

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

Policy Type: Operational

Policy Number: OP-16

Policy Title: Library of Things

Policy Approval Date: 05/13/25

Chairperson: Val Duke

Policy Review Date: 05/29

Intent:

The Library of Things collection (herein after referred to as the LOT) is an extension of the Muskoka Lakes Public Library's (hereinafter referred to as the Library) traditional collection. As the Library strives to provide equitable access to resources, foster lifelong learning, and support the diverse needs of our community, the goal of the LOT program is to enable Library members to borrow non-traditional Library items such as tools, electronics, equipment, and other useful objects. This policy outlines the guidelines for providing the LOT.

Regulations:

In accordance with the Public Libraries Act, the Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board (herein after referred to as the Board) is responsible for providing a comprehensive Library service that reflects the community's unique needs. The Library may charge fees for items that are not designated as prescribed circulating materials in the Public Libraries Act.

Purpose:

The purpose of the LOT is to:

- Provide access to useful and innovative items that members might not otherwise be able to afford or have space for
- Encourage hands-on learning and creativity by offering a range of items that promote skill-building, hobbies, and practical use
- Foster sustainability by supporting the shared use of resources
- Augment/expand on existing resources. i.e. having a DVD player to borrow to access our video collection, adding binoculars to your bird book checkout, a ukulele with a beginners guide to music, etc

Items Available for Borrowing:

The LOT may include, but is not limited to:

- Tools (e.g., power tools, hand tools)
- Kitchen equipment (e.g., slow cookers, air fryers)
- Technology (e.g., cameras, projectors, laptops, tablets)
- Outdoor and recreational equipment (e.g., tents, bicycles, sports gear)
- Educational kits (e.g., robotics kits, craft kits)
- Household equipment (e.g., vacuums, carpet cleaners)
- Gardening tools and equipment
- Musical instruments (e.g., guitars, keyboards)

The Library may periodically update the available items based on demand and community interests.

Eligibility:

- The LOT is available to all cardholders who are in good standing with the Library.
- Members must be at least 18 years old to borrow items. Members under 18 may borrow items with a parent or guardian's consent and responsibility.

Operating Principles:

The CEO or designate is responsible for administering the program, in accordance with the guidelines for the items set out in Appendix A, including:

1. Borrowing
2. Fees and Deposits
3. Special Considerations
4. Maintenance and Cleaning
5. Limitations and Restrictions
6. Liability and Indemnification

Borrowers are responsible for:

1. the safe and proper use of the items while in their possession, including following all instructions and guidelines provided by the Library and item manufacturer
2. inspecting the item for damages before borrowing and reporting any issues to Library staff immediately. If damage is noted after borrowing, the borrower must notify the Library as soon as possible.
3. returning items in the same condition that they were borrowed
4. cleaning and maintaining the items according to any provided guidelines before returning them
5. ensuring that items are returned on time. Late items may affect borrowing privileges, and repeated late returns or damage to items may result in the suspension of borrowing privileges
6. agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless the Library, its employees, and agents from any and all claims, damages, or liabilities arising from their use of borrowed items
7. signing the *Muskoka Lakes Public Library General Liability Waiver – Borrowing Things from the Library of Things Collection*

Related Documents:

MLPL OP-05 Membership

MLPL OP-13 Fee Schedule

MLPL OP-24 Collection Development

MLPL General Liability Waiver – Borrowing Things from the Library of Things Collection



Appendix A

Library of Things Guidelines

1. Borrowing

- Items may be borrowed for a designated loan period, typically ranging from 7 to 21 days, depending on the item.
- Members may borrow only one item per Library card at a time from the LOT. The Library may allow more depending on item availability and demand.
- Due dates are firm, and members accounts will be blocked and items marked lost after being overdue for 1 week. Members will be billed at that time for the cost of the item.
- Borrowers must pick up and return items in person unless special accommodations are arranged with Library staff.
- Borrowers may need to demonstrate knowledge of how to use the item safely and appropriately, especially for items that may require special handling, such as tools or equipment.
- Borrowers use all items at their own risk.

2. Fees and Deposits

- Borrowing items from LOT is generally free of charge. However, the Library reserves the right to require a refundable deposit or non-refundable rental fee based on the cost or maintenance requirements.
- Fees for overdue items are set according to the Library's general policy on overdue materials.
- If an item is damaged, lost, or not returned, the borrower will be responsible for replacing the item or paying the replacement cost, including any associated fees for maintenance and cleaning.

3. Special Considerations

- Some items in the LOT may have additional restrictions or requirements for borrowing. These items will be clearly marked with specific instructions or prerequisites, such as safety training or a demonstration of competency.
- Certain items may only be available to members who meet specific requirements, such as skill level or experience.
- Library staff are available to answer questions about items in the collection and to assist with the safe and proper use of items.

4. Maintenance and Cleaning

- Items in the LOT will be regularly cleaned, inspected, and maintained by Library staff. However, borrowers are expected to examine and inspect items after checking them out and notifying Library staff immediately of any damage or defaults and return items in clean and functional condition.
- If an item requires repair or cleaning, members should return it as soon as possible, and the Library will handle the necessary upkeep

5. Limitations and Restrictions

- Some items may be subject to specific usage limitations, such as the number of times an item can be borrowed per year, seasonal restrictions (e.g., outdoor equipment), or geographic limitations (e.g., equipment requiring local weather conditions).
- The Library may remove items from the LOT based on demand, condition, or cost of maintenance.
- The Library reserves the right to update this policy at any time, including adjusting fees, loan periods, and item availability

6. Liability and Indemnification

- The Library is not responsible for any injury, damage, or loss that occurs as a result of using an item borrowed from the LOT.