Jan 2016: Mich Lib List query re: Non-resident fees

We charge $5 for non-residents to use our computers.

Residents of our community, patrons who work in our community and patrons who have library cards at other libraries within our cooperative may use them free of charge.

Patrons must log onto computers with their library card which authenticates their patron code.

I hope this information helps.

**Nicole Bovee**| Circulation Supervisor

Troy Public Library |510 W. Big Beaver, Troy, MI 48084  | Office: 248.524.3553  |[troypl.org](http://www.troypl.org/)  [cid:image010.jpg@01CF8BD8.30248410](https://www.facebook.com/troylib)  [cid:image011.jpg@01CF8BD8.30248410](https://twitter.com/troylib)

“We believe a strong community embraces diversity, promotes innovation, and encourages collaboration.  We strive to lead by example within the region. We do this because we want everyone to choose Troy as their community for life. We believe in doing government the best.”

Sylvia,

We only charge non-resident fees to those that wish to check items out from our library, and the fee is determined by averaging the millage costs everyone else pays (per capita) within the district.  Because we’ve gotten computers through past BTOP grants, there are specific stipulations that the computers must be available for all to use, regardless of library patronage, though I’m not sure our board would wish to charge for use of non-residents if this WEREN’T a grant stipulation.  Printing, faxing, copying all have fees attached, but are the same  for all.

Emily

Sylvia - Our annual fee is $70. That number comes from dividing the cost per household for all of the

John Martin, Director  
Loutit District Library  
407 Columbus Ave.  
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Last summer, I noticed an increase of summer families registering as an Out of Service Area user for our fee of $30.00. We had two families that signed up for 5 or 7 cards. That is when I did some checking into what our tax payers pay.

average taxpayer in Three Rivers pays $44 per card. Our OSA fee was $30.00. Therefore, our Board approved an increase to:

$50.00 for single + one (this is the wording to cover a couple or a single parent with 1 child)

$75.00 for family

I requested this amount based on what area libraries charge. A library close by that is the same class size charges this same amount.

I did calculations for cost per resident, cost per household, and cost per active library cards. I used the amount that we receive from city taxes to do the calculations.

Anyone can come and use our computers without card. We give serveral guest passes a day. Many come from surrounding communities because we have longer hours, more computers and they live closer to Three Rivers (but not in our service area). I am sometimes frustrated by this because I see many OSA users in every day to use our computers. But how can you cut off access to anyone? We are a public library.

I hope this will help you out. Let me know if you have more questions.

Melissa McPherson

Library Director

Three Rivers Public Library

I looked at the census to determine who many households lived in my township and divided that number by the amount collected in my millage to determine a fair amount per household.  For me it worked out to $120. per year.  We charge $35 per quarter if they only want it for a short time, or $120 per year.

Mary K. Hill  
Director  
Lincoln Township Public Library  
269-429-9575

Historically we charge $50.00 per household. Last year I called the assessors that cover the area that make up the millage area. I determined from the average cost of homes in the area, that I could go as high as $60.00, but have not so at this time. To me it makes sense to charge a fee that matches the cost of what the average taxpayer pays. Kalmazoo District Library I think calculates that number almost every year and changes that cost yearly.

Jim Oliver, Director

Charlotte Community Library

Something comparable to the annual taxes paid by your citizens, on a per capita basis.  Sounds like your township board is even meaner than mine is.  Connie

TADL doesn't have a non-resident card but I once worked at a library that did.

Those cards were a different color (yellow) than those for residents (white). Non-resident cards were only good for a year instead of the two years for residents. It was in a college area so a high resident turnover rate.

If you don't want to go to the expense of another color card, you could add a sticker of some kind to indicate a non-resident. You would need to be able to add this information to your patron database as well so access to any extra services such as Overdrive may be blocked if needed.

You'll also need to decide if it's going to be an annual or monthly or something else fee so you can keep track of expiration and renewals.

Please consider summarizing the answers for the list.

