



SOUTH MISSISSIPPI REGIONAL LIBRARY

Policy & Procedure Manual A

REVISED & ADOPTED
FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Contents

- Section 1A: Introduction..... 3**

- Section 2A: Administrative Board of Trustees... 4**
 - 2.1 Bylaws..... 4
 - 2.2 Powers and Duties..... 5
 - 2.3 Meetings..... 7
 - 2.4 Library Director 8
 - 2.5 Amendments 8

- Section 3A: Hours of Operation 8**
 - 3.1 Library Branch Hours of Operation..... 8
 - 3.2 Holiday Closures 9
 - 3.3 Staff Development Closures 120
 - 3.4 Emergency Closures..... 150

- Section 4A: Circulation Policies & Procedures. 11**
 - 4.1 Library Card Registration 11
 - 4.2 Procedures..... 122
 - 4.3 Loan/Fine Policy 122
 - 4.4 Interlibrary Loan 155
 - 4.5 Access to Circulation Records..... 155
 - 4.6 Computer/Internet Policy 166
 - 4.7 Child Safe Internet Policy..... 199
 - 4.8 Photo Permission..... 21

- Section 5A: Materials Selection 21**
 - 5.1 Collection Policy..... 21
 - 5.2 Selection Responsibilities..... 23
 - 5.3 Collection Management 24

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

5.4 Guidelines for Weeding Dewey	25
5.5 Gift Policy.....	266
5.6 Reconsideration of Material.....	27
Section 6A: Patron Rules and Forms	28
6.1 Patron Rules of Conduct	28
6.2 Incident Report	31
6.3 Accident Report.....	322
6.4 Unattended Child Policy	333
6.5 Meeting Room Policy	34
6.6 Lost and Found Policy.....	39
Section 7A: Financial, Purchasing & Property Policy.....	40
7.1 Financial Policy.....	40
7.2 Purchasing and Procurement.....	41
7.3 Inventory and Insurance	42
7.4 Bond Insurance.....	43
7.5 Banking and Audits	434
7.6 Cash Received.....	46
7.7 Petty Cash	46
7.8 Incidentals and Supplies	47
7.9 Payment of Bills and Invoices.....	47
7.10 Property.....	48
Section 8A: Video Surveillance Policy.....	49
Appendix A: Forms	

Section 1A: Introduction

South Mississippi Regional Library System (SMRL) serves the citizens of Jefferson Davis and Marion Counties. SMRL has two branches in Jefferson Davis County: Bassfield Public Library (also named the Dr. Frank L. Leggett Library) and Prentiss Public Library. Marion County has one branch in Columbia, the Columbia-Marion County Public Library, which is the headquarters branch for SMRL. Columbia and Prentiss are the county seats of Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties. Current population of Marion County is 24,441; Jefferson Davis County's current population is 11,321 (2020 U.S. Census estimates).

On October 9, 1972, Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties joined in creating the Marion-Jefferson Davis Regional Library system with Columbia as the headquarters. On January 12, 1977, the Regional Library Board changed the name to South Mississippi Regional Library. The system is supported by the cities of Columbia, Prentiss, Bassfield, and the Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties and some state funding. The Columbia-Marion County branch celebrated its centennial on January 1, 2012.

In 2005, SMRL along with Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Library System and Copiah-Jefferson Library System formed the Longleaf Consortium to purchase and share the Polaris Automation System. In 2018, the Consortium migrated to the Apollo Automation System. The Consortium also shares books, both print and electronic. Pike-Amite-Walthall Library System joined the Consortium in 2020.

The management and control of South Mississippi Regional Library System is administered by a legally appointed Administrative Board of Library Trustees who are appointed for staggered terms of five years by the Boards of Supervisors in Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties. Terms of appointment follow SMRL's fiscal year from October 1-September 30. The Board consists of five trustees. Each county appoints a trustee every other year so that each year there is an alternating 3-2 split of representation of both

counties. Each trustee must be a resident and qualified elector of the area represented by said trustee.

The *Friends of the South Mississippi Regional Library* is a nonprofit volunteer organization that raises funds for the Library via book sales and other fundraisers. The Friends also assists the Library with programs. Proceeds of fund raisers are used to purchase items for the Library or help with programming expenses. Presently, the Branch Manager and Library Supervisor serve as liaisons. Patrons of the Library, as well as local businesses, may join *Friends* for a nominal fee. Applications for membership are available at each branch.
Revised and Adopted November 9, 2021.

Section 2A: Administrative Board of Trustees

2.1 Bylaws

1. The South Mississippi Regional Library System (SMRL) provides free public library service to the people of Marion and Jefferson Davis counties. SMRL is headquartered at Marion County-City of Columbia Library in Columbia, MS. SMRL is organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi (§ 39-3-17 *Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated*) according to the principles and practices recommended for good public library service.
2. The management and control of South Mississippi Regional Library System is administered by a legally appointed Administrative Board of Library Trustees who are appointed for staggered terms of five years by the Boards of Supervisors in Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties (§ 39-3-15 *Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated*). Terms of appointment follow SMRL's fiscal year from October 1-September 30. The Board consists of five trustees. Each county shall alternate appointing trustees on a yearly basis so that each year there is an alternating 3-2 split of representation of both

- counties. Each trustee shall be a resident and qualified elector of the area represented by said trustee.
3. Officers of the Board of Trustees consist of Chairman and Vice Chairman. The trustee with the most seniority is appointed chairman for his or her last year of service; the vice-chairman is the trustee with the next most seniority.

2.2 Powers and Duties

1. The specific duties and responsibilities of the South Mississippi Regional Library Board of Trustees shall be coincident with those ascribed to in § 39-3-17, *Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated*.
2. The Board shall have the supervision, care, and custody of all property of the library system.
3. The Board shall employ a library system director, prescribe his/her duties, fix his/her compensation and remove him/her for cause. The Director of the Library shall be executive director of the policies adopted by this Board. The Library Director shall administer and establish procedures according to policies established by the Board. His or her duties shall include:
 - a. employment of staff with the approval of the Board;
 - b. prescription of staff duties;
 - c. removal of staff for cause;
 - d. preparation of the budget;
 - e. financial and statistical management including purchasing of materials, supplies, and equipment according to the Financial Policy;
 - f. acceptance of materials and donations for the library system;

- g. disposal of property as stated in the Financial Policy
 - h. reporting to the Board of Trustees;
 - i. any other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient administration of the library system;
 - j. recommend to the Board such policies and procedures as in his or her opinion will promote the efficiency of the Library in its service to the people of the area.
4. The Board shall have exclusive control of the finances of the library system and upon approval submit an annual budget prepared by the Library Director containing estimates for the ensuing fiscal year to the appropriating bodies.
 5. At least one Board member, preferably the Chair, will be authorized to co-sign SMRL checks with the Director.
 6. Disposal of equipment and property which cost \$250 or more dollars initially should be reported in the minutes. This excludes books and other library materials, regardless if purchased or a gift. If equipment or property is donated to another state agency or non-profit organization, the minutes should state where the equipment/property was donated.
 7. The Board shall do all other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient management and control of the library system.
 8. No Trustee shall receive a salary or other compensation for his/her service; however, required traveling to other locations than board meetings may be compensated for mileage at the federal mileage rate in effect at the time of travel.
 9. Trustees shall not use the position or privileged information he/she may receive as a trustee for personal benefit or for the premeditated benefit of business

associates, friends or family. Trustees should avoid conflicts of interest and comply with § 25-4-105 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*.

