

AM 100 Borrowing Procedure Research

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The Borrowing Policy consists of the following sections:

1. Maximum Items Borrowed
2. Loan Periods and Renewals
3. Over-Threshold Accounts
4. Lost or Damaged Materials
5. Holds

Committee members divided up the 5 topics and individually researched whether there are any existing procedures and whether the topic currently has procedures, any topics/questions we might need to consider, whether procedures are needed, and any training that might be needed.

Timeline:

January 2017

- Procedure committee is formed and begins research
- Committee has first draft of Research and Procedures documents.

February 2017

- Committee shares these documents with Policy Committee
- Committee reviews feedback and updates documents
- Documents are shared with the Senior Managers

March 2017

- Claims options and Research/Procedure documents are presented to the Library Managers
- Updated documents are shared with Library Management Team
- Committee reviews feedback and updates documents
- Updated documents are shared on the Intranet – research first, then procedures
- Committee reviews feedback and updates documents
- Final Procedures are drafted and posted on the Intranet with talking points and timeline for implementation
- Training recommendations are forwarded to the Organizational Development Department
- Borrowing Policy goes to Public Services Committee of Commission

April 2017

- Borrowing Policy is forwarded to full Commission for approval

May-June 2017

- Training on needed topics is developed and implemented (tentative)

July 1, 2017

- New Borrowing Policy and Procedures go into effect

General Borrowing

Current procedures

Previously procedures were incorporated into the policies AM 100, 110, 120 and procedures 100.1.

Considerations discussed:

1. Situation: Procedures referring to borrowing electronic media exist.
 - a. Decision: These are no longer needed. These procedures should be repealed and replaced with new procedures related to Borrowing.
 - b. Explanation: They do not refer to anything that staff can take action on but rather refer to lending limits for Overdrive and how to set the lending period.
2. Situation: Requirements for proof of member identity were listed in policy.
 - a. Decision: Members may provide one of 3 options in order to borrow materials:
 - i. The physical library card
 - ii. Their library card number and last name
 - iii. Enough information to positively identify the correct library account
 - b. Explanation: Each of these options should allow for all methods of checking out. If a member has their library card and is checking out at the Circulation Desk, no further information is needed. If a member is checking out online or at the self-checkout, they will need to provide their card number and last name. If they do not have a physical card, but they can provide their number (ECARD or ONECard) and their last name, they can check out. If they do not have their card or know their card number, they need to provide enough information that the person looking up the account can reasonably identify the correct account. We chose not to set which details or how many points of information are necessary to give frontline staff enough freedom to accept whatever proof of identity the member can provide.

Maximum Items Borrowed

Current procedures

No current procedures exist

Considerations discussed:

1. Situation: Expanding the number of items borrowed may tax a local library's holdings on specific subjects or authors. Should we limit checkouts by subject or author?
 - a. Decision: No
 - b. Explanation: With the prevalence of self checkout machines, there is no feasible way to implement limiting all members at a location to a specific number of titles on a given topic. Limiting checkouts locally would go against the idea of having more uniform procedures (experiences) across the system. As the CollectionAnywhere warehouse develops, it will provide greater access to a deeper subject collection across the system.

Procedures needed:

General consensus was that no procedure is needed.

Loan Periods and Renewals

Current procedures

The procedure AM 100.1 Borrowing Electronic Media details loan periods and checkout limits for Overdrive.

Considerations discussed:

These actions are well-managed by the software.

Procedures needed:

General consensus was that no procedure is needed. The current AM 100.1 can be repealed and replaced with the new procedure.

