Berks County Public Library System Borrowing Policies

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Definitions

Adult 1 year and Juvenile/YA 1 year card

This card type is issued to any new library user who lives outside of Berks County including out-of-state residents, and allows the cardholder to borrow physical materials within any BCPL location only. If you attend school or work in Berks County, you will have access to digital resources with this card and may request out-of-System Interlibrary Loan (ILL) materials available from libraries outside of the Berks County Public Libraries System.

Adult 3 year and Juvenile/YA 3 year card

This card type is issued to new library users who live in Berks County. Cardholders can access and borrow physical materials including but not limited to books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, museum passes, etc. In addition, cardholders can access countywide digital/downloadable services and any specialty resources provided by the registering library. Cardholders may request out-of-System Interlibrary Loan (ILL) materials available from libraries outside of the Berks County Public Libraries System.

Extended card

This card type is issued to institutions, when the Director or other authorized person of the agency signs the library card application. By virtue of signing the application, the institution accepts responsibility for all fines, fees, or charges incurred through library transactions.

Outreach card

This card type is issued to homeschooling educators when they present an affidavit as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and issued by the local school district. The affidavit covers the school year, and the borrower card registration must be renewed annually. Because Pennsylvania Law does not require homeschooling educators working with children younger than 8 to have an affidavit, those educators may receive an Outreach card at the discretion of the Library Director.

Limited 6 months

This card type is issued to new library users at the discretion of member libraries. A cardholder with this card type may have up to 5 physical items on hold and 5 checked out at the same time. Borrowing privileges are suspended after $5.00 in fines or fees are accrued.

Library Card Registration

The Berks County Public Library System (BCPL) provides services to all residents of the County of Berks in fulfillment of its mission to develop services, resources and collections to meet the cultural, informational, educational and recreational needs of its diverse community. BCPL member libraries issue library cards to establish a patron account and facilitate loan of materials. Library cards are valid for use at all BCPL member libraries and Reading Area Community College. All library transaction records are confidential under Article IV. Section 428 of the Public Library Code (24 PA C.S.).

Obtaining a Library Card

Individuals ages 18 years old and older must register for a library card by completing and signing a library card application. The applicant must provide full legal name, address and date of birth. Applicants must provide proof of residency and identity before receiving a physical library card. Applicants are able to complete a registration form online. By virtue of registering for a card, the applicant agrees to accept responsibility for all fines, fees, or charges incurred through library transactions.

A parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a library card application in order for their child(ren), under the age of 18, to receive a library card. At the discretion of the member library and under certain circumstances, another adult may register as the responsible adult on behalf of a minor child.

The adult applying for a juvenile library card on behalf of a child must be in good standing (no fines/fees over $10). A juvenile library card can be linked to the library card account of the signing adult. Member libraries may require adults registering on behalf of a minor child to apply for a library card if an account is not already opened. Upon turning 18, a minor who has a library card will need to apply for a new card or update their current card and thereby assume financial responsibility for the new account. BCPL member libraries and staff do not act *in loco parentis.*

Library Card Types

Card Type	Residency	Access Level	Expiration	Max # of Items	Max # of Holds
Adult 1 Year	Pennsylvania Resident and Out-of-State	Physical Materials Only For digital access – confirmed Academic/Employment status	1 Year	50 items	20
Juvenile/YA 1 Year	Pennsylvania Resident and Out-of-State	Physical Materials Only For digital access – confirmed Academic/Employment status	1 Year	50 items	20
Adult 3 Year	Berks County Residents	Physical Materials, Digital Access, ILL Services	3 Year	50 items	20
Juvenile/YA 3 Year	Berks County Residents	Physical Materials, Digital Access, ILL Services,	3 Year	50 items	20
Extended	Berks County Institutions	Physical Materials	1 Year	200 items	50
Outreach	Berks County Homeschooling	Physical Materials	1 Year	150 items	50
Limited 6 Months	Berks County Residents	Physical Materials, Digital Access, ILL Services	180 Days	5	5 of 20

Using a Library Card

Cardholders should present a valid library card in order to check out materials and to use library computer resources. If a library card is not available, the cardholder must provide an ID and proof of address that exactly matches the address on the account. Library cards are not transferable. Adult cardholders can designate others to pick up holds, check out items, or place holds for them by completing the "Allow others to use my account" section of their registration. This authorization

is specifically noted in the cardholder's account. Designated persons may be asked to provide photo identification to verify they are authorized to use the cardholder's account.