2.3 Meetings

1. The Board shall have four scheduled meetings per year, with one each quarter. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, the Director, or any member as long as a quorum is met. A vote may be taken by phone on matters that arise between meetings. The vote should be included in the minutes of the next meeting.
2. A quorum consists of three or more members present.
3. Any trustee who misses four consecutive meetings shall be subject to removal by the governing authority (§ 39-3-15 *Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated*).
4. All Board and committee business shall be conducted in open meetings that comply with §25-41-5 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*. Notices of date, time, and place of meetings will be posted in all branches. Anyone desiring to bring a matter pertaining to library service in the area served by the South Mississippi Regional Library may do so by notifying the Chairman one week before the next scheduled meeting.
5. All meetings of the Board shall be governed by the parliamentary procedures set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order*. Minutes of the meeting are the official record. For expediency, the minutes may be recorded by a trusted staff member, preferably the Bookkeeper/Secretary as she/he is privy to staff salaries, etc.
6. The order of business for meetings of the SMRL Board of Trustees is as follows:
 - a. Welcome
 - b. Adoption of Minutes
 - c. Distribution of paperwork
 - d. Old Business

- e. New Business
- f. Scheduling of next meetings
- g. Adjournment

2.4 Library Director

1. The Library Director shall be appointed by the South Mississippi Regional Library Board of Trustees and shall be responsible to the Board.
2. The Library Director shall be invited to all Board meetings but may be excused from executive sessions at the discretion of the Board.
3. The Library Director shall have no vote on Board actions.
4. As outlined in §39-3-17 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* the Library Director shall administer and establish procedures according to policies established by this Board. Additional duties shall include: (a) employment of staff with the approval of the board of trustees; (b) prescription of staff duties; (c) removal of staff for cause; (d) preparation of the budget; (e) financial and statistical management; (f) reporting to board of trustees; and (g) other acts necessary for the orderly and efficient administration of the library system.

2.5 Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting and passed with a 3 of 5 majority vote. Any amendment must adhere to the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*.

Section 3A: Hours of Operation

Revised and adopted by the SMRL Board of Trustees November 9, 2021.

3.1 Library Branch Hours of Operation

Per the Mississippi Public Library System Accreditation Program, *One or more library locations in each county within*

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

the library system is open until at least 6:00 p.m. or later at least one day a week or offers weekend hours. Therefore, the hours of operation for the three branch libraries of the South Mississippi Library System are as follows:

- Columbia-Marion County Public Library
Monday-Thursday: 9:00 a.m.-- 6:00 p.m.
Friday and Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-- 5:00 p.m.
- Prentiss Public Library
Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday: 9:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.
Wednesday and Friday: 9:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m.
(Closed 12:00-1:00 each day.)
- Frank L. Leggett Public Library
Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m. –5:00 p.m. (Closed 12:00-1:00 each day.)

3.2 Holiday Closures

All branch libraries of the South Mississippi Regional Library System will be closed for operation for the following state recognized holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Dr. Martin Luther King and in January Robert E. Lee's Birthday	Third Monday
Presidents' Day in February	Third Monday
Memorial Day May	Last Monday in
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day September	First Monday in
Veterans' Day	November 11

Thanksgiving Day

**Fourth
Thursday in
November**

Christmas Day

December 25

Additional days may be added to holidays by decree of the Governor. SMRL does not observe Confederate Memorial Day, the last Monday in April, which is a state recognized holiday. The paid holiday leave will instead be used on Good Friday (the Friday before Easter Sunday) each year. The Columbia-Marion County branch will close for all Saturdays immediately following or preceding a holiday closure (Friday or Monday).

3.3 Staff Development Closures

Key components to staff development are staff meetings and in-house staff training. All branch libraries of the South Mississippi Regional Library System will be closed for operations for the following staff development:

- one half-day closure per library branch each month, dates to be determined by the Administrative staff, for staff meetings and workdays.
- one full-day closure for the system per fiscal year quarter, dates to be determined by the Library Director, to conduct staff training.

3.4 Emergency Closures

An emergency is any situation that may adversely affect patron or staff safety or prevent library staff from providing satisfactory service to the public. Only the Board of Trustees or the Library Director can approve for emergency library closures. Policy and Procedure Manual C provides library staff with a set of disaster priorities, emergency procedure guidelines and lists of contact personnel. This policy will be updated annually to ensure accuracy and currency.

Section 4A: Circulation Policies & Procedures

Revised and adopted by the SMRL Board of Trustees November 9, 2021.

4.1 Library Card Registration

1. Persons who live in Marion or Jefferson Davis Counties are eligible to obtain library cards from the South Mississippi Regional Library.
2. It has been the custom of the system (for over 25 years) to issue library cards for persons living in surrounding counties, free of charge, because of the strong social, cultural, and economic ties that exist.
3. As a member of Longleaf Consortium (Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin, Copiah-Jefferson, and Pike-Amite-Walthall are the other member systems), South Mississippi Regional honors cards issued by any branch within the Consortium. A list of branches is posted at the front desk.
4. Persons from other counties or neighboring parishes in Louisiana may apply for a library card if they attend school or work in Marion or Jefferson Davis Counties.
5. Children who are 5 years of age and older may register for their own library cards with parent or guardian permission signature.
6. Anyone 16-years-old or younger must have a parent or guardian signature to be issued a card.
7. The first card issued is free, subsequent cards are available for a \$1 replacement fee.
8. Temporary cards may be issued to a non-resident who is residing in the area for two weeks or more. A non-resident must furnish a verifiable local address and a driver's license. No more than three items can be checked out on a non-resident's account.
9. Patrons are asked to allow a photo to be attached to their card record in the automation system. This will be done when the card is issued, renewed, or systematically when the card is used. Patrons who refuse to have a photo taken will be required to sign a waiver that voids and nullifies any challenge to

someone else using their card to check out materials (see Appendix A). Parents or guardians of minors will be required to sign permission waivers to allow a photo to be taken or to refuse to allow a photo to be taken and attached to the minor's library card record (see Appendix A). The same rules apply to minors as to challenges to someone using their card if there is no photo allowed on the record.

4.2 Procedures

1. An application for a library card must be completed and signed.
2. Two proofs of address must be provided. If the mailing address is different from the 911 address, both must be furnished. The mailing address will be stated as the primary address, the 911 address as the secondary.
3. Adults must provide a driver's license or an identification number.
4. A photo must be taken, or a waiver signed. This will be done before patrons use the card. ID should be furnished to ensure that the correct person is being photographed.
5. Applicants must specify *Yes* or *No* on Internet User Agreement Policy. If yes, the Internet use agreement must be signed.
6. Parents/guardians of children under age 17 must sign to give permission for their children to use the Internet without their supervision (*see Appendix A: Children's Safety Internet Policy and Agreement*).

4.3 Loan/Fine Policy

1. Adult customers may check out a total of 15 items at a time but are limited to 4 magazines and 4 realia per checkout. Juvenile patrons may check out a total of 10 items at a time on his/her card.
2. Only patrons 18 years or older may check out videos, realia, or devices. Only patrons 18 years or older may check out adult fiction materials. Any parent or guardian

of a minor child may submit a written request (see *Minor Child Adult Access Permission Form*) to have a note placed on their child's account alerting staff that the minor has their permission to check out items from adult collections.

Amended by the SMRL Board of Trustees on November 30, 2023.

