

Shoalhaven Libraries - Operations

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is:

- to inform library staff and the public of the operations policy of Shoalhaven Libraries.
- to detail library membership and lending conditions that apply to the library and its collections.
- to outline the service delivery standards and requirements of the library.

2. Statement

The policy is to be read in conjunction with Council's Code of Conduct, Shoalhaven Libraries Internet Usage Policy (POL22/60) and Shoalhaven Libraries Children's Policy (POL22/59) and amendments made therein. It was adopted by Minute 02.891 on 23rd July 2002 and renamed and reaffirmed in its revised format by Minute 05.135 on 22nd February 2005 and Minute 09.489 on 28 April 2009.

3. Provisions

3.1. Mission Statement

Shoalhaven Libraries aims to educate, enrich, entertain, inform, involve, and empower the people of the Shoalhaven.

Shoalhaven Libraries is also committed to serving the information and recreation needs of children and young people. The Library aims to provide a welcoming environment, with resources and programs to meet the needs of all Library customers including targeted groups.

3.2. Professional Values

Shoalhaven Library services are underpinned by the following professional values:

The **ALIA Statement on Free Access to Information (2018)** states "that freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have unrestricted access to information and ideas."

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) 'believes that library and information services have particular responsibilities in supporting and sustaining the free flow of information and ideas.'

Collection material should not be rejected on the grounds that its content is controversial or likely to offend some sections of the library's community.

A publication that has not been subjected to legal restriction or prohibition will not be excluded from the collection on moral, political, racist, or religious grounds alone whatever the pressure that may be brought to bear by individuals or groups.

The **ALIA Professional Conduct Policy Statement (2018)** states that 'People engaged in library and information services are members of a profession committed to act with integrity, ethics, trust, expertise and the promotion of public good.

The Library Council of NSW guideline **Access to Information in New South Wales Public Libraries (2019)** states that public libraries have 'a role as an unbiased source of information and ideas, including online content. It must accept responsibility for providing free access to

materials and information presenting, as far as possible, all points of view on current and historical issues, including controversial issues.'

Public Libraries acknowledge the democratic rights of individuals to freely pursue their own information interests. This view is articulated in the **UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (1994)** which states that 'constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information.'

The customer's user's right to privacy with respect of the use of the library or its materials is fully recognised and guarded within the provisions of the **Library Act of New South Wales 1939** and **amendments**.

4. Library Service Charter

Library customers can expect:

- Prompt, courteous, and efficient service by approachable and non-judgemental staff.
- A welcoming and safe environment.
- Free and equal access to resources and services to all individuals and groups within the community, in accordance with the NSW Library Act 1939.
- A range of library resources and services at each library tailored to the needs of each community.
- Library information resources which are relevant and up-to-date.
- Access to a range of information technologies, including public computers, internet access, Wi-Fi and electronic resources.
- Access to staff with professional expertise and knowledge.
- Provision of assistance to people who need adaptive technology and different media to enable them to use the full range of library services and facilities.
- Confidentiality in accordance with the NSW privacy legislation.
- To have suggestions and comments about the library service welcomed.

5. Shoalhaven Libraries' Customer Code of Conduct

5.1. All customers of Shoalhaven Libraries branches are required to observe the following facility rules:

- 5.1.1. Agree to abide by all rules of the facility applicable to the general public.
- 5.1.2. Agree not to harass, threaten, or intimidate facility staff or Library customers.
- 5.1.3. Agree not to behave in a manner that would be regarded by a reasonable person as being offensive.
- 5.1.4. Observe all lawful directions from staff in relation to conduct whilst in Council facilities.
- 5.1.5. Bags and personal belongings are your responsibility and should be kept with you at all times. Library customers that leave items in the Library do so at their own risk.
- 5.1.6. Photography in the Library is not permitted without prior permission.
- 5.1.7. Adults must accompany and supervise children at all times.
- 5.1.8. Discussion and the use of mobile phones in the library should not disturb other Library Customers.
- 5.1.9. Respect the rights of other Library customers.

