

PORTAGE DISTRICT LIBRARY

Resident / Non-Resident Membership Policy

I. Definition of the Portage District Library Service Area Boundaries

The service area of the Portage District Library is property located within the City of Portage or the portions of the Portage Public School District located in Texas Township and Pavilion Township. Only those who reside within or own property or businesses within these boundaries are entitled to free membership.

NOTE: Those who reside within or own property or businesses in the portion of the Portage Public School District located within the City of Kalamazoo are served by the Kalamazoo Public Library.

II. Who is able to get a free membership?

- A. Any person who resides within the Portage District Library service area.
- B. Any person who pays real or personal property tax on property located within the Portage District Library service area.
- C. Any business and/or institution located within the Portage Library District service area may be issued a library card in the name of that business or institution. See Section V, part D of this policy for more details.
- D. Any person who is a resident member of a library district that has established a reciprocal borrowing agreement with the Portage District Library can have a free, limited use membership. See the Reciprocal Borrowing Policy for additional membership requirements.
- E. Any person who can document that they are an educator at an educational institution that is located with the Portage District Library service area and would not otherwise qualify for any free membership type. See Section V, part E of this policy for more details.

NOTE: Businesses outside of the Portage District Library service area are not eligible for reciprocal memberships.

III. Non-Resident Memberships

Any person, business or institution that does not fit into one of the above categories must pay a non-resident fee for library service. The non-resident membership is good for one year from date of issuance and entitles the member to all services of Portage District Library.

The “Cost of Service” is calculated based on the average taxable value per residential parcel within the service area of the Portage District Library. As required by Section 11a of the State Aid to Public Libraries Act, MCL 397.561a, the fee may not exceed “the cost incurred by the library in making borrowing privileges available to non-residents, including but not limited to, the costs, direct and indirect, of issuing a library card, facilitating the return of

loaned materials, and the attendant cost of administration.” This cost figure is re-calculated annually and reported to the Library Board.

NOTE: The non-resident fee for senior citizens (62 yrs. and older) is 50% of the standard non-resident fee charged to people who reside outside of the Portage District Library service area.

IV. Required Documentation for Establishing a Membership

The appropriate type of library membership for any person will be issued only upon verified identification and proof of current residential address for the person requesting the membership or, in the case of children under the age of 18, their parent or documented legal guardian. Businesses and Institutions have additional requirements addressed below. In order of preference, one of the following items of identification is required to establish a membership:

1. Valid Driver’s License
2. Valid State Identification Card
3. Valid Kalamazoo County ID Card
4. Valid Passport
5. Valid Military ID
6. Valid School ID with Photo

If the current residential address is not listed as part of the identification presented, a secondary document that includes a current residential address is also required to establish membership. The secondary document must be in the name of the person requesting the membership or, in the case of children under the age of 18, their parent or documented legal guardian. Businesses and Institutions have additional requirements detailed below. In order of preference, one of the following documents is required for proof of current residential address when the current residence is not listed on the identification presented to establish membership:

1. Valid Voter’s Registration Card
2. Current property tax bill or receipt
3. Current utility bill for water/sewer or gas/electric services
4. Registered Land Contract
5. Current Lease Agreement
6. Current vehicle registration

V. Special Circumstances & Other Membership Types

- A. In the case of children under the age of 18 who are unable to show identification or proof of current residential address and are not accompanied by a parent or documented legal guardian, an alternative form of registration will be offered that will require the membership card to be mailed as proof of residence. The mailing also serves as notification to the responsible party that a membership card has been issued.

- B. For those individuals seeking membership who may live in alternative living situations, such as shelters, temporary housing, group homes, transitional housing or care facilities, there may be other options for registration and/or proof of residence. Memberships may be limited in duration and/or limited in amount or type of material that can be checked out for those who are unable to provide the requested residency documentation.
- C. Memberships are not available to those who are visiting the Portage District Library service area. However, internet guest passes are available to anyone who can show appropriate identification. See the Internet Usage Policy for additional information and restrictions.
- D. Businesses or institutions within the Portage District Library service area that would like to take advantage of the opportunity for membership require additional proof of operation within the library district, proof of ownership, or documented authorization from the business or institution. These memberships can only be established by the business owner, institutional director or their documented designee. These types of memberships are only processed by specific library personnel, not through typical individual member registration processes. Due to the variety of business and institution types, contact the Library for specific information regarding the additional requirements.
- E. Individuals who can provide written documentation that they are working as an educator at an educational institution within the Portage District Library service area and do not otherwise qualify for any other free membership type can be provided with a special non-resident membership free of charge. Appropriate documentation should come in the form of a letter provided by their employer and must be provided annually upon the expiration of the membership to continue the membership. This type of membership is not intended for personal use, but to provide access to library collections for use in support of curriculum and other educational endeavors that impact students in the Portage District Library service area. The privileges of this limited membership will be similar to what is offered to reciprocal borrowing membership types.

VI. Membership Responsibilities and Privacy

- A. Once a membership has been established, the person, business or institution in whose name the membership is opened is responsible for any use or misuse of the membership, including, but not limited to, fines, losses or fees assessed against the account. In the case of minor children, the parent or documented legal guardian is the responsible party. In the case of a business or institution, the owner, director, or their designee will be the responsible party. Lost or stolen membership cards should be reported immediately. See the Fines & Fees/Usage Policy or the Internet Usage Policy for additional information.
- B. In accordance with the Michigan Library Privacy Act, all library records must be kept confidential. Information contained within library records will only be divulged in person to the member showing valid identification, the card holder, the person liable for payment and return of library materials, or as required by law via a court order. See the Library Privacy & Search Warrant Policy for additional information.