3. SMRL reserves the right to limit or forbid checkouts in certain subject areas due to demand (i.e., Black History month, science fairs).
4. Patrons may **not** use another patron's card for additional checkouts, without prior patron authorization on file.
5. SMRL does not charge late fines for overdue materials. However, after items are four weeks overdue, the cost of items will be charged to the patron's account along with a processing fee of \$5. If an item is returned in good condition, the cost of the item and processing fees will be deleted from the patron's account. Patrons may also, with approval from Administrative staff, replace a lost item with an equivalent item, and the cost of the original item and processing fees will be deleted from their account.
6. Fees will not be assessed to patrons who lose items in house fires, floods, hurricanes, or tornados. The patron must furnish verifiable proof.
7. Any books, audio books, or videos designated a new release circulate for 2 weeks with no renewals. Patrons are limited to two of each of these material types at each checkout. Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Administrative staff.
8. Books, audio books, and videos (excluding new releases) circulate for 14 days and may be renewed twice provided there are no holds on the books. Patrons may renew by phone or online through the library catalog.
9. Magazines circulate for 7 days and may not be renewed.
10. Realia circulate for 14 days and may not be renewed.
11. Computer management software requires patrons to log on to the computer with their library card. Patrons are allowed up to three hours per day in one-hour increments. If a computer is not available, patrons may ask a staff

member to reserve one using the computer management software.

12. Patrons ineligible for a card within the Longleaf Consortium may use a visitor pass when using the computers. Visitor passes are issued for one hour per day. In all instances, computer users must read and sign the *Computer/Internet Use Agreement (see Appendix A)* before using the computer.
13. Per the Mississippi Code of 1972, Title 39, Chapter 3, Article 1, reasonable reimbursements may be collected for special library services, provided these are determined in advance and in writing by the administrative Board of Trustees. SMRL will charge fees for the following special library services: printing, copying, faxing, scanning, and laminating documents, as well as providing patrons with digital storage devices (flash drives) and listening aids (ear buds). The fees for these special library services will be based on the cost of the supplies and equipment needed to provide the services.
Amended by the SMRL Board of Trustees on November 8, 2023.
14. Meeting room keys circulate overnight for after-hour meetings. Keys will only be issued to patrons, aged 21 and over, with library cards without overdue fines or fees. Keys are to be returned to the staff or left in the drop box after the meeting. If a key is not returned within three days, the account of the patron checking out the meeting room will be assessed a fee to change the locks on the door. Please refer to the Meeting Room Policy for additional information.
15. Patrons who do not have their card with them may check out materials and computers if they furnish proof of their identity and address.
16. Patrons with any fees will not be allowed to check out the meeting room until the account is cleared. Patrons with fees above \$5 are not allowed to check out materials until the account is below \$5. Minimum payment on fees above one dollar is \$1. *Fees older than 90 days will block a patron from checking out materials or computers. Payment arrangements can be made on fees.*

17. All payments are cash only. SMRL will not accept checks for copies, faxes, or scans. Checks are accepted when a payment is mailed in, or when the payment is for lost materials and fees. However, any returned check fees will be added to the patron's account.

4.4 Interlibrary Loan

1. SMRL provides interlibrary loan services to registered patrons whose user record circulation status is "OK." Patrons whose circulation status is either "BARRED," "BLOCKED," or "DELINQUENT" are not eligible for interlibrary loan services until action is taken to clear their circulation status.
2. The requesting patron incurs any fee that is charged by the lending library. Postage is paid for by SMRL. If requested items are not picked up by the requesting patron within seven days, the item(s) may be returned to the lending library.
3. The patron interlibrary loan period is based on lending library's due date. Library staff will adjust the patron due-date, accordingly, allocating adequate time for mailing.

4.5 Access to Circulation Records

South Mississippi Regional Library System follows the American Library Association policy on confidentiality of library records and will not make inquiry into the purposes for which a patron requests information. For this reason, each library patron shall be assigned a library card number to be used when checking out materials. Any records made in loaning books or in answering reference questions are for the sole and express purpose of protecting public property. If a staff member receives a request for information relating to circulation or registration records, the following procedure should be utilized:

1. The library staff member receiving the request to examine or obtain information relating to circulation or

registration records will explain the policy on confidentiality. If the person or group making the request is not satisfied and insists in repeating demands, the staff member should immediately refer the person making the request to the Library Director who shall explain again the confidentiality policy.

2. If further action is desired, the Library Director, upon receipt of a process, order or subpoena, shall consult with the Board and/or attorney to determine if such process, order or subpoena is in good form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance.
3. If the process, order or subpoena is not in proper form, or if good cause has not been shown, insistence shall be made that such defects be corrected before any records are released.
4. Any problems relating to the privacy of circulation and registration records which are not provided for above shall be referred to the Library Director. Without the consent and approval of the Library Director, under no circumstances should any information from patron files or about patrons be given to anyone. This is a violation of that patron's right to privacy.

4.6 Computer/Internet Use Policy

South Mississippi Regional Library has a Computer/Internet Use Agreement and Policy in place that patrons are required to agree to before using the Internet. This policy is available as a separate document for patrons to read and sign (*see Appendix A*), and it is also the first page they see when they log in to a public computer. Wireless Internet users who bring their own devices are also agreeing to the Policy when they log on to SMRL's network. SMRL complies with CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act). All Internet connections, whether wired or wireless, are filtered. However, filters do not and cannot catch all objectionable content.

1. To use SMRL computers, you must have your own library card. Residents of Marion and Jefferson Davis counties must apply for a card if they do not have a current one. One-time use guest cards will be issued for out-of-area visitors.
2. If there are fees or overdue library materials on your library account, you will be blocked from checking out a computer until the fee is paid and/or the materials returned.
3. Computer use on SMRL computers is limited to a maximum 180 minutes (3 hours) per day. At the Library Staff's discretion, priority may be given to students doing homework or online classes.
4. Users, whether wireless or wired, agree not to engage in any activity that violates this policy, including but not limited to, viewing pornography (nudity, sexually explicit content), viewing content harmful to minors, sites promoting illegal activities, obscenity or engaging in computer fraud. Patrons caught violating this policy may have their computer privileges revoked and face criminal penalties. *Viewing Child Pornography* is a criminal activity that will be reported to the Police. (See full policy and Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated 97-5-27, 97-5-29, 97-45-3).
5. Children 17 and under must have a permission form signed by a parent/legal guardian to use the computers without the parent/legal guardian present.
Parents/guardians must read the Safe Internet Policy and

should educate their minor children on safe Internet usage, particularly giving out personal information.

6. Computer users must not engage in any activity that could harm or disable the computer, software on the computer, or the security in place. Hacking, changing settings, altering files, or downloading software is not permitted. Violations will result in loss of privileges and possible prosecution (see full policy and MS Code 1972 Annotated 97-45-7).
7. Users may not save to the hard drive on SMRL computers. Flash drives are for sale at the circulation desk.
8. Computer management software will monitor the timed sessions and shut down at the end of the session. Users may log in again up to three times per day if no one waiting is for the computer. However, if directed by a staff member to relinquish the computer, the user must do so.
9. Print management software monitors printing and will hold prints in a queue for a period of time until paid. However, in the event that any printing generated by the user is printed, the user must pay for the prints.
10. Only one person is permitted to sit at a computer, unless permission is granted by Library Staff. Eating and drinking at the computer stations is not permitted.
11. Users are not to engage in any activity that will disturb other computer users. This includes, but not limited to, playing sound without headphones (available for sale at the circulation desk), talking on cell phone calls (calls

should be taken outside unless it is necessary to complete an assignment on the computer), talking to other patrons, etc. Disturbances of any nature will be dealt with by staff. Depending on the severity, staff may issue warnings, ask patrons to leave, or call the police.

12. Remember that while you are visiting or talking, your minutes on the computer are ticking down. Don't waste your time. If you leave a computer to use your cell phone outside, the staff may close your session and assign the computer to the next waiting patron.
13. Public computers will automatically shut down 15 minutes before closing.

4.7 Child Safe Internet Policy

The **Child Safe Internet Policy and Permission Form** (*see Appendix A*) is available at each circulation desk for patron information and signature. This form must be signed and attached to each child's (ages 17 and under) library card application.

Background: The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. In early 2001, the FCC issued rules implementing CIPA.

