



Duxbury Free Library Policy: Non-Certified Libraries

Service to library patrons is immeasurably enhanced by cooperative efforts among libraries willing to share their resources. The goal of mutual benefit is predicated on the assumption that every participating library will make a contribution to the collective effort.

In Massachusetts, the measure of whether or not a library maintains standards is its participation in the certification and State Aid program administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MGL Ch78, SS19A, 19B). A Massachusetts library that is not a participant in the State Aid program – certified either by compliance with requirements or by waiver – cannot demonstrate that it is able to reciprocate in resource sharing arrangements.

When a library fails to maintain minimum standards in collection development, staffing, and/or hours of service, then its reliance on other libraries becomes disproportionately greater, and its contribution to the common good becomes disproportionately smaller. Recognizing this, the MBLC requires that libraries participating in the State Aid program lend materials on a reciprocal basis but imposes no such requirement to lend to libraries that are not participants, nor to the patrons from communities whose libraries are not participants.

In the interests of protecting the resources purchased by Duxbury taxpayers, and as an incentive to neighboring communities to fairly fund their own libraries, the Trustees of Duxbury Free Library (hereinafter “Duxbury Trustees”) maintain the right to deny or restrict borrowing privileges to Massachusetts public libraries that are not certified, and to residents from Massachusetts communities that do not have certified libraries.

However, Duxbury Trustees recognize that individuals should not be penalized when poor decisions are made by town officials. Therefore, while Duxbury Trustees retain their right to deny borrowing privileges, this decision will be made only after examining the circumstances that led to the decertification of the library in question and meeting with Library and town officials from said community as feasible to discuss the importance of Library funding support at the community level. After such review and meeting, Duxbury Trustees will discuss and decide whether and how to restrict lending to the decertified Library and the residents of the associated community.

If Duxbury Trustees vote to deny or restrict borrowing privileges, they will send notification in writing to the affected library within seven days of the vote. Borrowing privileges may be denied or restricted until 1) the affected library becomes re-certified, which will immediately reinstate borrowing privileges for the community, or 2) Duxbury Trustees vote to reinstate privileges after receiving notification in writing from the Trustees of the affected library that its municipality has made substantial progress toward restoring certification. Upon receipt of such notification, Duxbury Trustees will review and vote no later than their next scheduled meeting. If Duxbury Trustees vote to reinstate borrowing privileges for any such affected library, the Duxbury Trustees will notify the affected library in writing within seven days of the vote.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Library Trustees and ratified or amended at that time.

Adopted: Library Board of Trustees, 3/13/2007

Revised: 11/14/2023