteer badge.
 8. Be sure volunteer has filled out Volunteer Information Form, has been given Library Bill of Rights, has been given the procedures for the job they are to do.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To provide an accurate job description.
2. To prepare professional staff.
3. To prepare all participants – through an orientation.
4. To offer a well-planned program of training and supervision.
5. To be ready to place the volunteer.

6. To treat volunteers as co-workers with acceptance and trust.
7. To avoid confusing jargon.
8. To give the volunteer a significant task.
9. To continue to inform the volunteer.
10. To give the volunteer proper recognition.
11. To evaluate with the volunteer.
12. To provide opportunities for the volunteer's personal growth.
13. Annual appreciation day.

Somerville Public Library VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

1. Date: _____
 2. Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)
 3. Current address: _____
 4. City: _____ 5. State _____ 6. Zip _____
 7. Home/message phone: _____
 8. Do you have a current driver's license and use of an automobile? Yes ___ No ___
 9. Have you been convicted, or have you served time in a correctional institution within the past seven (7) years, for any crime, which might have some bearing on your fitness to serve as a library volunteer?
Yes _____ No _____ if yes give details on a separate sheet.
 10. List the days and hours you are available for volunteering: _____

 11. Indicate the kinds of activities or tasks you think you might be able to do or would like to learn to do in the library: _____

 12. Previous volunteer/work experience, education, special training and/or hobbies: _____

 13. I certify that all statements above and attached to this Information Form are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that false statements shall be sufficient cause for my volunteer activities to be discontinued by the Library.
- I have read and understand the Volunteer Policy of Somerville Public Library as well as the Library Bill of Rights.
- Signature of volunteer _____ Date _____

EVALUATION OF VOLUNTEERS

Appraisal for _____ Present Position _____
(Name of Volunteer)

Supervisor _____ Hours Donated From _____ to _____

Somerville Public Library

WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

Somerville Public Library will provide free Internet access points or “hot spots” for users with portable computers or devices capable of receiving wireless signals, during normal library business hours. These access points will allow users to access the Internet from their laptop computers when sitting within range of the access points.

Library staff will provide general information on the settings necessary to access the Internet via these connections, but are not responsible for any changes you make to your computer’s settings and cannot guarantee your hardware will work with our wireless connection.

If a user has problems accessing the Internet over these connections, staff will verify the Library’s connections are up and running, but they cannot assist in making changes to the user’s network settings or perform any troubleshooting on the user’s own computer. Please refer to your owner’s manual or other support services offered by your device manufacturer.

As with most public wireless “hot spots,” the Library’s wireless connection is not secure. There can be unscrupulous parties between you and anyone you communicate with, and any information being sent or received could potentially be intercepted by another wireless user. Cautious and informed wireless users should choose not to transmit their credit card information, passwords and any other sensitive personal information while using any wireless “hot spot.” Please take appropriate precautions when using this service.

The Library will not be responsible for any information (i.e. credit card) that is compromised, or for any damage caused to your hardware or software due to electric surges, security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their laptop computers or wireless devices.

The Library provides access only to Web-based email. For Outlook or other email services, you must connect with your own Internet provider.

Printers are not available via the wireless connection at this time. If you need to print, please save your work to a floppy disk or email files to yourself, then login to a wired library workstation and send jobs to the public printer.

Use of these access points is governed by our Computer Use/Internet Policy. All users are expected to use the Library’s wireless access in a legal and responsible manner, consistent with the educational and informational purposes for which it is provided. Users may not violate federal, state or local laws, including the transmission or receiving of child pornography or harmful material, fraud, or downloading copyrighted material.

Somerville Public Library

WIRELESS INTERNET USE PROCEDURE

Somerville Public Library now offers free wireless "WiFi" access to the Internet for properly equipped laptops and handheld computers. When you use wireless Internet in the Library you are accepting the Library's policies on Internet Access and Wireless Access. Please take the time to read these policies before accessing the network.

Advantages

- No waiting for an available PC.
- No enforced time limits . . . connect as long as you like.
- Enjoy roomier workspace in a quieter area of the building.
- Fast access.
- Download files.
- Save your files permanently on your own device.

Limitations

- A WiFi network is less secure than a wired network (see below).
- Signal strength may vary within/without the Library.
- The Library provides access only to Web-based email. For Outlook or other email services, you must connect with your own Internet provider.

802.11e, Also Known as WiFi Your laptop must conform to the "802.11e" standard, commonly known as "WiFi." New laptops often come standard with a wireless interface. These laptops usually come automatically configured to pick up the wireless signal. Older laptops with a PCMCIA slot or USB port can be fitted with a wired/wireless network interface card (NIC) for about \$80 or even less.

Where and When You Can Pick Up the Wireless Signal

The entire Library building is now wireless accessible. The wireless access is available during the hours the Library is open to the public.

What You Will Need

- A laptop or PDA with wireless capability, configured to use the Library's Internet connection (see below).
- Charged battery – the library has some accessible electrical outlets near some tables, but not all. If you find an outlet, use it. But be prepared to be self-powered.
- Headphones if you plan to use audio files. The Library has a few headphones for loan at the Circulation Desk but these are often in use by those using the library's computers.

How Safe is WiFi? - Security Concerns

The Internet is a public communications network, which means that there can be untrusted parties between you and anybody you communicate with. Wireless poses the same risks to your personal information that a wired network poses, as well as some new risks. WiFi users need to educate themselves about these risks and take steps to secure their personal information, such as virus and hacking protection. Cautious WiFi users may choose not to transmit such sensitive data as their social security number, credit card information and passwords while using any WiFi "hotspot", including the Library's.

The Library will not be responsible for any information (i.e. credit card) that is compromised, or for any damage caused to your hardware or software due to electric surges, security issues or consequences caused by viruses or hacking. All wireless access users should have up-to-date virus protection on their laptop computers or wireless devices.

Wireless Technical Information

Wireless hardware and software varies as to the operating systems you may use on your laptop, so we can't give you precise instructions. In many cases, you need to do nothing to hook up (just click on Internet Explorer), but you might need to check the following in your wireless software:

- The "Service Set Identifier" (SSID) should be set to "any".
- The "Wireless Mode" should be set to "Infrastructure" (not "ad hoc").
- In Network Neighborhood Properties (right click on Network Neighborhood and click on "Properties") click on the Wireless TCP/IP adapter setting and look at its properties. Ensure that you have checked "Obtain an IP address automatically."
- If you use Windows 2000 or XP and have more than one adaptor, you may have to disable the one you are not using.
- Some adaptors have a physical switch (very small) that must be turned on in order to connect to the Internet.
- Most wireless software has an indicator that tells you a signal is being received. Make sure the link quality and signal strength are both at least "good". If not, move about the room to a location that has a stronger signal.
- Click on your browser (Netscape, Internet Explorer, etc.) and the Internet should come right up!

Please note that the Library cannot assist you with your laptop, card or configuration. The Library cannot accept the liability of handling your equipment.