Requirements: Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection

measures must block or filter Internet access to sites that (a) are obscene; (b) contain child pornography; or (c) are harmful to minors under age 17 (for computers that are accessed by minors).

SMRL Compliance: SMRL complies with CIPA.

Unfortunately, along with a wealth of useful educational sites on the Internet, there are also sites which contain inappropriate material unacceptable for children. All SMRL Internet connected computers and the wireless connection are filtered. However, filters may not catch and block all objectionable sites. SMRL strongly urges parents/guardians to instruct their minor children on the hazards of using the Internet.

Parents/guardians should:

Instruct minors in SMRL Internet policy. Minors as well as adults must abide by SMRL's Computer-Internet policy. No patrons using SMRL computers or the wireless network are allowed to visit sites that promote obscenity, pornography in any form, nudity, violence, illegal activities, or that in any way could be construed as harmful to minors.

- **SMRL does not block Facebook and other social websites. The reasoning is that many people use these sites for legitimate business and personal reasons. However, there is a real danger in providing personal information for anyone to view. Please use these guidelines to instruct your child:**
- Always ask your parents' permission before using your full name, address, telephone number, or school name anywhere on the Internet.
- Always tell your parents or other adults you trust if you see something online that is scary or that you don't understand.
- Don't respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable or uneasy.
- Never give out a credit card number or password online.
- Never arrange to meet in person someone you've met online.

SMRL asks that all patrons treat computers in a safe and responsible manner. Parents/guardians are responsible for any misuse or damage to hardware or software on SMRL computers or network caused by their minor child.

4.8 Photo Permission

See Appendix A for Juvenile and Adult Permission and Waiver forms.

For every library card account, a patron photo must be taken, or a waiver signed. Parents and guardians must sign a Permission or Waiver form for each child under the age of 17. Photos shall be taken before patrons use the card. ID (for adults) should be furnished to ensure that the correct person is being photographed. Patron photos should be updated annually when patron registration is renewed.

Section 5A: Materials Selection

5.1 Collection Policy

In its selection of books and other materials for public access, the South Mississippi Regional Library subscribes to the principles set forth in the *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read Statement*, *Intellectual Freedom Statement*, which endorse the concept that the freedom to read is essential to the democratic ideals of the United States. Therefore, it is the express intent of the library collection of South Mississippi to promote the broad dissemination of ideas upon which democracy thrives. It is felt that the function and duty of this public library is to provide the means, whenever possible, through which all persons may have access to the free flow of ideas.

A diverse collection should contain content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to authentically reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.

Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and

creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves. This means acquiring materials to address popular demand and direct community input, as well as addressing collection gaps and unexpressed information needs. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered.

Best practices in collection development assert that materials should not be excluded from a collection solely because the content or its creator may be considered offensive or controversial.

Because the library collection includes materials that reflect a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences, for all ages of the community it serves, SMRL encourages parents and guardians to be an active participant in the selection of library materials by their child or children ages birth to 17. Each family has the right to determine which library resources are acceptable for its children and must accord the same right to other parents and guardians.

Materials selection at the South Mississippi Regional Library is a co-operative effort involving library staff members and library customers. Popularity and customer requests will not be the only basis for selection. Books and non-book materials will follow the same selection criteria. Gift materials will be evaluated in the same manner for inclusion in the collection. Weeded materials will be replaced when there is a demand, or the materials are considered classics and important to a public library collection.

In terms of relevancy, materials shall

- Be timely or relevant to contemporary society
- Be representative of various contemporary points of view
- Interpret, document or illuminate the past
- Provide information on a specific subject
- Satisfy community interest in a subject
- Fulfill current or anticipated demand

Feature a local author or subject

In terms of merit, materials shall

Be noted for literary or artistic quality

Contribute to the enjoyment of life

Be recognized as a classic in the genre

Have gained the positive attention of critics and reviewers

Have received awards or honors

Reflect the competence and reputation of the author, director, illustrator or other person responsible for the work

In terms of form and content, materials shall

Be accurate

Be readable and understandable

Be suitable for the intended audience, including special needs customers

Be suitable and durable in format

No book or other material shall be excluded because of the race, national origin, color, gender, personal history, or the political, religious, or social views of the author or creator.

5.2 Selection & Processing Responsibilities

The Branch Managers are responsible for the materials selection at their respective branches.

The Youth Services Librarian will assist in the selection of materials for the children and young adult collections of the Columbia-Marion County Library.

All library staff members are encouraged to make suggestions for consideration. Library patrons routinely make request for consideration.

Cataloging and processing of library materials are under the supervision of the Technical Services Librarian at the SMRL headquarters branch. Periodicals, which are delivered directly to each branch library, are the only exception, and are the

responsibility of the Branch Managers or staff designated by the Branch Managers.

5.3 Collection Management

In order to maintain the integrity of the collection, a regular plan of weeding will be maintained. Branch Managers and Library Supervisors are responsible for overseeing the weeding of their library branch locations: determining which genres/formats need weeding and when, as well as assigning weeding tasks to the staff under their supervision. All titles selected for weeding will be reviewed by at least two parties before being removed from the collection, in order to ensure that no materials of lasting value are improperly removed (local history, items in a series, etc.) Damaged items will automatically be removed from the collection, but may be subject to replacement if recommended by the Branch Manager or Library Supervisor. Materials discarded will be withdrawn from the collection of the respective branches. These books cannot be sold by the Library, but can be given to the Friends of the Library for their sale, donated to individuals or organizations, or sent to recycling.

The CREW Method for weeding will be applied to materials, whether purchased or donated, in the South Mississippi Regional Library System. The Crew method uses an acronym, MUSTIE, to indicate when an item should be removed from the collection. In the case of gift or donated books, the CREW method helps determine if the item will be included in collection or put in the Friends of the Library book sale.

- Misleading and/or factually inaccurate: (this included items that fail to have the substantial periods of time not represented because of the age of the material)
- Ugly (worn out beyond reasonable mending or having been poorly repaired in the past):
- Superseded by a new edition or a better source.
- Trivial (of no discernible literacy or scientific merit & without sufficient use to justify keeping it)

- Irrelevant to the needs and interest of your community.
- Elsewhere (the material may be easily borrowed from another source or found on the Internet)

5.4 Guidelines for Weeding Dewey

(These are ideal guidelines)

000s—General: Encyclopedia set no more than 5 years old; computer books no more than 3 years old; library science should be current enough to be useful to staff.

100s – Philosophy and Psychology: No more than five to eight years or by an important author.

200s--Religion and Mythology: Should reflect the interests of your community and the period in which they were written; current on each of the major religions.

300s -- Social Sciences: Replace general almanacs every year. Older titles in law, government and education may have some historical value but be certain there are titles containing current information and the collection is balanced.

400s – Language: Current dictionary in English; at least one recent unabridged dictionary; Spanish/English dictionary and other languages if possible.

500s – Pure Sciences: Outdated quickly. Replace when new theories, techniques, or discoveries are available. Pay close attention to technology.

600s – Applied Sciences: Medical discoveries are constantly being announced and older materials may be very misleading or even dangerous. Popular culture thrives on fads. Try to keep up to date on what's "hot" and toss what's "not." Materials on collector's items should be kept, as should repair manuals for cars and appliances.

700s – Arts and Recreation: Histories of art and music can be kept until they wear out but be mindful of sports and games.

800s – Literature: Good condition, a few standard anthologies of both American and British literature.

900s – History, Travel and Geography: History books should be evaluated for demand, factual accuracy, and interpretation. A balance of perspectives is ideal. Travel and geographical materials should be no more than two- years- old unless the material has a significant amount of background or history information that cannot be obtained elsewhere.

Biography: Literary value and new releases.

Adult Fiction: Leave in collection if it has enduring appeal, part of a series, or by an important author.

