



OTSEGO DISTRICT PUBLIC LIBRARY

401 Dix Street • Otsego, MI 49078 • (269)694-9690 • www.otsego.library.org

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Borrowing Policy

Legal Service Area

Any resident of the Otsego District Public Library legal service area may apply for a library card. The library's legal service area consists of Alamo Township, the City of Otsego, Otsego Township, Trowbridge Township, and Watson Township. A card will be issued, upon showing proof of residency in the legal service area.

Anyone applying for a library card must show some form of identification, (preferably a photo ID) with his or her current address printed on it. All cards must be obtained with the person requesting the card present. Cards cannot be made for people not at the library physically, (including both signer and library card holder, in the case of juvenile cards) unless there is special permission from the Library Director for homebound patrons only. Minors (children 17 years of age and younger) cannot apply for a library card without a parent or legal guardian present. Applications are available at the circulation desk.

For residents, it is free to obtain a resident library card. Patrons are eligible for one free replacement card. After a replacement card has been issued, a charge of \$1 will be assigned for further lost card(s).

Proof of Identification and Residency

A library card will be issued upon showing proof of identity and proof of residency in the library's legal service area. Patrons 18 and older must present an acceptable form of identification such as:

- State-issued driver's license or identification card
- U.S. passport Foreign passport
- Alien registration card
- Military identification card
- Student identification card

In addition, proof of residency must be verified by one of the following items:

- Michigan driver's license or identification card
- Current utility bill
- Current auto insurance card
- Current vehicle registration
- Lease agreement
- Voter registration card
- Current bill from a major credit card
- Applicable digital documentation as per above
- And any other proof deemed acceptable by a library director

Online Library Card Registration

Otsego District Public Library residents and reciprocal borrowers may sign up for a library card online and receive a physical library card in the mail. By signing up online for a library card, patrons agree to all the guidelines listed in the Otsego District Public Library Borrowing Policy. Proof of identity, residency, and signature on library card application will be verified and collected at the next in-person visit to the library. On their first physical visit after applying for their online card, the patron will be asked to fill out the library card application at the library.

General Borrowing Guidelines

By receiving borrowing privileges, the patron agrees to comply with all rules and regulations of the library, to pay any hotspot fines, to pay for loss or damage to library materials incurred while in use and to give immediate notice of any change of address or phone number. Parents and their guardians are responsible for monitoring their children's internet usage and checkouts. Upon presentation of an Otsego District Public Library card or a valid picture ID, materials will be loaned to the patron.

If a card is not presented and the staff member is familiar with the identity of the patron, the loan will be permitted. Library staff may ask the patron for verification of identification if they do not know the patron. Materials will be loaned only to those persons with borrowing privileges in good standing (fines under \$5) with the Otsego District Public Library. Interlibrary loan of materials to qualified libraries will be honored only for resident card holders when the patron is in good standing with ODPL.

Item Loan Periods

- 3 Weeks – All books, Audiobooks, Rising Reader and STEAM kits, CD Players, C-Pen scanners and other multimedia tools, Puzzles, and Board Games
- 1 Week – Magazines, DVDs, Music CDs, Wi-Fi Hotspots, and Circulating memberships

Wi-Fi Hotspots

Wi-Fi hotspots are only eligible for checkout by adult resident library cardholders. Hotspots can be put on reserve and they go out for one week (no renewals). Reserves of hotspots must be picked up within three days due to the popular nature of this item. The replacement cost is \$200 if they are lost or damaged. An agreement form must be signed for use. Data usage is unlimited. Full details about hotspot data, costs, and agreement can be found at this link: [Wi-Fi Hotspot Checkout](#)

Overdue Fine Fee

The Otsego District Public Library recognizes the barrier to access that library overdue fines create for families. For this reason, the library does not charge overdue fines on materials. However, this does not mean that patrons can take an item and never return it with no penalty or completely ignore due dates on the items that they checkout. Existing checkout limits still apply and if materials are not returned within the amount of time listed in this policy, the library will bill replacement costs/materials recovery fines/processing fees for the items not returned as listed in this policy. Damaged materials replacement costs are also not included in "fine free." Fine free relates solely to overdue fines on materials.

Fine-free does not apply to Wi-Fi Hotspots. Overdue hotspots receive a late charge of \$5 per week late to cover service costs.

Interlibrary Loan

The library offers interlibrary loan to all patrons residing in the legal service area of the library. The library encourages patrons to initiate their own interlibrary loan request by visiting mel.org/welcome. Staff can assist patrons with learning how to use the interlibrary loan system. ODPL Staff will assist reciprocal patrons with interlibrary-loaning items to their home library for pickup.