Regards,

Katheryn Carrier

Reference Librarian

Traverse Area District Library

Hi Sylvia. Our library charges non-resident fees based on the average amount a resident patron would pay in millage fees. (about $40-45 a year).

We charge $40 for a yearly family, and $20 for six months. Anyone who walks through the door has the use of all the library's computers (we issue a free guest pass) and services. The out-of-district fee is necessary for the patron to check out materials. Hope this helps.

Skip Schmidt - St Ignace Public Library.

We do not charge to use guest passes for our computers and our non-resident fee is $5.00 per year to get a library card.  We determine residency with a valid driver’s/MI ID or indication that they own property in our service area ie tax bill or utility bill.

As you can see we are pretty easy and fyi historically some of our “summer visitors’ have been extremely generous to the library over the years.  Including several bequests, one that continues to pay out a couple hundred dollars each year.  Good luck on your policy change – Amanda

Amanda Winnicki, Library Director

Menominee County Library

We charge $20.00 for a 1 year card to all non-residents (those outside of our taxing township, Tuscarora). These cardholders have full use of the library's services. All those who want to use the library without purchasing a card (I am speaking of computer usage, of course) are unable to access our computers (we have Cassie on them and our patrons use their barcode on their library card for authentication. Others must pay $1.00, and most are agreeable to that. The Cassie system simplified our lives immensely! Good luck with this. Yours in service, Cindy Lou Poquette

Our non-resident fee is set at $100.00 per household(address) per year.  The Library Board set this rate based on our library millage paid by the district residents.  While there are very few homes in our district that their taxable value would generate paying $100.00 in PMDL library millage, our millage is approved in perpetuity.   The library board felt that the district residences made a long term commitment

to supporting the library so the “short timers” commitment should be much more.

Sheila Pere Marquette District Library & Harrison District Library

We used to be a City library, but became a district library last year and passed our millage in August 2015, with the tax bills going out in December. The board decided that as of January 1, 2016, everyone not residing in our district would have to pay $40. They considered what other libraries in our county charge and that our average tax bill is about $60. That includes lots of farms and the board thought $60 was too high based on the local economy.

We just started issuing new cards this week and are checking everyone's address to a tax parcel listing to make sure they are in the district (We became a district library with our school district, but only the part that is in two townships...so the boundaries are very confusing and one area in each township has no library service at all.) We used to have a very open policy of letting anyone get a free library card no matter where they live, but now that taxpayers are directly supporting the library district, it's too hard to justify doing that.

I much, much prefer our former policy; it was much friendlier and we always figured that people coming into town to use the library were also supporting the businesses in town...but I suppose that doesn't matter to people living in the townships who are now having to support the library.

The new policy doesn't specifically address computer use for people just passing through town or who live outside the district; so far, we're just letting them use the computers. I would dread having to charge them, just as I dislike having to pay for computer use when I visit other libraries.

Do you not have a separate library board?

Good luck, Colleen Leddy, Director  
Stair District Library

At Tecumseh District Library we determine non-residents according to the tax district.

Our tax payers pay on average between 70 and 80 Dollars in taxes to the library. We charge patrons who do not pay taxes to the library 25 Dollars for a 6 month card and 50 Dollars for a one year card. Once a patron purchases a non-resident card, he/she is regarded as a member of the library and can use all services free of charge, that includes computer privileges. If a non-card holder comes in, we charge 5 Dollars for a computer day pass.

So for computer privileges we just ask to see a library card, resident or non-resident. If the card is valid, not expired and in good standing, patrons may use all library services.

I hope that helps. If you have any other questions, please let me know.

Have a great evening,

Sonja

At Camden Twp. Library, we only charge an "out-of-area fee" to get a library card (since a non-resident would not be paying millage).    
We consider our public computers a service - the same as our fax/copy/print services or for public programs.  The only charges would be if they print something from the computers.