Young Adult and Children’s Fiction: Watch for outdated topics, oversimplified or abridged classics.

Young Adult and Children’s Non-fiction: Use adult criteria but look for inaccuracy and oversimplification.

The Reference Collection: Current, revised editions.

5.5 Gift Policy

South Mississippi Regional Library Gift Policy

The South Mississippi Regional Library accepts gifts of new and used books, audio recordings, videos, and other similar materials. Items will be added to the collection in accordance with the selection policy of the library, and the library reserves the right to decide when a gift added to the collection must be withdrawn. South Mississippi Regional Library also reserves the right to refuse items. Reasons for refusal include books that are a health hazard (mold, mildew, insect-infested, etc.) and large collections that will have to be discarded.

Once donated, items become the property of the South Mississippi Regional Library and may be given to other libraries or non-profit agencies, sold via Friends of the Library of the South Mississippi Regional Library, traded, or discarded if they are not added to the collection. Donated items will not be returned to the donor and the library will not accept any item that is not an outright gift.

The library acknowledges receipt of donated items but is unable to set a fair market or appraised value. It is recommended that the donor make an itemized list of items donated. If items are being donated to obtain a tax benefit, it is the donor's responsibility to establish fair market value or obtain expert assistance in establishing any value.

Donors should be encouraged to complete a **Deed of Gift** form (*see Appendix A*) and can be provided with a **Materials Donation Receipt**.

Adopted by the South Mississippi Board of Trustees February 18, 2010. Revised May 6, 2019.

5.6 Reconsideration of Material

A material challenge is when a patron requests that a book, movie, or other material be removed from a library's collection due to its content.

The process begins with a librarian discussing the complaint with the patron who brings it to the service desk. During that interaction, the librarian will explain that the library has materials for everyone and everything goes through a selection process or is purchased because of patron requests. The librarian should offer to assist the patron to find alternate materials that would better meet the needs and interests of the patron and/or their family members.

If the individual is concerned about a children's or young adult resource, explain that parents and guardians play a major role in guiding their child's reading and library use. Often a person's concern about a children's or young adult book involves a desire to "protect all children" by removing that item from the collection or restricting access to it. Explain that each family has the right to determine which library resources are acceptable for its children and must accord the same right to other parents.

If the patron chooses to go forward with the challenge, the complainant should be provided with a **Reconsideration of Materials Form** (*see Appendix A*). Upon receipt of this reconsideration form, the item in question will be reviewed by the Library Director and the South Mississippi Regional Board of Trustees. A letter will be mailed to the complainant to inform them of the Board's decision.

If you are facing a challenge, or a question has been raised about a book and you think a complaint or challenge might follow, contact the Mississippi Library Commission Information Desk at 601.432.4492 or mlcref@mlc.lib.ms.us.

One of their librarians will compile and send information about specific titles, such as the following:

- Professional reviews
- Awards and distinctions the book has received
- Articles about the book or relating to the nature of the complaint, including author, genre, audience, or content

Section 6A: Patron Rules and Forms

6.1 Patron Rules of Conduct

See Appendix A for an abbreviated list of rules. This list is posted in each library branch and is available at the circulation desks.

SMRL's patron rules of conduct have a threefold purpose: to protect the rights and safety of library patrons, to protect the rights and safety of staff members, and to preserve and protect the library's materials, facilities, and property.

Definitions and scope

These behavior roles shall apply to all buildings and all grounds (hereafter referred to as the “premises”) and to all persons entering in or on the premises of each of the three branches of SMRL: Marion County-City of Columbia Public Library, Prentiss Public Library, and Frank L. Leggett (Bassfield) Public Library.

Behavioral Rules

Any person who violates rules 1-5 while in or on library premises will be immediately ejected and excluded from all SMRL library premises without first being given a warning. Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges for a period up to three years, and the incident will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

1. Committing or attempting to commit any activity that constitutes a violation of any federal, state or local criminal statute or ordinance.
2. Directing a specific threat of physical harm against an individual, group of individuals or property.
3. Engagement of sexual misconduct in any form whether verbal or physical.
4. Being under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicating liquor.
5. Possessing, selling, distributing or consuming any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance.

Any person who violates rules 6-17 while in or on library premises will be given warnings at the discretion of library staff. With each warning, the violator will receive a copy of the library’s Patron Rules of Conduct. Subsequent offenses by that person will result in that person being asked to leave the premises for the day. In the event that further offenses occur after a person has been asked to leave the library premises for a day, the staff may suspend library services to

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

that person for up to 30 days. After a 30-day suspension, it is at the discretion of the Library Board of Trustees to determine the consequences of person's repeated violation of the Patron Rules of Conduct. These consequences may include permanent suspension of library services.

6. Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the library, or disturbs library staff or patrons, including, but not limited to, conduct that involves the use of abusive or threatening language or gestures, conduct that creates unreasonable noise, or conduct that consists of loud or boisterous physical behavior or talking.
7. Using library materials, equipment, furniture, fixtures or buildings in a manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof; or in a destructive, abusive or potentially damaging manner; or in a manner likely to cause personal injury to the actor or others.
8. Disobeying the reasonable direction of a library staff member.
9. Soliciting, petitioning, or distributing written materials or canvassing for political, charitable or religious purposes inside a library building, including the doorway or vestibule of any such library building or in a manner on the library premises that unreasonably interferes with or impedes access to the library.
10. Smoking or other use of tobacco within 20 feet of any SMRL building entrance.
11. Bringing animals inside library buildings or leaving an animal tethered and unattended on library premises (with the exception of service or support animals or as allowed at a library-approved event).

12. Violating SMRL's rules for Acceptable Use of the Internet and Library Public Computers. A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy may be requested at the Circulation Desk.
13. Taking library materials into restrooms or out of the building if the materials have not been checked out.
14. Improperly using library restrooms, including, but not limited to, bathing, shaving, or washing hair.
15. Leaving one or more children 12 and under, who reasonably appear to be unsupervised or unattended, anywhere in or on library premises (the SMRL Unattended Children Policy is available at the circulation desk).
16. Entering library buildings with bare feet or a bare chest or wearing clothing that would be deemed inappropriate, such as but not limited to, swimsuits, bathrobes, pajamas, or undergarments, except for library-approved events where pajamas, swimwear, etc., are allowed.
17. Disturbing others because of offensive body odor.

6.2 Incident Report

In the event a patron fails to comply with the Patron Code of Conduct, or an altercation occurs between patrons, or patrons and staff, whether verbal or physical, an **Incident Report** (*see Appendix A*) shall be completed.

The staff member witnessing the event shall complete the Report. All efforts shall be made to provide as much detail as possible, including the name and description of the person(s) involved.

Once an Incident Report is completed, the Report shall be given to the Branch Manager or Library Supervisor, who will in turn forward a copy to the Library Director. In the event that the Incident required the involvement of Law Enforcement, an effort will be made to also attach a copy of any report filed by that entity.

All Incident Reports shall remain on file at the headquarters branch. If multiple Incidents involving the same person or persons occur, the Incidents shall be put before the SMRL Board of Trustees to determine a plan of action.

6.3 Accident Report

An **Accident Report** (*see Appendix A*) shall be completed for all accidents involving patrons and staff, regardless if physical injury has occurred or if the involved party refuses medical attention.

The staff member on duty shall complete the Accident Report, including taking victim and witness statements. The accident victim should be photographed; if he/she refuses to do so, this should be noted on the Accident Report. Photographs should always be taken of the scene of the accident, and all photos need to be attached to the Accident Report.

Once an Accident Report is completed, including signatures of victim, witnesses, and staff, copies of the Report shall be distributed as follows: the accident victim shall receive a copy; a copy shall be forwarded to the Branch Manager or Library Supervisor; the Branch Manager or Library Supervisor shall provide a copy to the appropriate owner of the facility in which the accident occurred; a copy shall be sent to the Library Director; and the Library Director shall send a copy to the Library's Insurance carrier. A final copy will be held on file at the Library headquarters.

