

THE DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY'S NEW NON-RESIDENT LIBRARY CARD FEE

By virtue of the Detroit Public Library's longstanding designation as a statewide resource, all Michigan residents have enjoyed free access to the Library's resources and services for many years. Last year, however, the state of Michigan completely eliminated the budget line item that supported free access to the Detroit Public Library (DPL) by all residents of Michigan. Since 2002, the Detroit Public Library has lost \$6 million in state funding. This loss of state funds has adversely affected the Library's ability to continue to support statewide use of its resources.

The Detroit Public Library is not unlike other public libraries across the country that are faced with shrinking budgets and/or loss of longstanding revenue streams. As a result of this changing environment, public libraries are being challenged by having to reduce staff and other resources while continuing to meet increased demand for information services. Many libraries have had no choice but to significantly decrease current services or charge fees to maintain quality services and programs. A recent survey of public libraries in Michigan and urban public libraries in other states revealed that public libraries are charging fees for non-resident borrowing privileges and extended reference services.

Although there is a "grass roots initiative" to identify public funding to stabilize and equalize the support of Michigan's public libraries statewide, Christie Pearson Brandau, State Librarian, Library of Michigan in Lansing said that

"...The legislature has not yet supported that concept. Until it does, libraries in this state, including DPL, will have to rely on local funding, minimal state aid, penal fines and non-resident fees."

Currently, the primary support for DPL is property taxes paid by the residents of Detroit. Detroiters actively support their public library. However, it is important to point out that because millage revenue is consistent with property values, it takes, for example, three mills in Detroit to generate the equivalent of one mill in Southfield, Farmington Hills or Novi.

Without state funding and/or newly identified revenue streams, the Detroit Public Library cannot continue to function as a free statewide resource. Effective August 2, 2004, the Detroit Public Library will charge non-Detroit residents an annual fee of \$100 per person or household for a library card. The new library card will be required to borrow materials and for access to any of DPL's special collections. The special collections at DPL, including the Burton Historical Collection, the Hackley Collection and the National Automotive History Collection, were partially funded through the State of Michigan's grant to DPL.

The attached sheets provide answers to some of the frequently asked questions [FAQ] regarding the new library card fee.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Non-Resident Library Card Fee

1. Why a \$100 non-resident fee?

The \$100 price point is on average with what other libraries around the state charge for a non-resident library card. The \$100 fee is also significantly lower than what some other public libraries in Michigan charge for non-resident library cards. Ann Arbor, for example, charges \$150 a year per household. It is also important to note that charging a non-resident library card fee is not new to DPL. In fact, DPL presently charges non-Michigan residents \$40 for a library card.

2. Will non-residents need a library card to enter a Detroit Public Library building?

No, non-Detroit residents will not need a library card to enter a DPL library building. And, a library card is not required for any of DPL's general services, materials and programs. A library card will be required however, to check out materials, use computers, or use DPL's special collections.

3. Other libraries only charge for borrowing books. Why is DPL charging for access to the special collections?

A borrowing fee will not apply to the special collections because materials housed in these collections do not circulate. Our records indicate that 60 – 75% of the users of DPL's special collections do not live in Detroit. With the loss of state funding, it is not possible to continue to provide the same level of statewide services to these users without a fee of some sort.

4. Which special collections will require a library card for access?

Three DPL special collections will require a library card for access. They are:
Burton Historical Collection
E. Azalia Hackley Collection
National Automotive History Collection

5. What about customers who only visit the library once or twice a year to use the special collections. Will they have to pay \$100?

DPL values the customers who make special trips to Detroit to use the special collections. These customers can pay a daily use fee of \$10 per day, to use any of the special collections. A daily use fee does not allow borrowing privileges.

6. How do you define "access to the special collections?" Does this mean that people will not be allowed to enter the special collections, even if they only want to look around?

At present, the Hackley Collection is by appointment only and will continue to be that way. The Burton and NAHC collections will remain free to browsers. Any staff assistance will require a library card or a daily use fee.

7. Are any provisions being made for members of the Friends of DPL?

The Friends of DPL will offer a free library card to members who join or renew at \$150 or above. The annual membership includes full borrowing privileges and use of the special collections, invitations to special activities and events, discounts to programs and a newsletter with updates on library news and special programs.

8. How will non-resident household cards be handled?

A family who elects to purchase a non-resident household card may list a spouse or family member on their card, provided they have the same verifiable address. Only two persons can be listed on one card. DPL will only issue one card to a household. Persons not listed on a library card will not be authorized to use the card.

