

# Hamilton Public Library Policy Agreement

## General Use

The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) is a non-profit organization, which relies on donations to provide a vast array of materials for our community. HPL strives to be the place where everyone can come together for civic engagement, social interaction, and collaborative learning. The library wants those who use the library to find the facility a welcoming and receptive environment for their lifelong learning. The library encourages children to visit with their parents to take advantage of all the available resources and programs.

The library policies are designed to provide for the safety, security, and comfort of all people visiting and using the library. Both visitors and library personnel share responsibilities for maintaining this vital community resource just as they share its space and resources.

Library visitors are required to observe the library's rules of behavior and to accept responsibility for the use of the library's computer resources and for all borrowed materials. Library staff stands ready to assist library visitors and to respond promptly to patron concerns guided by library policies and the underlying principles shaping those policies.

People demonstrating disruptive behavior will be required to leave the library grounds and further privileges may be revoked. Restoration of library access or borrowing privileges will follow a prescribed schedule and is subject to review by the Library Director.

## To Get a Library Card

To apply for a Hamilton Public Library card, you must apply in person, be 18 years or older, have a valid Texas photo ID, AND provide 2 additional items to validate your current Hamilton County Address. **All 3 items MUST have the same Hamilton County address.** Valid photo ID's must have an identifying number. Examples: Texas Driver's License, TX DPS ID, Passport, Resident Alien Card. Proof of current residence includes Texas Driver's License, Texas Department of Public Safety ID, voter's registration card, vehicle registration, or utility bill, all with the same local Hamilton County address. Applicants who reside outside of Hamilton County will be assessed an annual fee of \$50.00.

A **Temporary Card** will be issued to patrons who do not have a current Texas photo ID with a Hamilton County address and/or all supporting documents. The temporary card will be valid for **6 months only**. You must be 18 years or older to apply for a library card. The required identifications are a current valid photo ID, an email address, and a cell phone number. The card will cost \$20.00. Upon the return of all library materials and card, on or before the 6-month deadline, the deposit of \$20.00 will be returned to the temporary card holder. If the temporary card is held longer than 6 months, the entire deposit will be forfeited, and a New Temporary application and deposit will be required.

## Children's Safety at the Library

Parents must guide the behavior of their children, set age-appropriate limits, and observe necessary precautions for the safety of their children in the library.

To best ensure their safety, **children cannot be left unattended or unsupervised in the library.** In order to best safeguard their children, parents will want to be readily available and within proximity, whether their children are browsing for materials or participating in library programs.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure the appropriate behavior of their children in the library at all times. Library personnel can NOT be responsible for children who are unsupervised. The library wants to be a partner in the education process to develop a life-long love of reading.

## **Borrowed Materials**

New patrons are limited to 2 items on their first checkout. Once those are returned, patrons may checkout a total of 10 items per card. 2 DVDs and/or 2 CDs per checkout per card may be included in the 10-item limit.

Books and audiobooks on CD are checked out for two weeks and may be renewed once **if no other user has a hold on them**. DVDs may be checked out for one week and are **nonrenewable**. Magazines may be checked out for one week and may be renewed once. Items may be renewed in person, over the phone, online using the card catalog, or by replying to a text from our “Gabbie” system. Parents are responsible for items borrowed by their children.

Holds/reserves may be placed on items not immediately available and may be requested by phone, through the online card catalog, or in person. The patron will be contacted when the item is ready for pickup. Please make sure a working cell phone number is on file. The hold will be released if the item is not picked up within a week.

If items are overdue, a fine will be assessed to the patron’s account. Books are charged \$0.25 for each day overdue. Magazines are charged \$1.00 per day overdue. Audio-visual materials (DVDs, CDs) are charged \$1.00 for each day overdue. **If patron’s account has a fine, the patron will not be allowed to check out more items or use the computers in the library.** A book-drop with outdoor access is available to return items 24/7. Patrons must pay for or replace all damaged or lost materials. **If there are damaged or lost materials on an account, the patron will not be allowed to check out more items or use the computers in the library until their account is brought current.**

All patrons are financially responsible for all borrowed materials (books, magazines, DVDs, and CDs). **DO NOT DEFACE** (write, highlight, mark, cover-up, or blackout) any of the library’s materials **in any way**. Defacing library material will result in a suspension of patron’s privileges as well as the replacement cost. **Do not lend any borrowed items to another individual.** Patrons are responsible for items checked out to their account. If a patron lends materials to another individual and the items are lost, damaged, or destroyed, the borrowing patron is obligated to pay the replacement and processing costs for those items.

## **Interlibrary Loan Books**

Hamilton Public Library users are eligible to borrow through the Interlibrary Loan Program (ILL) after they are active members and are in good standing with the library for six months. If an item is not available at the Hamilton Public Library, a patron may request the item from another library. The lending library sends the book to Hamilton. A fee of \$3.00 will be charged to cover the return postage, whether the item is picked up or not. There is a limit of three interlibrary loan requests at a time.