Hope this info helps,

-Laura Orlowski, director

Camden Twp. Library

We charge a non-resident fee for library cards only.  If a non-resident wants to use the computers, we have several guest cards that we use to log in.  Other than checking out items, non-residents are treated the same as residents.  We place no limitations on attending programs, using the computers, meeting room reservations, etc.  Our fee to become a member is only $15 per year (subject to change this year to more accurately reflect what our average resident pays in taxes). Mindy Schaffer - DeWitt

No, we have guest passes for people without a card to use our computers.  But I have had boards like that, so I can totally empathize.  We just have them give us proof of residency when they sign up for a card.  Other places, we have let them use the computers for free if they leave their license at the desk.  I guess it depends on the mission of your library and if you want to be a community center, or a fee-based institution.  I have always been able to convince my board that we are here for the public, and the few people that use the computers free is creating a positive atmosphere in the library.  Since we are a tourist destination up here, we see a lot of family members of our regular patrons.  I think it doesn’t hurt come millage election time when those voters have been able to bring their family to one of our libraries and they can use our services for free.  We do also offer a temporary card, good for four months.  The card cost is $25 – which we refund $20 once all materials have been returned, so it basically costs $5.  With all of the summer-only residents, it makes sense for us.

Hang in there, Sylvia ;-)  I think the best way of doing this is to offer a guest or non-resident card, and calculate the cost based on what a resident of your legal service population would pay annually for library service.  I would NOT require any card to use the computers, but a sign up for tracking time, etc. instead.  Some libraries take a library card OR a driver's license while the patron is using the computer, some don't do either, but I really hope you do not charge in any way for public access to the Internet.

Sheryl L. Mase, Director

Mid-Michigan Library League

We began user fees in July 2014. After reviewing the number of people using us for services (books, interloans, etc.), my Library Board decided to charge a fee and they based it on what the average cost in millage tax is to our township residents. We charge $25 for a single card and $50 for a family card (2 adults plus their minor children); this fee is paid every year. We also restricted those outside our service area to just having the privilege of checking out items; they do not have interloan services through us, they have to use their home libraries for that service (more non-residents were using MeL through us than the residents were).

Regardless of where you live, everyone is able to use our computers and participate in our programming.

**BillieJo Bluemer**

Library Director

Rauchholz Memorial Library

Sylvia,

This is a personal response to your email and does NOT reflect the ideas or opinions of my employer.

As a traveler who spends a great deal of time in Leland Township, and even more money, I would be quite upset if your Board decided to charge me when I come in to use your computers to check email, weather, etc.  Especially in light of the fact that cell coverage in the township is so abysmally poor and many times I’m dependent on you to get a written marine forecast.

I understand tight budgets and the need to raise funds, but nickel and diming non-residents creates ill will for the entire region, not just the library.  It’s the opposite attitude of what your Chamber and Economic Development team are looking for.  Why not offer exceptional service and ask me for a donation? You would come out much further ahead financially and create less work load for the staff and maintain positive relationship with visitors.

There is a library further up north that

would not allow me to access my email (for work) despite the fact I stayed within their time guidelines.  I missed an important work email for which there were significant repercussions.  I have not and will not go back to that community to spend any of my travel dollars.  I will not support them economically.  And I tell people when asked how short sighted they were.

I’m very sad to hear your Board is considering charging for services.  Very sad.  Charging fees is not a positive move for creating more funding.

Again, this is a personal perspective, not endorsed at all by the Kent District Library.

Sadly,

**Diane M. Cutler**

**Branch Manager**

Cascade Township Branch

Sorry, Sylvia, I scanned your original message too quickly.   We do not charge usage fees to non-residents for public computers, copiers, etc.  The non-resident distinction only comes into consideration when a patron wishes to obtain a library card and then, of course, we ask for proof of address.   I apologize for giving you a lot of information you didn't need in my earlier response!    
To address your question, I agree that it isn't reasonable to ask everyone who walks in the door to present proof of address.  You could ask to see a patron's ID before issuing a guest pass to the public computers.   For other common walk-in services, such as use of the photocopier, I think you would lose a lot of goodwill by asking for proof of address.  
All the best,  
Teresa Stannard, Library Director

Parchment Community Library

401 S Riverview Dr.

We only charge a non-resident fee if someone who lives outside of our district, and does not participate in any type of reciprocal agreement (MI Library or MEL visiting patron), wants to check out material.  We do not charge for using our computers or other services.