Over-Threshold

Current procedures

No current procedures exist

Considerations discussed:

1. Situation: What is the difference between a library card and a library account? Initially the policy read that *a new library account will not be issued to the borrower* when an account is Over-Threshold.
 - a. Decision: A new library card number can be issued without creating a new account. Some members may have legitimate multiple accounts, specifically in the case of ONECard and Online Borrower Registrations. The policy team updated the policy to remove that statement.
 - b. Explanation: The distinction here is that issuing a new physical card does not create a new account in this case or remove the outstanding block on the account. There are many reasons that a member would want a physical card with their number on it instead of retaining or memorizing the number. The card will be issued for any of the eligible accounts that support having a physical card right now (ie, not a ONECard). As we move toward using a card number for more services in order to obtain statistical data for M&M, it will be important to allow members to obtain a new card even with a blocked account. This will allow members to continue using their library card for other library services/programs and not fall into the Occasionals group even if their account is Over Threshold. With the current software, there are no problems with issuing a new card to a member even if they are over-threshold. It is currently understood to be good customer service to issue a new card as it allows members easier access to the public computers and keeps the card in the 'active' category for demographical information.
2. Situation: A member has accrued a small amount of fees and it is blocking their card. They will no longer be able to use the library because they cannot afford to pay the fines.
 - a. Decision: Staff have the freedom to make the decision to clear an account of fines and fees so that a card can remain usable.
 - b. Explanation: Small charges/fines are currently frequently waived or reduced by frontline staff out of good will.
3. Situation: What if a member accrues hundreds of dollars worth of fines or lost items due to the new checkout limits?

- a. Decision: Staff have the freedom to make the decision to clear an account of fines and fees so that a card can remain usable. Claims Never Had would be appropriate for removing Lost items in order to create a record to catch the rare cases of abuse of the system.
- b. Explanation: Based on the January 2017 Commission Packet, the library system budgets for \$500K in fines and fees revenues out of \$33M total revenues. This comes to approximately 1.5% of revenues. The group considered whether to put a cap on how much frontline staff could waive without a supervisor's approval. We struggled with determining what that cap would be. What would be high enough that supervisors weren't asked all the time and gave the freedom to frontline staff to use their professional judgement? We also explored whether anyone would 'get in trouble' for waiving too much in fees/fines. When we asked Kay this question, she assured that no one would 'get in trouble' for putting members first. We discussed how frequently this situation would arise and whether we would want insurance or police documentation to waive large losses due to acts of nature or theft. Will larger fees occur more frequently with higher checkout limits? Overall, the losses to the budgeted revenue seem minute even if waiving fines and fees increased. Ultimately, we wanted to stand by our Core Values to allow frontline staff to make the decisions themselves. Does the decision put library members first? Does the decision balance the needs of one member with others who need access to library materials? Are we demonstrating integrity and respect for our members? If staff can answer these questions with confidence, then we can support the decision no matter what the financial cost.

Lost or Damaged Materials

Current Procedures

Procedures can be found in the CarlX training manual on page 70.

Considerations discussed:

1. Situation: Currently the owning library is responsible for determining whether an item will be charged to the member as damaged. This results in different standards used at each location.
 - a. Decision 1: Create a system-wide definition of damage to standardize what members are being charged for across the system. *Definition: The item is no longer usable due to readability, extensive damage to the cover or pages, any damage due to water or bodily fluids, infestations, or because it is missing a critical part.*
 - i. Materials that were not damaged by a member but need to be withdrawn may be called 'aged out' materials to minimize confusion between the types.
 - b. Decision 2: Set an expectation that members will not be charged for an item that would have been withdrawn anyway using standard weeding guidelines (normal wear and tear, dated material, high circulations, anything that would require a 'Damage Noted' stamp, or other criteria determined by the Collection Anywhere department).
 - c. Explanations: Having a standard for what constitutes chargeable 'damage' will provide a more consistent experience for members across the system. These decisions set the parameters for determining what is considered damage without trying to conceive of every situation. The Collection Anywhere department is currently working on standard

weeding guidelines. They expect to have them available before the July 1st implementation date.

