


Library Service – Waiving of Lost and Damaged Item Fees and Charges

Policy – Branch Specific OP182

Prepared	Reviewed	Approved	Date
Library Service Coordinator	Manager Leisure and Cultural Services	CEO	June 2022
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1. The purpose of this policy is

To assist Library Service staff when receiving customer requests to waive lost and damaged item fees and charges.

Provides guidelines for when a customer disputes a lost or damaged library item.

2. Policy Statement

Library Service staff are required to respond to customer requests for the waiving of lost or damaged fees and charges for library items. This policy outlines the criteria under which applications for the reduction or waiving of fees and charges can be made and the circumstances under which applications will be considered. Fees and charges will only be reduced or waived as a result of extenuating or unforeseen circumstances such as accident or personal loss such as a house fire. This policy enables Library Service staff to make decisions based on individual customer circumstances and provides for staff to refer more complex requests to a supervisor where necessary.

3. Principles

- Council will treat all people fairly and consistently under this policy.
- Council will recognise genuine application of this policy and will treat people with respect.
- Council recognises the importance of establishing lost and damaged fees and charges as a management tool for ensuring that all items are returned good condition.

Customer responsibility

When joining as a member of the Mildura Rural City Council Library Service customers make application to borrow items, subject to the regulations of the Mildura Rural City Council Library Service and undertake to “pay any charges incurred for lost or damaged items”. This is acknowledged when the membership card is signed by the patron or guardian. This statement reads *“I agree to accept responsibility for materials borrowed, and abide by all conditions of use”*.

Lost and damaged items

The purchase price of any item is registered on the Library Management System database and is calculated together with the Library Service's processing fee when any item is listed as lost.

In the event of loss or irreparable damage to an item whilst on loan to a customer, the customer is required to reimburse the library for the cost of the item, plus a processing fee (as per the Mildura Rural City Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges).

A billing notice is sent 28 days after an item is overdue. If there has been no response after a further 28 days, depending on the charge, a debtor's invoice may be requested from Mildura Rural City Council and sent to the customer with a printout of the items list from the Library Management System. The customer will also lose borrowing and Internet privileges until the fee is paid.

Appeals in writing to the Library Service Coordinator will be considered on individual merits.

Items Claimed Returned

The Claims Returned Procedure outlines the process for a disputed item that a borrower says has been returned.

- When the borrower notifies Library Service staff that they believe the item has been returned, the item is marked with a status of "claims returned".
- Library Service staff will search for the disputed item in each Library Branch, each week for one month. The borrower will be advised to continue to search at home.
- If the item is located in the library, the item comes off the borrower's record.
- If the item has been found by the borrower and returned, the status of the item will return to normal.
- If the item is not found in one month, the status of the item is changed to 'lost', and a billing notice will be sent to the borrower.
- The borrower will not be allowed to borrow if the charge on the card is \$15 or more.

If the item is not located after the claims returned searches, an appeals process is available by putting the case in writing to the Library Service Coordinator.

Payment Plans

If fees and charges exceed \$15, a minimum payment of \$5 per visit must be made if the library patron wishes to borrow or use computer services. This requirement will continue until the total is less than \$15.

4. Who is responsible for implementing this policy?

The Library Service Coordinator is responsible for implementing this policy.

5. Definitions

Damaged Any item that is returned damaged beyond reasonable wear and tear.

Overdue Any item not returned on or before the due date.

Lost Any item not returned within the 28 days after the due date.
Any item claims returned and not located within one month.

6. Legislation and other references

6.1 Legislation

For further information related to this policy see:

NIL

6.2 Documents

This Policy is implemented in conjunction with the following document:

Mildura Rural City Council Annual Budget

6.3 Risk Assessment Reference

Please tick the corporate risk(s) that this policy is addressing.

Risk Category		Risk Category	
Asset Management	✓	Financial Sustainability	✓
Committees		Human Resource Management	
Compliance – Legal & Regulatory		Leadership & Organisational Culture	
Contract Management		Occupational Health & Safety	
Contract Tendering & Procurement		Organisational Risk Management	
Corporate Governance		Project Management	
Environmental Sustainability		Public Image and Reputation	