Ann Greene

Eau Claire District Library

We charge a non-resident fee for patrons outside of our district.  It has historically been $40 per year per household.  When we went for district status in 2006, we calculated that $40 was about the average tax a taxpayer would be paying to support the library, so we felt the $40 figure was well reasoned.  We do not, however, charge for use of the computers.  Anyone is free to use them.

Mimi Herrington, Director  
Bad Axe Area District Library

Hi Sylvia,  We only charge a non-resident fee if they want to check something out. They can use the public computers, look at anything they want, but if they want to take anything with them they must get a card. We charge them a fee if they do not live in our legal service area. Those who do live in our service area already support us with property taxes since we are a District Library. Our fee is only $20 per year for the whole family.

Be careful about "usage fees". I think public libraries have some responsibility to have some things available to everyone regardless of ability to pay. That's why we don't charge to use the computers. I would check with a lawyer who is familiar with library law. Or maybe Sheryl can help.

Good luck.

Nanette Miller

Here are our non-resident fees for the 2016 calendar year: <http://www.kpl.gov/policies/nonresident-fee.aspx>

Non-resident cards are typically purchased only by those who cannot receive a reciprocal card through one of the area libraries with whom we have an existing reciprocal agreement, and grant access to all library services and privileges which would be provided to residents. Last year, I think we only sold 19 of them, but it’s an option that is valued by those who elect to take advantage of it.

Regarding computer use, free guest passes are available to those who are able to demonstrate their ineligibility for either a resident or reciprocal card.

Best,

**J. Patrick Jouppi**

Executive Assistant

Kalamazoo Public Library

We take the total Taxable Value for our district and divide it by the number of parcels (a figure obtained from the County Equalization office) to obtain the Taxable Value per parcel.  We then multiply the Taxable Value per parcel by our millage rate to find the amount of tax an average household pays to support the library.  That's the figure we use as our non-resident fee, rounded down to the nearest $5.00.  We calculate this every year.  
Teresa Stannard, Library Director

Parchment Community Library

We just base our fee on what an average tax payer pays, or $80.  I have worked other places where you look up their actual EAV, and then enter a formula based on your tax rate, so everyone pays what they would actually pay if they lived in the district also.

Lisa Poignant Waskin

Director

Superior District Library

   We are a class 4 library and charge 25 dollars for our non-resident cards. We determined this by comparing what the libraries around us charge, we didn’t want to charge way more or less than them.

It is a small amount for what our non-residents get. They can check out anything in the library including anything on our digital platform such as e-books & audio books. However, we don’t charge to use our computers they are open to the public. I’m not even sure if / how you would want to enforce that. We poll everyone that uses our computers to see where they live and we have a large majority of individuals that use our computers who don’t live anywhere close to our area and have several out of state users.

I do think that it is a good idea to charge individuals to use your library who are not in your service area because it makes them realize libraries are not free, someone has to pay for it. It may encourage them to use the library that they should be using, and if they choose to continue using your services it can help raise some more funds for you!

Good luck!

Miriam Andrus, Director

Big Rapids Community Library

Just remember you cannot charge more than your own patrons. That is illegal. You might want to call Shannon White at the Library of Michigan to get an official opinion and the law.   
The rule I have always used is you take your library budget, divide it by your population and that will give you a per capita amount.   
So if your budget is $700,000 and your population is 35,000 then the charge would be $20.00 for a non-resident card.   
Charging for the use of computers and other services is something else, especially if you don't charge your own patrons.  Again get Shannon's opinion.   
Sandra Wilson   
Lakeland Library Cooperative Director