2. Situation: Since the owning library must make the decision on whether to charge a member for damage, it complicates the ability for a member to address a damaged item at the returning library.
 - a. Decision: The returning library will use the new guidelines (above) to determine whether a member will be charged for damage and will be responsible for updating the member account, notifying the member and owning library, and retaining the item until claimed or disposed of.
 - b. Explanation: With a standardized set of guidelines as to what is chargeable damage, each library will be making similar decisions, so it won't need to go back to the owning library for a decision. This will make the process more streamlined for the member and easier for staff to explain.
 - c. Additional Explanation: Although not part of our original reasoning, this process also supports the transition to collection management at a system level so that materials belong to the whole system and not just one library. Once the CollectionAnywhere warehouse is developed, the warehouse will not be equipped to handle damaged materials. These will need to be handled at the returning location.
3. Situation: Are there other pieces of the damaged/missing items process that need to be standardized?
 - a. Decision 1: Libraries will notify members regarding items with damage/missing parts as soon as possible.
 - b. Decision 2: The returning library will keep damaged materials for 6 months. In cases where mold, bodily fluids, infestations, or other dangerous conditions exist, staff will retain photos of the item, including the damage and identifying information, in lieu of retaining the actual item.
 - c. Decision 3: Discarded items that were charged to members will not be re-sold at the Booksale.
 - d. Decision 4: In-kind donations are not accepted in lieu of replacement costs.
 - e. Decision 5: Staff will attempt to renew damaged items one time and then allow materials to naturally age into Lost status, unless the member is ready to pay at that time.
 - f. Explanations: (1) No specific timeline for notifying members of damaged materials is needed as long as library staff make it a priority. Every library has different staffing levels and volumes of damaged materials making a strict timeline impractical. (2) We want to make sure that it is safe to retain the damaged materials. Materials can always be sent to another library for a member to pick them up. Notes on the account can clarify where the item is being held. (3) We are wanting to avoid the situation where a member pays for an item but does not pick it up and then finds the item being sold at the booksale. Although it would be a rare situation, it would also reflect on our integrity if we re-sold an item that someone had been charged for. (4) CollectionAnywhere provided the following statements on why we do not accept in-kind donations as replacements:

It can be difficult to determine if the copy is an acceptable replacement. It may be a paperback rather than a hardback, it may not be clear that it's the right title, or it may not be in good condition.

We may not need another copy for replacement for a variety of reasons, including that the item itself is old and out-of-date or that we have enough copies in the system to fill member demand.

There is a cost in both staff time and processing of these materials both at the library where it is received as well as at the Service Center where it is sent for processing.

4. Situation: The Claims process has always been somewhat problematic in terms of customer service. Claims Returned is not currently operating correctly in that items not found remain on the card but the card status stays 'Good.' Claims Never Had also has some drawbacks. Please see the document 'Claims Decision' for the full information about the problems with Claims.
 - a. Decision: Options were presented to the Library Managers 3/9/17 on how to proceed with handling Claims. The decision and explanation can be found in the separate Claims Decision document which was sent by email to All Correspondents on 3/13/17.

Procedures needed:

1. System wide definition of damage.
2. Process to handle any damaged material at the returning location instead of the owning location.
3. Process to notify owning location that the item was damaged.
4. Process to notify members of the damage.
5. Statement of freedom to clear any and all fees and fines.
6. Process to clear items and fees associated with system/staff error.
7. Procedures will include that we do not accept in-kind donations in lieu of replacement costs.

Holds

Current procedures:

No current procedures exist.

Considerations discussed:

1. Situation: There is currently a holds loophole where members can place more holds once items are Hold In Transit.
 - a. Decision: No procedure currently needed.
 - b. Explanation: The maximum items borrowed is intended to prevent this from becoming a bigger issue. With the holds maxed at 50 and borrowed items maxed at 100, member will likely be able to check out all of their holds even if it reaches 100.
2. Situation: Not every library is open every day. Are holds being filled every day at every location, including Sunday?
 - a. Decision: Every location needs to be filling their holds every day they are open.

- b. Explanation: Some libraries had considered not running the Title Router or Issue Router on Sundays because there are no deliveries on Sunday. Even though there are not deliveries, each library has holds to fill for their own members as well.
- 3. Situation: Members may opt to change the pickup location for holds after they have been filled. Sometimes, materials are routed to the new location without updating the ILS or printing a new reserve label.
 - a. Decision: All holds should be processed uniformly, including ensuring the ILS shows the accurate status and location for the item and all holds have an accurate routing label.
 - b. Explanation: IT can move members to the top of the holds list for materials with multiple holds on it. This can be covered in training.