9. What about teachers in Detroit Public Schools, who do not live in Detroit?

DPL will continue to provide outreach and traditional library services to schools in Detroit. At a school's request, DPL will issue a library card to the school for teachers to check out resource materials. Teachers who do not live in Detroit, but desire a personal library card may purchase a non-resident library card.

10. What about students in Detroit schools, who do not live in Detroit?

Persons, who are non-residents, but are enrolled in any school [including public and private, K thru 12 and post secondary] that is located within the city of Detroit, may obtain a free library card. Students who apply for a library card must present a current, valid school ID or proof of current enrollment and attendance in a Detroit school.

11. Why implement a non-resident fee now...right before the millage election?

It was an administrative budget decision to implement the new fee during the first quarter of DPL's 2004-2005 fiscal year ... the first full year that DPL does not benefit from state support.

12. Do I need a library card to use the Internet?

Yes, a library card is required to use the Internet at DPL. However, exceptions are made for non-resident visitors who may only need to check their email.

13. Can I get a free library card if I work in Detroit and pay Detroit income taxes?

No. Funding for DPL is generated from Detroit property taxes, not from City of Detroit income taxes.

14. What if I work for the City of Detroit?

Employees of the City of Detroit who do not live in Detroit will need a non-resident library card to check out materials for personal use. DPL is an independent municipal organization and not a city department.

15. What about use of the Municipal Reference Library (MRL)?

Employees of the City of Detroit can continue to use the Municipal Reference Library at no cost. The Municipal Reference Library is partially funded by the Detroit City Council.

16. What about businesses in Detroit that pay millage taxes?

Any Detroit company may apply for a company card to borrow materials from the Main Library. Non-Detroit companies may apply for a non-resident company card to borrow materials from the Main Library for an annual fee of \$100.

Requests must be submitted on company letterhead to:

Detroit Public Library, Circulation Department
5201 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202

17. Are there any provisions for residents of Highland Park?

The Detroit Public Library will continue to work with the City of Highland Park to reinstate its closed library. At present, residents of Highland Park can continue to enjoy the same library privileges as Detroit residents.

18. Will the non-resident card fee affect inter-library loan (materials requested by other libraries for short-term borrowing by their library users)?

No. Inter library loan will NOT be affected by the non-resident card fee.

19. Will DPL continue to honor Michicard (a reciprocal borrowing program among Michigan libraries that allows Michicard cardholders to borrow materials from participating libraries outside of their library community)?

Yes. DPL has been a Michicard library for many years. Michicard holders will still be able to use computers and borrow materials at DPL. Michicard privileges, however, do not include access to the DPL's special collections. To access DPL special collections, a non-resident will have to have a DPL non-resident card, or pay a daily use fee.

20. Does DPL have reciprocal borrowing arrangements with communities that do not participate in Michicard?

Yes. The Detroit Public Library, through longstanding reciprocal borrowing agreements, honors library cards from Baldwin Public Library (BPL) and Bloomfield Township Public Library (BTPL). Through this agreement:

- Detroit residents with DPL library cards have borrowing privileges and access to all collections at Birmingham and Bloomfield Township libraries.
- Birmingham and Bloomfield Township residents with BPL and BTPL library cards have borrowing privileges and access to all collections at DPL.

21. How will non-resident group tours be handled?

DPL will continue to conduct group tours at no charge.

22. Will library volunteers pay for a library card?

No. Library volunteers receive the same library borrowing privileges as DPL employees.

22. If someone wants a library card, can they apply online, over the phone or do they need to come in? Since many of our users live out of state, how do we handle this?

An online application process is in the works.

23. How will you handle email, fax, letter and telephone information request directed to the special collections? Do we ask for a library card #?

Non-resident customers sending questions to Burton, Hackley or NAHC will need to provide their library card number or pay a daily use fee to have their questions answered.

24. What about questions from the national media or publishers?
A fee waiver may be granted for non-resident media and publication inquiries, at the approval of a service director.

25. What about Ask A Librarian?

The "Ask-A-Librarian" service is intended for ready reference questions, that is, questions that can be answered in 15 minutes or less. Detailed reference questions should be routed to subject departments. If the department is one of the three special collections, the customer will need a library card, or pay a daily use fee, to have their question answered.

26. What about non-resident CEIC customers?

CEIC services and computers are free to all customers who are using the CEIC service.

27. How will the non-resident policy be implemented? Will all non-residents be blocked centrally on 8/1/2004?

Effective August 2, all non-resident cards will become invalid. DPL has ordered a new non-resident library card.