Cardholders must report address, telephone and/or email changes to the library. Lost or stolen library cards must be reported to the library immediately so that the card can be invalidated. The owner of the card is responsible for all items checked out on the card until the card is reported lost or stolen.

Suspension of Cardholder Privileges
The cardholder accepts responsibility for all fines, fees, or charges incurred through library transactions. A cardholder's account is considered delinquent when items are overdue or money is owed.

Cardholders will not be able to borrow materials or place holds when:

- There are accumulated charges of more than $10.00.
- The count of overdue items on the cardholder's account exceeds 10.
- The total count of items checked out on the cardholder's account exceeds 50.

Expiration of Library Cards
Library cards may be renewed annually or every three years, depending on the patron permission group assigned at the time of registration. Patron accounts will be automatically deleted if five or more years have passed since the account's expiration date. However, accounts will not be deleted if any of the following conditions are met:

- There has been activity on the account within the past year (e.g., logging into the OPAC, accessing an eResource authenticated through Evergreen via SIP, or any item circulation).
- The account has outstanding bills of any kind.

Material Loan Periods and Terms of Loan

Item Format	Length of Loan	Renewals	Fines/Fees	Item Limits
Admission (Museum) Passes	7 Days	0	$1 per day; Replacement fee varies	1 at a time
Audiobook on Cd, Playaway	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
Books	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
DVD, Blu-Ray	7 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
DVD TV Series, Blu-Ray TV Series	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time

Item Format	Length of Loan	Renewals	Fines/Fees	Item Limits
Hotspot	21 Days	0	$1 per day; Replacement fees vary	1 at a time
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	Determined by lending library	Determined by lending library	Determined by check-out library	5 at a time
Kits	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
Laptops/Equipment	7 Days	0	No Fine; Replacement fees vary	1 at a time
Laptops/Equipment Library-Use	In-Library Use Only	0	No Fine; Replacement fees vary	1 at a time
Library of Things	7 Days	2 (if no holds)	$1 per day; Replacement Fee – cost of item;	1 at a time
Magazines	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
Music CD	21 Days	2 (if no holds)	No Fine; Replacement Fee – cost of item	50 at a time
Video Games	21 Days	0	No Fine; Replacement Fee- cost of item	2 at a time

Placing a Hold (or Request/Reserve)
If an item is not available at the time and place that it is desired, cardholders can place a hold (request/reserve) on the item at any member library, by phone, or online. Cardholders will be notified when the item is available for pick-up.

Items placed on hold (requested/reserved) may be picked up at the BCPL library that was specified at the time the hold was placed. Member libraries may restrict or limit pick-up options for certain items. Held items must be picked up within 7 days of notification. Hold periods for special materials may vary by library.

Renewing Items
Most materials, unless on hold for another patron, will be automatically renewed for up to two additional loan periods. An additional subsequent renewal may be available; please consult your library for more information. Renewals for longer loan periods may be granted by the owning library. Items may be renewed at any member library, online, or by phone. The cardholder's barcode number is required for telephone renewals.

Nonrenewable items may include Museum and other Admission Passes, HotSpots, Library of Things and out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL). For more information, contact your local library.

Returning Items

Most items belonging to any BCPL member library location may be returned at another member library location. Book drops are available at each library for the return of materials when the library is closed. These items must be returned inside the lending library at the circulation desk: museum passes, hotspots, Library of Things, and out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL).

Damaged Items

Damaged materials will be immediately discarded if moldy, infested, or in a condition that will jeopardize library staff or other materials. After paying any related fees for a damaged item, a patron may request to keep the item. Please consult your library's local disposal policy for more information.

Fines

There are no overdue fines on standard library materials such as Books, Audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, or Magazines. Cardholders are responsible for returning library materials on time. Member libraries may charge fines on special materials, out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL), and Library of Things. Fines are calculated based on the open dates of each individual library and vary by material type.

Overdue & Billing Notices

Cardholders are notified when items checked out become overdue. Patrons receive notices from the library using the notification preference listed in their library card account.

5 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent an overdue notice.
15 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent a second overdue notice.
30 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent a billing notice if the items have not been returned.

Section 6708 of Title 18, Pennsylvania Code makes it a summary offense to retain library property after being notified to return it.

Please note: RACC's Yocum Library has their own Circulation Policy. Please check www.RACC.edu for the policy.

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