Procedures needed:

General consensus was that no procedure is needed.

Training considerations:

General Borrowing

- 1. Situation: A member does not know their card number or have a physical library card with them.
 - a. Training Response: Training could address what points of information can verify a person's identity or which account is theirs.

Maximum Items Borrowed

- 1. Situation: When a member returns a large number of materials via a drive up book drop prior to entering the library to check out more materials, their card may still be maxed out when they are ready to check out.
 - a. Training Response: Training could address the use of overriding the limit on checkouts. If the newly-returned materials have not been checked in yet, staff may use the override function for better customer service.

Loan Periods and Renewals

- 2. Situation: The 7-day grace period may be confusing to staff.
 - a. Training Response: Training may explain that the fines begin accruing the first day overdue, however, fines are waived if returned before the 8th day. If material is returned on the 8th day, \$.80 is due. The grace period is also not cumulative. If you renew 8 times, you don't get 8 more weeks at the end of the checkout period.

Over Threshold Accounts:

- 3. Situation: Policy now reads "Members may not register for more than one account."
 - a. Training Response: Training would clarify that issuing a new card is fine, but having multiple active library accounts for the same individual is not allowed (with the exceptions of ONECard or the online borrower registration situations).
- 4. Situation: Either by member request or out of good customer service, a staff member wants to clear fines or lost material from an account.

- a. Training Response: Staff may receive training on communicating with members about fines and fees, how to handle such a request, and identifying when offering this step is appropriate.

Lost or Damaged Materials:

- 5. Situation: A member begins to monopolize library equipment or repeatedly asks for materials/fines to be removed from their account.
 - a. Training Response: Training can address how to deal with a pattern of behavior that violates the Rules of Conduct.
- 6. Situation: A member brings in an item they purchased for the purpose of replacing an item they lost or damaged.
 - b. Training Response: Training can include why we do not accept in-kind donations in lieu of replacement costs and how to talk with members about this.
- 7. Situation: A member needs to pay for Lost or Damaged items.
 - c. Training Response: Training can include how to use the software for these processes.
- 8. Situation: A member disputes the fines/fees on their account.
 - d. Training Response: Training can include situational training on clearing fines, fees, and lost materials including the possible use of Notes on the account.
- 9. Situation: A member claims that they either already returned an item still on their card or never had it.
 - e. Training Response: Training can include how to resolve the situation using Claims Never Had.
- 10. Situation: Staff need to decide whether to charge a member for an item that might be damaged.
 - f. Training Response: Training can include what falls under standard weeding guidelines – high number of circulations, old editions, normal wear and tear, damage from a sorter, etc. CollectionAnywhere is currently working on these guidelines and will have them ready prior to the July 1 effective date. One recommendation would be to have photos for referencing what should be ‘aged out’ versus charged for damage.
- 11. Situation: A member notices a defect in the material they are ready to check out.
 - g. Training Response: Staff would like clarification on what level of defect/wear needs to receive a ‘Damage Noted’ stamp. The Library Managers also recommend changing the stamp to say ‘Condition Noted’ instead to continue clarifying the difference between ‘damage’ and ‘aged out’ materials.
- 12. Situation: A damaged item charged to a member has not been picked up after 6 months.
 - h. Training Response: Training can include tying this situation in with the Collection Development Policy on what materials are sent to the Friends.
- 13. Situation: Materials are returned damaged/missing parts and a staff member needs to notify the member of the damage.
 - i. Training Response: Training can include best practices on how to notify members about lost or damaged materials – in writing, in person, via phone or email - including the use of templates developed for this purpose.

Holds:

14. Situation: The holds loophole issue continues and a member is monopolizing materials through the holds process.
 - a. Training Response: Training can address how to deal with a pattern of behavior that violates the Rules of Conduct, including monopolizing library equipment.
15. Situation: Changing the pickup location for a hold that has been fulfilled is not always a straightforward process.
 - b. Training Response: Training can include how to process a hold and work with IT (when necessary) to change the pickup location, place the hold at the top of the list, and print a new label.