- 5.1.10. Push bikes and skateboards are not permitted in the Library and are left at the Library customer's own risk
- 5.1.11. Evacuate the Library quickly and safely when requested by staff
- 5.1.12. *"Safety is Everyone's Responsibility"*: Report any problems, or potential risks, to the Library staff immediately
- 5.1.13. The health and safety of our customers is important to us.

You ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER these premises if you are experiencing or exhibiting symptoms of cold, flu, COVID-19, respiratory illness or other infectious illness or disease.

Such symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Chills or sweats
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose
- Loss of sense of smell
- Skin rash, lesions, or sores.

If you are experiencing or exhibit any of these symptoms whilst on these premises, you may be asked to leave.

- 5.1.14. Library customers who do not comply with the Shoalhaven Libraries' Customer Code of Conduct may be asked to leave the library or may be refused access to the library buildings by any library staff member.

6. Shoalhaven Libraries Objectives

- To provide the Community with a library service that is free, equitable, accessible, safe, cost effective and efficient.
- To provide access to a current and relevant collection which meets community needs.
- To provide physical facilities that are attractive, designed for efficiency, accessibility, and sustainability, flexible and functional, and which will serve the identified needs of the community.
- To provide a specially designed and equipped mobile library service to those people who cannot reach a static branch or central library.
- To provide the community with a range of programs and activities to enhance community engagement.
- To strive for excellence in customer service and to ascertain library customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction with library services.

7. Shoalhaven Libraries – Responsibility Statement

7.1 Collection Development

The criterion for the selection of library materials follows professional standards as defined by the Australian Library & Information Association (ALIA) and is outlined in the Collection Development Policy of the South Coast Cooperative Library Service (POL20/73).

7.2 Access to Resources

The role of Shoalhaven Libraries staff is to guide and assist customers in finding and accessing resources appropriate to particular interests and needs.

The catalogue of the South Coast Cooperative Library Service is available online allowing customers to access the collections of the libraries that make up the South Coast Cooperative Library Service. Member services are also available through the library catalogue at www.shoalhavenlibraries.com.au

Shoalhaven Libraries general collection may contain publications that are classified 'Unrestricted' and films classified 'G' (General), 'PG' (Parental Guidance), 'M' 'MA' (Mature) or 'R' (Restricted) in accordance with the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games Act 1995). Members under the age of 18 are not permitted to access films with an 'R' rating, and members under the age of 15 should only access films rated 'MA' with the consent of their parent or guardian. All other resources are available to all persons without restriction. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians, not library staff, to make a final decision as to what is suitable for their child.

The Library promotes and supports Library customers' access to information, including electronic information through its internet facilities. Accessing illegal or offensive sites is prohibited.

7.3 Shoalhaven Libraries Services Statement

7.3.1 Information & Readers Advisory Services – to offer reference and readers' advisory services to Library customers. This includes:

- access to up-to-date reference materials and online databases.
- education programs to support information and digital literacy, and effective use of library resources and facilities.
- Reader's Advisory tools such as 'What to Read Next' advice, booklists, bookmarks, and online databases.

7.3.2 Reservations – to provide an access and delivery service to branches for items on loan or held at Cooperative branches. A cost recovery fee may apply.

7.3.3 Interlibrary Loans and Document Delivery – to facilitate access to resources held in other Australian library and information services collections. This includes public, special, educational, State and National Libraries. Fees apply.

7.3.4 Local Heritage Collection – to preserve, maintain and provide access to a collection of local heritage information, that covers the social, economic, and historical development of the Shoalhaven.

7.3.5 Cataloguing

- To provide a framework for bibliographic control of library materials and the exchange of bibliographic data.
- To maintain rigorous control to ensure consistency and uniformity to facilitate use by those unfamiliar with library protocols.

