

**FILE NO:** PSC2006-1589

**TITLE:** REDUCTION OR WAIVING OF OVERDUE LIBRARY ITEM CHARGES

**POLICY OWNER:** LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

**PURPOSE:**

The policy outlines the criteria under which applications for the reduction or waiving of overdue charges can be made and the circumstances under which applications are considered.

**CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

Library staff are often required to respond to customer requests for the reduction or waiving of overdue charges due to the late return of library items. Generally charges are only reduced or waived as a result of extenuating or unforeseen circumstances such as incident or illness.

While the overdue charge per item is minimal, the overall cost incurred by customers may impact on their future use of the library service. Overdue charges are designed to discourage borrowers from keeping materials beyond their allocated loan period, which disadvantages other users. Overdue charges assist in the management and maintenance of library collections and resources, providing equitable access to information and a greater social benefit to the wider community.

The library provides equal opportunity to all individuals and groups within the community to access resources, regardless of financial status.

**SCOPE:**

This policy enables library staff to make decisions based on individual customer circumstances and provides for staff to refer more complex requests to a branch supervisor or the Library Manager where necessary.

**DEFINITIONS:**

An outline of the key definitions of terms included in the policy.

- Overdue charges      An amount incurred for the late return of library items.
- Library items      Books, Audio Books, Audio Navigators, CDs, DVDs and Magazines.
- Reduction of charges      To reduce incurred charges to a lesser amount.
- Waiving of charges      To set aside or dispense with incurred charges.



**POLICY STATEMENT:**

- 1) The General Manager has delegation to write-off rates and charges under the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, once approved by Council.
- 2) Library staff are delegated by the General Manager to reduce or waive overdue library item charges as per the following categories:
  - a. General library staff (Library Assistant, Library Technician) – up to \$20.
  - b. Branch Library (Team Leader/Supervisor) – Up to \$100.
  - c. Library Manager – Up to \$500.
- 3) Requests for the reduction or waiving of overdue charges will only be considered once overdue items have been returned to the library.
- 4) Overdue charges in an amount that exceeds staff delegation may be waived on the following grounds:
  - a. Serious Illness of customer or immediate family member.
  - b. Incident involving customer or immediate family member.
  - c. Death of customer or immediate family member.
  - d. Presentation of Medical Certificate or Statutory Declaration.
  - e. Library error.
  - f. Library discretion (taking into account library branch guidelines and all circumstances of an individuals explanation for the late return of items).
- 5) At times Port Stephens Library Service may run campaigns such as 'Food for Fines' to support charitable organisations. These campaigns invite library customers to donate non-perishable food and toiletry items in lieu of paying accrued overdue charges.

**POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The key position/s responsible for this policy are:

- 1) Library Services Manager - implementing, complying with, monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and providing advice.
- 2) Team Leaders/Supervisors - implementing, complying with, reviewing and providing advice.
- 3) Library Staff – implementing and complying with.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

*Local Government Act 1993*

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

NSW Library Act 1939  
NSW Library Regulation 2010  
Port Stephens Council Code of Conduct

**CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:**

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**VERSION HISTORY:**

Version	Date	Author	Details	Minute No.
1	22/08/2006	Library Services Manager	Original policy adopted	650
2	12/05/2015	Library Services Manager	Policy reviewed	110
3	27/02/2018	Library Services Manager	Policy review – changes made to format and content updated.	036