If an ILL book is damaged or lost, the patron will be responsible to pay full replacement cost of the book to the lending library. Patron’s privileges will be suspended until payment is received.

## **Limits to Access**

The Hamilton Public Library serves all residents of Hamilton County free of charge. Those residing outside of the county will be charged an annual fee of \$50 per year. This fee is waived for TexShare card holders.

TexShare card holders share all borrowing privileges and are subject to the same policies as resident patrons with one exception: they are not eligible for interlibrary loan through the Hamilton Public Library and are referred to their “home” library for this service.

In order to best share limited resources, the library sets and periodically reviews material and service limits per cardholder. Library items may be designated for in-library reference use only and cannot be checked out.

**Cardholders must have an account free of fines or overdue books to preserve their library borrowing and computer privileges.**

### **Computer Resources and Internet Access**

The Hamilton Public Library is proud to offer the use of public computers as another valuable resource to the citizens of our community.

The internet is a global electronic network not under the library's control. The library cannot guarantee or be held responsible for the accuracy, thoroughness, timeliness, or content of any items retrieved. The library cannot successfully control or monitor the vast amount of material accessible from computers and networks via the internet. The responsibility for determining the suitability or accuracy of information lies solely with the individual user.

The Hamilton Public Library does not monitor the information available through the many internet access points, which often change rapidly and unpredictably. There are internet sites that carry sexually explicit and other information resources which might be controversial or inappropriate. The library is not responsible for and cannot protect patrons from information they may find offensive.

For usage records, each patron will be required to sign in legibly at their starting time of internet use and sign out when finished. Computers are on a first-come-first-serve basis **only**; there are **no reservations**. There will be a **30-minute time limit per patron** if others are waiting. Use of the computers must be terminated **immediately** upon request by library staff. If a patron has been bumped from the computer, they cannot bump someone else.

Printing charges will be \$0.50 per page for black and white copies, and \$1.00 for each color copy. Library staff is available to help with any printing questions. Patrons must pay for **ALL** pages printed. Failure to pay for copies will result in suspension of computer and library privileges.

Chat rooms, Myspace, and the use of Facebook games are prohibited. These sites are deregulated and open to viruses and other harmful entities.

Patrons are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws and to treat library equipment in a responsible manner. **Computers may be monitored by staff at any time.** Abuse of computer privileges may result in immediate termination of computer access.

**DO NOT** view obscene or pornographic sites. (Texas Penal Code Section 43.21, et. Seq). Do not interfere with the operation of any computer, on-site or remote. Do not alter, damage, or destroy data or computer programs. Do not make copies of resources that are protected by copyright. Such resources may include, but are not limited to, software, data, text files, images, and sound. The Hamilton Public Library reserves the right to confiscate illegal copies created with our equipment. Do not access information without the effective consent of the owner or licensee of those resources. These acts may be considered a misdemeanor or felony crime under Texas State law (Section 1, Title 7, Chapter 33, Section 33.02a.)

As with other library materials, restriction of a child's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Parents are responsible for their minor children's use of equipment and should screen their child's selection of material on the Internet. Under current policy of Hamilton Public Library, minor children must be in the presence of the parents to use any computer.

Transferring files and downloading from the internet must be done on flash drives/pin drives/thumb drives/memory sticks/USB storage devices. Patrons must provide their own devices. No files may be transferred to drive "C:" (the hard drive.) No software will be loaded on computers that is not owned and licensed to the Hamilton Public Library.

Failure to follow the policies and guidelines outlined here will result in suspension of computer and library privileges. Please use courtesy and respect of others so that this service will be beneficial to the entire community.

### **Rules of Conduct**

The Hamilton Public Library is open to the public for the purpose of reading, studying, researching and quiet use of library materials, facilities, and equipment. While at the library, patrons are to be engaged in activities associated with the use of the library.

Cell phones must be turned off upon entering the library. Visitors may not smoke or use any electronic cigarette device anywhere in the library building or on the library grounds. All trash must be placed in proper receptacles. Animals may not be brought into the library except service animals. All computer usage rules are to be followed. Headphones may be provided, however, all audio listened to must be at such a volume that will not disturb other patrons.

Patrons may not damage, steal, or misuse library property. This includes making **any** markings on library property such as books. Patrons may not put their feet on chairs or tables or rearrange furniture. Patrons may not sleep in the library. Patrons may not run, skateboard or roller blade through the library, or bring bicycles into the library. Shoes, shirts, and appropriate clothing are required at all times. Loitering and soliciting are prohibited.

**Do not leave children unattended. Library staff is not responsible for watching children.**

Patrons may not act in any disorderly manner which disrupts the orderly operation of the library or interferes with the use of the library by others.

Disrespectful conduct in the library is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Patrons may be asked to vacate the premises immediately, and future library privileges may be revoked for a period of time, to be determined by the Library Director.

Everyone's safety at the library is important. If problems arise, please contact staff for assistance.

Welcome to the Hamilton Public Library, a place where you can imagine, discover, create, innovate, and believe in your possibilities.

**Your Library Card # \_\_\_\_\_**

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