7.3.6 Community Noticeboards

- All material for display should be approved, signed, and dated by the Customer & Community Resources Manager or other senior staff.
- Priority will be given to the display of material for sporting, recreational, arts, health, educational and cultural activities held within the Shoalhaven Local Government Area. Notices of such activities not pertaining to the local area will be displayed only when space permits.
- Government publications and notices will be displayed, space permitting.
- The Community Noticeboards are not to be used for advertising for private business, personal 'For Sale' notices and /or commercial endeavours.

7.3.7 Services to Targeted Customer Groups

- To provide services and materials which meet the needs of targeted customer groups.
- To provide the community with a range of activities/programs and events related to library services and collections that enrich the lives of the community.

The major library customer groups represented in the Shoalhaven are:

7.3.8 Children & Youth Services

See Shoalhaven Libraries – Children's Policy (POL22/59)

7.3.9 Other Targeted Customer Groups

- **Literacy** – to actively promote and support programs for members of the community with identified literacy and digital literacy needs
- **CALD** – to meet the library needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders** – to actively consult and negotiate with Indigenous Australians to promote library and information literacy
- **People with a disability** – to provide barrier-free access to library services and resources for people with a disability.
- **Aged** – to ensure that older members of the community can access and use library collections, services, and programs. The Home Library Service provides access to library information and resources for those community members who are unable to physically access their local library due to disability or age. A doctor's certificate is required as proof of eligibility to register.
- **Mobile Libraries** – to provide access to library resources to customers in remote areas.

- **Digital** – Digital membership that provides 24-hour access to resources and information.

7.4 Library Membership

Membership to the library is free, in accordance with the requirements of the Library Act 1939.

The Act sets out the core library services that must be offered free of charge; determines the regulations governing the use of the Library; defines the relationship between Local Government and the State Government with regard to public library services, and articulates the State Government funding process.

7.4.1. Membership Categories

- **Digital** – any resident of Shoalhaven Local Government Area can join free of charge and access all digital resources
- **Adults** – permanent residents, ratepayers and those working in the Shoalhaven Local Government Area can join free of charge
- **Juniors** – persons under sixteen (16) years of age must have permission of a parent or legal guardian. The parent or guardian should accompany the child or young adult to the library and produce current identification to join.
- **Non-residents** – Visitors to the Shoalhaven Local Government Area may join as non-residents. This type of membership is free and provides restricted lending conditions of five (5) items and one renewal, no interlibrary loans and no borrowing of Kiama or Gerringong collection items.
- **Organisations** – Local organisations (e.g., Nursing homes, pre-schools) can join the library, however written approval from the organisation's executive on letterhead is required.
- **Unconfirmed Address** – any resident of the Shoalhaven who currently has no fixed address can join free of charge. This type of membership provides restricted lending conditions of five (5) items and one renewal, no interlibrary loans and no borrowing of Kiama or Gerringong collection items. Acceptable forms of identification are Medicare, Centrelink, or concession cards for name confirmation purposes only.

Current identification showing a current address must be shown (except in the case of Unconfirmed Address). Accepted forms of identification are:

- A current NSW Driver's Licence or NSW Photo Card
- A current Health Care Card (Centrelink)
- Shoalhaven Council Rates Notice
- Student Card
- Defence Card
- Lease Agreement/Rent Receipt

Only one library membership per person is allowed.

8. Lending Conditions

8.1 Loan Period

- The standard loan period is four (4) weeks.
- Two (2) loan extension (renewal) is allowed, except if an item is reserved or overdue by more than two (2) weeks.

- Heavily reserved items will have a reduced loan period of two (2) weeks.
- Requests for loan extensions can be made by phone, email or in person at any branch library. Members can also renew their loans online via the online catalogue or the Shoalhaven Libraries App.
- Library collections not for loan include, Reference, Local Heritage, and newspapers. The materials in these collections are for use within the library only.
- Extended loan periods greater than four (4) weeks can be requested and is allowed at the discretion of each branch manager.
- The loan period for special collections or materials may vary from the standard period as determined by the Library Manager.