6.4 Unattended Child Policy

Adopted by the SMRL Regional Board September 2009; revised and adopted May 2019.

See Appendix A for a version of the policy that addresses parents and caregiver. This version is available as a separate document at the circulation desks.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers are responsible for the safety, behavior, and supervision of their children at **all** times in the Library and on Library property. Children, like all library users, are required to respect Library property and to act in a manner appropriate to the use and function of the Library.

Basic Rules and Regulations:

- Children ages **12 and under** must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or caregiver age 16 or older at all times and in all areas of the Library and its property except when participating in a Library sponsored program. In the event that a child aged 12 or below is left at the Library unattended as stated above and no one can be contacted to pick up the child, the staff will contact the Police Department and/or Sheriff's Office for assistance.
- Older children and adolescents who come to the Library without a parent, guardian, or caregiver are welcome for appropriate use of the Library, such as homework or reading. Vandalism and/or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may serve as grounds for removal from Library property.
- Parents, guardians, and caregivers should be aware of Library opening and closing times. If a child (17 or younger) is left after Library hours and no one can be contacted to provide transportation, the staff will wait for 15 minutes and then call the Police Department and/or Sheriff's Office for assistance. Staff **will not**

transport children home or to any other destination under any circumstances.

Group Visit Policy:

The South Mississippi Regional Library System welcomes visits from groups, such as schools, daycare centers, and home-schooling groups. The following basic rules apply to groups:

- Groups of children must be accompanied by an adult. Groups of eight (8) or more children must be accompanied by at least two adults.
- Teachers or group leaders are responsible for group discipline and must remain with the group the entire visit.
- The behavior of the group should not disturb other Library patrons.

Philosophy behind the SMRL Unattended Child Policy

The library staff is here to serve the entire public and have many duties to perform in order to help all patrons in the best way possible. As a result, they cannot always monitor the whereabouts or behavior of children. Many situations could arise: a child could be lured away by a stranger or become ill; a child could wander outside and become lost or injured; or an emergency could dictate that the staff evacuates the building. For these reasons, staff cannot assume the responsibility of a child's care when they use the library.

SMRL is primarily concerned with every child's safety and feel this policy better assures their well-being. Therefore, the behavior and welfare of children in the library are the responsibility of the parents or guardian accompanying the child to the library.

Adopted by the SMRL Regional Board September 2009, updated May 2019.

6.5 Meeting Room Policy

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

Revised and adopted November 1, 2022.

The South Mississippi Regional Library (SMRL) system, as a public institution, welcomes the use of its meeting room facilities for not-for-profit, educational, cultural, and public information and/or gathering forums, which are of local interest. Private social gatherings are prohibited.

It is the intent of SMRL to make these facilities available to the public on an equitable basis in a manner which prohibits any one group or organization from dominating the use of these facilities. Policies governing the use of the library meeting rooms are made in accordance with Article VI of the **Library Bill of Rights**:

Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of groups requesting their use.

The meeting rooms are made available to all individuals or groups on a first-come, first-serve basis subject to the following requirements:

1. All meetings must be free and open to the public and media. Admission fees, collections, donations, and selling of services or materials are prohibited before, during, and after the meeting on library property. The Friends of the Library may conduct fundraising programs and sell merchandise in the library as this entity is considered a non-profit organization by the State of Mississippi. This policy is in compliance with state law and is also consistent with the Mississippi Attorney General's Opinion dated March 4, 2002, Docket #92-0167.

2. To reserve a Library meeting room, a completed **Application for Use of Library Meeting Room** form (*see Appendix A*) must be received by the Branch Manager or designee **at least one week** before the meeting. The person reserving a meeting room must be 21 years of age and have a valid South Mississippi Regional Library card account in good standing. Applications must be submitted at least annually and will be accepted and scheduled in the order received. Rooms may be scheduled up to one year in advance. Meeting rooms may be booked twice a month only in order to prevent monopolizing the space by any one group or person to the exclusion of others in the community.
3. The person responsible for completing a meeting room application will be considered the official contact person for the reservation. Usage of a meeting room is not an endorsement of the individual/group's objectives or beliefs. When the use of a meeting room is questionable, the final authority will be the South Mississippi Regional Library System Board of Trustees.
4. Priority for scheduling the meeting rooms will be as follows:
 - Library and library-sponsored groups and programs or Library staff educational training programs and meetings;
 - Community oriented groups;
 - Small groups or individual study.
5. The length of time that a meeting room is reserved must include adequate time for setting up and returning the room to good order. Library staff is not responsible for setting up or cleaning up. The Library will not be

responsible for, nor provide storage for, the property of groups. Neither the SMRL Board of Trustees nor Library staff assumes liability or responsibility for individuals or groups while in the meeting room.

6. The person reserving the meeting room will be responsible for maintaining order among the attendees. Programs held in the meeting rooms should not disturb other library patrons. All activities held in a library meeting room must comply with the Library's Rules of Conduct posted in the meeting room. Failure of the official contact person to enforce library policies will result in a written warning to the group. A second violation of library policies will be submitted to the Library Director for resolution, possibly resulting in the loss of permission to use the room.
7. Library-owned equipment is available on a limited basis, subject to the availability of the equipment. Request for use of this equipment must be made at the time of the application for meeting room use. It is the organizer's responsibility to ask for training or help with connections if needed. Library equipment must not be damaged or altered in any way. Neither the SMRL Board of Trustees nor Library staff assumes liability or responsibility for any privately-owned equipment used on Library premises.
8. The service of food will be dependent upon the physical facilities of the meeting room. Kitchen facilities may be available in some locations. Request for use of any kitchen facilities must be made at the time of the application for meeting room use. Food is to be served only in the meeting room.
9. Gambling in any form is prohibited. The possession and/or use of controlled substances in or on library

property is prohibited. All tobacco products, vaping devices, and alcohol are prohibited inside the library, restrooms, and on library premises.

10. After-hours meetings are not permitted unless the meeting room has separate outside access, and the user must make prior arrangements to check out and return a meeting room key. All individuals checking out a meeting room key must be at least 21 years of age and have a library card account in good standing. In libraries with no outside access, meetings must be concluded 15 minutes before regular library closing time, and rooms must be vacated at closing time.
11. Individuals/groups with a meeting room reservation must **check in and out** at the Circulation Desk before and after using the room. A **Meeting Room Use Report** (*see Appendix A*) must be completed and turned in at the Circulation Desk after use of the room. For individuals using the meeting room after-hours, the Report must be returned with the meeting room key.
12. Groups consisting mainly of persons 16 years-old or younger must be *accompanied* by an adult who will submit the application and assume all responsibility for meeting room use.
13. Publicity must neither state nor imply that the library is either sponsoring or endorsing a program; neither shall publicity state nor suggest that attendance is limited to group members. Any written announcements or publicity must include the statement “USE OF LIBRARY FACILITIES DOES NOT INDICATE ENDORSEMENT BY THE LIBRARY SYSTEM.” Individuals or groups using a library meeting room shall not use the SMRL logo in connection with publicity or

use the library's address or phone number for registration.