Reciprocal Borrowing Agreements

Residents from several nearby communities have the ability to borrow materials from the Otsego District Public Library. Otsego has reciprocal borrowing contracts with the Allegan Public Library, Kalamazoo Public Library, Martin Public Library, Parchment Community Library, Plainwell's Ransom District Library, and the Van Buren District Library. Residents from those areas must receive a card from their home library. The application process is the same as for those residents in the legal service area. Library staff will contact the applicant's home library to inquire whether the applicant is in good standing or not before issuing them the Otsego District Public Library Card. Wi-Fi Hotspots, MeLCat interlibrary loan service, and Hoopla are not available to reciprocal borrowers through their ODPL card. If a reciprocal lender would like to participate in these services, they should purchase a Non-Resident Card.

Shared Use of Library Cards

The library advises against sharing library cards because whoever signs on the card is responsible for replacement costs for all materials unreturned, lost, or damaged. Library staff will not allow family members to check out on a family member's card unless there is a staff note on that card that the patron gave permission for their family member to do so or they have the physical library card in hand. A note may be put on a library card by the patron who signed for the card allowing a family member/close friend to checkout/pick up holds if patron is homebound or needs assistance. Call or alert the library staff to add or remove usage notes to a library card account. Library staff will verify patron's identity before allowing them to check out on the family member's card.

Non-Resident Cards

Non-residential patrons (patrons outside of our borrowing area) may purchase a library card at the price of \$100/year. This yearly fee allows the patron access to Wi-Fi Hotspot checkouts, Hoopla, and interlibrary loan delivery to ODPL.

Renewal of Materials

The renewal of materials may be done in person, by telephone, or self-renewal through the library's online catalog. There is a limit of one renewal per item for all materials. An item with a reserve on it will not be renewed. Interlibrary loan materials are renewable upon the approval of the lending library. The renewal period is also determined by the lending library.

Materials Reserves (Holds)

As a special service to library patrons, a reserve (hold) may be placed on eligible library materials by telephone, email, Internet or in person. There is a limit of 25 items that a patron may have on reserve. The patron will be notified by email when the reserve becomes available and must be picked up within seven days. The only notification type that the library offers on holds is email, but if a patron does not have email they may call the library to inquire if their hold is available. A reserved item may only be checked out on the card for which the original reserve was made.

Drive-Up Window

All borrowing policy procedures apply at our drive-up window. Please call ahead to the library at (269) 694-9690 if you are able when you want to pick up holds at the window and they can have your items ready for pickup. A bell is available at the window for drive-up service. Absolutely no walk-ups or bicycles will be served at the drive-up window.

Book Packs to Go

Patrons can request "Book Packs To Go" using a form on the ODPL website found at: <https://otsegolibrary.org/bookpacks/>. Books chosen in book packs are merely recommendations, and any that patrons do not want/don't like can just be returned on their next visit.

After Hours Pickup Lockers

Call the library at (269) 694-9690 to arrange for an After Hours Pickup locker for materials on hold. Once materials are placed in the locker, they are under the responsibility of the patron and are checked out to that patron. The lockers have 24/7 surveillance.

Lost and Damaged Materials

It is the responsibility of the patron to return materials in good condition. If an item is lost or damaged, the patron must pay replacement cost for the item. The replacement cost will be the actual cost of the item plus a \$3.00 processing fee, this fee is included in the item cost listing. The library will also accept an exact new duplicate of the item that has been lost, in lieu of payment, but the \$3.00 processing fee will still be assessed.

Refund or Found Items – A patron who pays for a lost item may have the cost of the item refunded if the item is returned within 30 day and is in good condition. The proof of payment (receipt) must accompany the material.

Denial of Use

Use of the library or its services may be denied for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return materials, or to pay penalties, destruction of library property, and failure to comply with library policies such as the Patron Code of Conduct policy.

Materials Recovery Policy

Adopted 6/17/2013 • Revised 8/17/2022 • Revised 6/30/2025

Patrons will be contacted by the library at the email addresses and home addresses listed on their library card. It is the patron's responsibility to update this information as needed. If a patron does not submit an email address when they sign up for their library card, they will not receive the 14 or 30 days overdue notices and will only receive the one written notices in the mail.

The process for collecting overdue, lost, and or damaged materials is as follows:

- 14 days overdue – Patrons will receive an email from library staff.
- 30 days overdue – Patrons will receive a second email from the library requesting materials to be renewed or returned ASAP.
- 60 days overdue – Patrons will receive a final notice in the mail from the library warning them at 75 days overdue their account will be referred to a materials recovery service.
- 75 days overdue – Patrons with a total of \$50 in unreturned materials will be referred to a materials recovery service. Patrons will be assessed a recovery fee of \$10 upon referral to a materials recovery service.

Payment Plan

Patrons may set up a payment plan with the library to avoid having their account sent to the materials recovery service. 10% of the beginning balance of the patrons' bills must be paid each month. Patrons interested in a payment plan should contact the library for a Payment Plan Form.