8.2 Loan Limit

- Overall borrowing is limited to thirty (30) items per borrower.
- Non-fiction collection - maximum of three (3) items per topic (per household).
- Fiction collection – a limit of three (3) books by the same author applies
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- Games and Puzzles – a limit of three (3) per membership
- The loan limit for special collections or materials may vary from the standard policy as determined by the Library Manager and Branch Managers.

8.3 Reservations

- Library members may reserve lending material at any branch library and can choose to collect the reserved item at any branch library. A fee may be applicable.
- Members are advised when a reserved item is ready for collection.
- Uncollected reservations are returned to the collection for others to borrow when the ten (10) day hold period expires.
- Items reserved by other members cannot be renewed.

8.4 Library Cards

- To borrow material and use public access computers, library members may show their library card, a valid form of ID or provide their member number.
- Library members can use either their physical library card or access a digital copy through the library app
- The person using a computer booking must be the same library card holder booked in for the session and the member is responsible for having their card or knowing its number.
- The member named on the membership card, or their guarantor, is responsible for losses and/or damage to library material borrowed on that card.
- Lost membership cards should be reported immediately.
- A fee is charged for the replacement of any membership card which has been lost or damaged.

8.5 Overdue and Lost / Damaged Items

- All borrowing privileges will be suspended if any items are overdue for longer than 30 days. Once the items are returned undamaged borrowing privileges will be reinstated.
- Library notices will be sent to remind members of overdue loans and request their return. Final Demand notices are also sent for non-returned and lost material stating the replacement cost if the items are not returned after 90 days. If the items are not

returned or replacement fees paid within 30 days of the Final Demand notice being sent borrowers will be banned from using library services.

- Charges also apply for the replacement of items lost or damaged by a member. The replacement charge consists of the original purchase price or value and an item processing fee. Once paid this is non-refundable.
- Borrowing privileges are withdrawn if accounts for fines or lost or damaged items remain unpaid.

8.6 Fees, Charges and Fines

- Core library services (as detailed in the Library Act 1939 and amendments) are free to members. Charges are assigned for services defined as value-added.
- The Local Government Act provides for Council to apply fees and charges as resolved by Council annually. All fees and charges are set by resolution of Shoalhaven City Council and are included in Council's Annual Management Plan.
- Borrowers must pay for items which are non-returned, lost, or damaged.
- The library does not charge overdue fines. For a list of current fees & charges charged by Shoalhaven Libraries please visit www.shoalhavenlibraries.com.au

8.7 Responsibility for Minors

- Responsibility for losses or damage incurred by members under sixteen years of age is assumed by the parent or guardian. This acceptance of responsibility is indicated by the parents or guardians signed declaration on the membership application form or by clicking Submit when registering online.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children's reading matter, Internet access and behaviour in the Library.

9. Food and Drink

9.1 Drinks

- Non- alcoholic beverages in spill-proof or covered containers are permitted (such as covered coffee cups, soft drink cans and water bottles).

9.2 Food

- Snacks are permitted (such as commercially wrapped bars and biscuits)

9.3 Prohibited Area – Local Heritage and Technology Area

- No food or drink is allowed in the Local Heritage Area or Technology Area. No food or drink is to be consumed near Local Heritage material.

9.4 General Conditions

- We ask you to act responsibly when consuming food and drink in the library and to be considerate of other library customers.
- Please dispose of your rubbish in the bins provided and report any spills to library staff.
- Library staff will use their discretion in determining whether food and drink are suitable to be consumed in the library. You will be asked to remove food or drink if it is considered to be unsuitable.

9.5 Children

- Parents and Guardians are responsible for monitoring the consumption of food and drink by children under their supervision.

9.6 Library Activities and Functions

- Alcohol will only be served at an activity or function with the prior approval of library management. The library practises responsible service of alcohol.
- Drink containers and foods not prescribed above may be used at library activities or functions with staff supervision.
- Parents, teachers, and supervisors of young children shall be alerted when food or drink is served at children's activities.

10. Implementation

The City Lifestyles Directorate will administer this policy.

11. Review

To be reviewed within one year of the election of a new Council.