14. **The official contact person will be financially responsible for any damages to library facilities and/or its contents. Any charges incurred will be billed to this individual or group representative.**
15. Individuals or small study groups may be permitted to use a meeting room for a study space. This use is dependent on availability and the approval of the Branch Manager or designee.
16. The Library retains the right to cancel a reservation for Library purposes or in case of a facility or weather-related emergency. If a reservation is canceled, the Library will notify the individual/group holding the reservation at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance or as soon as possible in the case of an emergency. The Library reserves the right to interrupt any meeting taking place in the meeting room in case of severe weather or other emergency situations.
17. The library reserves the right to enforce fire codes and all applicable local and state laws. Standard Fire Code Section 3101.14 restricts any open flame, flammable, combustible or hazardous materials in any place of public assemblage.
18. Library meeting room reservation requests that are denied by the Branch Manager may be forwarded to the Library Director for reconsideration. These requests should be addressed to: Library Director, South Mississippi Regional Library System, 900 Broad Street, Columbia, MS, 39429. If the applicant is still dissatisfied with the ruling, a request for reconsideration can be sent

to the SMRL Board of Trustees at the above address.
Action taken by the Board of Trustees is final.

6.6 Lost and Found Policy

South Mississippi Regional Library System is not responsible for personal items left in the library by patrons. When an item is left in the library by a patron, a reasonable attempt will be made to return the lost item to its owner.

Requirements & Guidelines

- If at all possible, staff should retrieve lost items in the presence of witnesses, either the patron who found it or other staff members. Money should be counted in the presence of a witness. A written description of items of value or money should be documented.
- In most cases, items that are lost and found in the library or turned in to library personnel by the public are held for two weeks, then disposed of.
- Hazardous and perishable items are discarded immediately.
- Items of obvious value, including (but not limited to) wallets, purses, jewelry, cash, and credit cards, are turned over to the police. Any attempt to recover the item will be handled by the Police Department.
- If the owner of an item can be determined, staff will attempt to contact the owner in a timely manner.
- If the owner of a Lost and Found item visits the library and satisfactorily identifies the item, the item will be returned to its owner.
- If items are not claimed in a timely manner, they are disposed of by being discarded or donated to charity, as appropriate.

Section 7A: Financial, Purchasing & Property Policy

7.1 Financial Policy

Purpose

The South Mississippi Regional Library System System's (SMRL's) Regional Board of Trustees establishes this financial policy to ensure fiscal accountability, appropriate use of funds in support of SMRL's mission and goals, and compliance with appropriate laws and ordinances of the state of Mississippi.

Budget

1. The Director and SMRL's Board of Trustees shall establish a yearly budget showing projected revenue and expenditures for the fiscal year (October 1-September 30). This should be completed by July 1 and presented to the Administrative Board of Trustees for approval.
2. Upon agreement of the budget by the Director and Board, the budget will be presented to the appropriate funding agencies for adoption. Presently these agencies are Marion County Board of Supervisors, Jefferson Davis County Board of Supervisors, City of Columbia Board of Aldermen, Town of Prentiss Board of Aldermen, and Town of Bassfield Board of Aldermen.
3. Upon adoption by the funding agencies, the final budget will be presented to the SMRL Regional Board of Trustees for review and adoption.
4. The Board of Trustees delegates to the director the expenditure of monies and the development of an annual collection budget to allocate funds for salaries, insurance, utilities, library materials, supplies, equipment, and any other miscellaneous expenditures

necessary to facilitate day-to-day operations of all three branches of SMRL.

7.2 Purchasing and Procurement

1. Single purchase of an item costing more than \$2,500 shall be approved by the Board of Trustees. Although not required, at least two price comparisons are preferred if the item is not on state contract.
2. Single purchase of an item between \$5,000 and \$50,000 must have at least two written bids unless the item is on state contract.
3. An item costing more than \$50,000 must be advertised for bids in the local newspaper. Bids will be opened by the Administrative Board of Trustees. The lowest competitive bid will be approved. Competitive may include other competing factors than merely cost, such as service and locality.
4. Items that are part of a grant will follow the rules outlined in the grant specifications. If there are none, the Library will follow the above policy. Items in a grant often total more than \$2,500, but each individual item should be below the \$2,500 threshold. Otherwise, the item will require Board approval.

7.3 Inventory and Insurance

All equipment and furnishings shall be listed on an inventory. Serial numbers (if available), item description, purchase date, and purchase price are to be kept on file at the headquarters branch. This inventory shall be updated annually. A number count, description, and estimated cost of all library books and materials is available in the automation system records.

The Prentiss building and contents are covered through insurance purchased by Jefferson Davis County Board of Supervisors. The Bassfield Public Library building and contents are covered through insurance purchased by the

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

Town of Bassfield. The Marion County Board of Supervisors purchases building and content insurance on the Columbia-Marion County Public Library. All policy holders are provided with a copy of the library contents inventory.

South Mississippi Regional purchases computerized business equipment coverage for the system. An inventory of the equipment (including serial numbers, description, purchase date, and purchase price) is kept on file at the library headquarters and provided annually to the insurance carrier. SMRL also purchases liability, vehicle and flood insurance (Columbia-Marion County Public Library only).

Additionally, SMRL purchases Workman's Compensation for the system. SMRL uses the reimbursable unemployment system and holds a CD equal to 2% or greater in annual gross salaries to cover unemployment claims.

7.4 Bond Insurance

In order to be compliant with House Bill 136, Laws of 2021, the Library adopts the following procedure regarding the handling and custody of public funds.

The following positions must carry a bond of not less than \$25,000:

- Board of Trustees/Board Chair
- Director
- Branch Manager / Library Supervisor
- Bookkeeper

Exceptions:

Positions whose handling and custody of public funds is incidental to their employment will not be bonded.

“Incidental” means that their handling and custody of public funds is either random, infrequent, or in immaterial amounts.

An immaterial amount is considered by the Library to be up to \$500. If public funds come into the Library over that amount, one of the bonded employees would need to handle that

transaction. Routine fine/fee transactions of circulation staff are considered to be incidental to their employment. Positions who work in acquisitions, whose handling of public funds is frequent, but limited to library materials, will not be bonded.

7.5 Banking and Audits

South Mississippi Regional Library maintains two operating accounts. The main account is the operating account that SMRL uses to pay all salaries, bills and invoices. The other account is a depository for incoming monies collected from funding agencies, grants, e-rate, fines and fees, and other miscellaneous sources. Money moved from any of the other accounts is first deposited into the depository account. Money received via Paymode is automatically deposited into this account.

Money from the depository account is transferred as needed by check, signed by the Library Director, to the operating checking account to pay expenses, bills, and salaries. In the absence of the Library Director, an authorized member of the Board of Trustees (usually the Chair) can transfer money from the depository account to the operating account.

In case of an emergency, an Administrative staff member, with approval by the Board of Trustees, can sign the transfer check. All signatures are on file with the depository bank. This authority cannot be enlarged except by action of the Board of Trustees and may be rescinded at the will of the Board.

Checks paid from the operating account require two signatures by authorized signers, preferably the Library Director and one of the members of the Board of Trustees with a signature on file with the bank. In situations where a Board member or the Library Director cannot sign the check, an authorized Administrative staff member can sign the checks as one of the

signatures. This authority cannot be enlarged except by action of the Board of Trustees.

SMRL also maintains an automation account, a vehicle replacement account, a Marion County Library account, and a Certificate of Deposit (for unemployment). The Prentiss and Bassfield libraries maintain an account at a bank in that county for weekly intake deposits.

The automation account was set up to manage automation expenses, including Internet circuits. Previously, E-rate funding for the Internet circuits were deposited into this account and then moved as necessary to the depository account. The funding is now deposited directly into the depository account. The vehicle replacement account is a savings account to purchase or maintain a library vehicle. Money is set aside each year and deposited into this account. The Marion County Library account is a savings account for gifts and donations deposits. Funds may be used from this account to purchase gift books or other library materials. The Certificate of Deposit is specifically an unemployment fund. South Mississippi Regional Library System is required by law to maintain an unemployment account of at least 2% of annual gross salaries to offset unemployment claims.

Every two years, South Mississippi advertises for bids from local banks to acquire or keep all of the aforementioned accounts via the local newspaper. In their first quarterly meeting of the fiscal year, the Board of Trustees votes by motion, second, and passage to “instruct” the Library Director to advertise for bids. In December, an ad is placed in all local newspapers in Marion and Jefferson Davis Counties. A copy of the ad is kept in the Depositories folder. Letters announcing the call for bids are sent to the local banks. At their second quarterly meeting of the fiscal year, the Board of Trustees receives and opens the sealed bids. The Board will designate depositories that are to begin on July 1. The banks winning the bids are notified by letter of the Board action. Any necessary changes may be made in July. **Any opening or**

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

closing of a bank account requires approval from the Administrative Board of Trustees.

South Mississippi Regional Library is required to conduct an annual audit. The audit is actually a financial compilation report and statement prepared by a certified public accountant specializing in government agencies. In their final quarterly meeting of the fiscal year, the Board of Trustees votes to instruct the Director to obtain an audit for the fiscal year ending on September 30. An auditing firm is chosen. Every effort is made to begin the audit in October. Once the audit is completed, the Board votes to accept the audit.

The audit is sent to Mississippi Library Commission, Mississippi Office of the State Auditor, the Chancery Clerks of Marion and Jefferson Davis counties, and the City Clerks for the Boards of Aldermen of Columbia, Prentiss and Bassfield.

7.6 Cash Received

Copies, faxes, fines, and other fees are taken at the circulation desk at all three libraries.

All transactions are to be recorded at the circulation desk. At each library, the daily intake money is locked in a safe or appropriate secure location. Each month, the Branch Manager, Library Supervisor, or the Bookkeeper will balance the money taken in with the amounts recorded. This information is put into a report to be submitted to the Director, while the deposit for each branch is sent to the Bookkeeper for deposit.

Friends' book sale money is not library money and is kept by the Friends in a separate account.

All donations made to the library (regardless of amount or form of payment) must be tracked as such and reported to the Director. Donated funds will be deposited into the appropriate savings accounts for each library branch and shall be used to purchase library materials and supplies as specified by the donor (and otherwise at the discretion of the manager or

supervisor) for the receiving branch library. Overages due to clerical error are not donations and should be deposited as part of the regular intake deposit.

7.7 Petty Cash

There is no separate fund for petty cash. Branch Managers and Library Supervisors are permitted to spend up to \$50 for expenditures as needed from money taken in at the circulation desk from copies, fines, faxes, and other fees. Expenditures above \$50 not previously approved must be approved by the Director. Any expenditure requires a receipt. The receipts for expenditures are turned in with the remaining intake money at the end of the month.

The Bookkeeper will issue a check to petty cash covering the amount of expenditure to add to the deposit so that the intake money balances with the money received report.

Another petty cash fund of \$100 is set up to be used for gasoline purchases for the library vehicle.

7.8 Incidentals and Supplies Purchasing Policy

Cleaning supplies and other incidentals may be purchased at the discretion of the Bookkeeper, Branch Librarian, or Library Supervisor. Purchases above \$50 must be approved by the Library Director. SMRL has a Wal-Mart tax-free number that is used to purchase various items. SMRL also has accounts with other vendors to purchase supplies, such as copy paper, ink/toner, toilet paper, paper towels, and cleaning supplies. The headquarters branch purchases and dispenses these items to the branches. The Branch Manager and Library Supervisor should inventory their supplies and inform the Director or Bookkeeper of the specific items needed so that purchases at the branches are kept at a minimum.

7.9 Payment of Bills and Invoices

Bills and invoices are approved for payment by the Library Director. The Bookkeeper will record all bills due in the QuickBooks accounting system. Every two weeks, the

SMRL Policy & Procedure Manual—PART A
Revised & Adopted February 14, 2022.

Bookkeeper will print out bills that are due and payable for the Library Director's approval to be paid. The checks will be printed and signed as specified in the *Banking and Audits* section.

7.10 Property

Disposal of Property

A. Disposal of Collection Materials Property

Collection materials (books, magazines, DVD's, audios, etc.) that are unusable, whether obtained by purchase or gift, may be discarded without Board approval by

1. Donation to the Friends of the Library for sale
2. Sent for recycling
3. Donation to charitable or non-profit organizations or a county, city or state agency, or an educational entity.

B. Equipment/Furniture Disposal

Any equipment or furniture will be disposed of in accordance with Mississippi State law as described in Sections § 19-7-5 and § 39-3-17 of the Mississippi Code of 1972. The *Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated* §39-3-17(c) addresses the property of a library system and states that the trustees of the administrative board have the supervision, care and custody of all property of the library. "All property" would include the personal property of the library system as described above. The code section further specifies in (j) a method of disposal of equipment or library materials, referring to §19-7-5, that is the same method of disposal of personal property for a county board of supervisors.

Equipment and furniture are disposed of when they are irreparable/broken, obsolete, unusable, or of no intrinsic value to the South Mississippi Regional Library System.

Equipment/Furniture that is irreparable/broken, obsolete, unusable, or of no intrinsic value to the Library System must be declared surplus by the SMRL Board of Trustees and disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director with the

approval of the Board of Trustees. A listing of the discarded property/equipment shall be noted in the Board minutes and the action taken with the following information, if available:

- Description - including make or model;
- Serial number, if applicable;
- Date acquired;
- Cost;
- Inventory number (if available);
- Location;
- Date item was last inventoried;
- Date removed from inventory;

All property will be disposed “as is.” There will be no attempt to repair or replace any property being disposed.

The Library Director will be responsible for the final physical disposal of discarded property and will report back to the Board of Trustees when action is completed.

Staffs of SMRL, members of the Administrative Board of Trustees, and their immediate family members are specifically forbidden to purchase or keep as a personal possession property of South Mississippi Regional Library, with the exception of collection items, i.e., books, magazines, and videos, sold by the Friends of the Library. Staff and Board members are required to pay Friends of the Library at the rate charged to the general public.

Section 8A: Video Surveillance Policy

The South Mississippi Regional Library System strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its patrons and staff. In pursuit of this objective, SMRL public service areas may be equipped with security cameras to promote the safety of patrons and staff and to provide extra security for resources and facilities.

The library’s video surveillance system shall be used only for the protection and safety of customers, staff, assets and property, and to assist law enforcement officials in accordance with applicable laws. The surveillance system is intended to support enforcement of the library’s rules of conduct, discourage inappropriate and illegal behavior, and aid in the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. Cameras are not intended to be used to monitor individual employee work performance.

A sign will be posted at each building entrance or in external areas to buildings equipped with security cameras to disclose this activity.

Camera locations will be positioned, changed, or added only with the permission of the Library Director or authorized designee. The cameras will generate live feeds and may record images. Cameras will not be monitored continuously, and neither SMRL nor its employees shall be responsible for doing so.

Members of the administrative and management team, including branch managers, may have access to the video records, both live and archived in order to identify the person or persons responsible for library policy violations, criminal activity on library property, or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations. Video records may contain personally identifiable information about an individual who has used the library (“patron information”) and as such, will be accorded the same level of confidentiality and protection provided to library users by the Mississippi Code **§39-3-365**

Confidentiality of library user records:

Records maintained by any library funded in whole or in part by public funds, which contain information relating to the identity of a library user, relative to the user’s use of books or other materials at the library, shall be confidential. Such records may only be released with the express permission of the respective library user or as the result of a court order.

Video records not involved in reported security incidents will be deleted within thirty (30) days of the date recorded. As

“serious incidents may warrant longer retention at the discretion of the local agency” (State of Mississippi Local Government Records GSC 15 05), video records related to a documented security incident will be maintained for the duration of the investigation or resolution of the matter at the discretion of the Library.

Adopted by the SMRL Board of Trustees on February 25, 2020.