

LIBRARY CARDS – RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT

Policy Statement

Bucks County public libraries issue library cards to facilitate, regulate, track and control use of the library and library resources.

Library cards enable qualified residents to borrow materials and access services. They define the terms and conditions of privileges extended to residents and non-residents, and balance the libraries' commitment to extend services against their legal, financial and practical ability to do so.

Statistical data about registered library users and library card use is collected and compiled so libraries can plan and target operations to specific community needs, and so they can effectively report statistics required by federal, state, local and private funding bodies. Libraries collect and use information about individual library users for management of individual library accounts. Internal library policies and Pennsylvania privacy laws protect personal data. The Bucks County Library Consortium policy titled Use of Patron Data for Library Advancement governs use of individual library data for library marketing and fundraising.

Regulations

General

Bucks County public libraries issue library cards at no cost to qualified borrowers in the following categories:

- **Resident:** a person who lives in Bucks County and can provide evidence of a Bucks County mailing address.
- **Qualified Access Pennsylvania borrower:** a non-resident who holds a card from a state-aided public library which participates in Access Pennsylvania. This category supersedes other non-resident categories; Access Pennsylvania cards must be issued to qualified non-residents.
- **Non-resident Bucks County student:** a person who attends an elementary or secondary public or private school or institution of higher learning in Bucks County and can provide evidence of current enrollment.
- **Non-resident property owner:** a person who owns commercial or residential property in Bucks County and can provide evidence of current Bucks County business ownership.
- **Non-resident business owner:** a person who owns and operates a business in Bucks County and can provide evidence of current Bucks County business ownership regardless of commercial or residential property ownership.



- **Non-resident employee:** a person who is employed at an establishment in Bucks County and can provide evidence of current Bucks County employment.
- **Guest:** a resident or non-resident using a temporary library card issued only for one-day public computer access with no other library privileges.

Bucks County public libraries issue library cards for a \$20 annual fee to non-residents who do not otherwise qualify for a free card.

The same library card is issued and accepted at all Bucks County public libraries, except the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library in Bristol which issues a different card. This card is accepted at all Bucks County public libraries.

Applicants are required to complete application forms in full in order to receive library cards. Library card applications are available at the circulation or other service desk in each library and on the library's website.

An individual may have only one current library card with the Bucks County public libraries.

A library card or card number is required for checkout of material, for access to electronic borrower services and unique resources on the library's website, and for public computer sign-up at most locations. A registered borrower who provides the library with a Pennsylvania driver's license or Department of Motor Vehicles issued identification card may use that as a substitute library card for checkout.

Library cardholders are responsible for the proper care and safe return of all items borrowed and all fees or fines incurred on their cards.

A library card number is required for public computer use at many of the Bucks County public libraries. Library users who would like to sign up for a computer but who cannot or do not choose to apply for a card will be issued anonymous one-day guest cards upon request. Neither identification nor proof of residence is required to obtain a guest card.

Library cards may be used in selected Bucks County public libraries as debit cards to pay for computer printouts and photocopying.

Proof of identity and residence and other status

Resident applicants are required to provide identification, including proof of current address, at the time of application. Non-residents applying for Access Pennsylvania and other no-cost library cards are also required to provide documentation of current status as a Bucks County student, property owner, business owner, or employee. If an applicant is entitled to an Access Pennsylvania library card, the library will issue a Bucks County Access Pennsylvania library card instead of issuing another type of free non-resident card, due to special funding received for extending service to registered Access Pennsylvania users. Bucks County public libraries that are not state-aided: the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library in Bristol, the Fallsington Library in Fallsington, and the Pipersville Free Library in Pipersville, cannot issue Access Pennsylvania Bucks County public library cards.



Libraries will accept the following documents as proof of identification and residence or other status for adult library card applicants, defined as persons age 16 or older. Libraries will mail correspondence to a post office box upon request, but will require proof of street address to verify residence.

For all resident and non-resident cards, acceptable identification and proof of current address shall be:

- Current driver's license, driver's instruction permit, or identification card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles. If this photo identification has the current address (not a PO Box), this one piece of identification will suffice. If this photo identification does not have a current address, additional identification with current address from the list below must be produced:
- Current vehicle registration
- Current voter registration card
- Current bank statement, credit card bill, utility bill, residential property tax bill, rent receipt, deed, property insurance bill, or lease agreement
- Secondary school identification

Additional proof for Non-Resident Access Pennsylvania card:

- Local library card with an Access Pennsylvania sticker

Additional proof for Non-Resident Students, one of the following:

- Official photo ID from high school or institution of higher learning
- Current tuition receipt or financial aid agreement

Additional proof for Non-Resident Bucks County Property owners, one of the following:

- Mortgage bill or statement dated within the month of application date
- Current utility bill, residential property tax bill, deed, rent receipt, or lease agreement

Additional proof for Non-Resident Bucks County Business Owners:

- Lease agreement for business property

Additional proof for Non-Resident Bucks County Employees, one of the following:

- Current payroll check or pay voucher. If the check does not have a Bucks County address, a letter on the employer's letterhead must also be presented.
- Official photo ID from employer

If the library card applicant's residence is temporary and he or she cannot provide identification as defined above, the applicant must provide either a copy of a signed contract with the provider of the temporary residence, or a letter on agency letterhead indicating that the applicant is a resident of that agency at that address. These applicants will be issued cards with resident status.

Library Cards for Children, defined as those age 15 or younger

To apply for a library card for a child, a parent or legal guardian must present a completed application, identification and proof of residency.

Libraries will accept the parent or legal guardian's identification and proof of residency or other status as listed above for adult applicants on behalf of a child applying for a library card. The same types of library card and library use privileges (resident, non-resident) are extended to the child as to his or her parent or legal guardian.

During library card registration drives at Bucks County schools or other institutions, the library may waive requirements for individual proof of residence at its discretion but will require completed library card applications.

By signing a child's library card application, a parent or legal guardian accepts financial responsibility for the proper care and safe return of all items borrowed and all fees or fines incurred on the child's card.

Parents and legal guardians are ultimately responsible for guiding and monitoring a child's library use. Bucks County public libraries provide a range of materials to suit various reading interests and perspectives. Libraries and their employees do not act on behalf of parents and legal guardians to monitor, control, or restrict what an individual child selects for reading, listening, viewing, and check out when a parent is not present.

Current Pennsylvania privacy law protects the confidentiality of a child's library card record. Library employees must adhere to the law and may not freely share information with parents or legal guardians about what a child has checked out or requested from the library. Those who would like to closely monitor their child's library use are urged to take the following steps:

- Require that the child share his or her library card and PIN as a condition of applying for a card
- Monitor emailed or mailed library notices



When making a phone or in-person request for information, be prepared to have the child on the phone line or there in person to verify that he or she gives permission to the library to share confidential information with you.

Use the child's library card and PIN to monitor his or her library records at MyAccount.

Proof of Age

Bucks County public libraries must block access to specific types of web sites for those ages 17 or younger, and upon request will remove blocks to access for those ages 18 and older. This is a requirement for receipt of federal technology funding for libraries.

Under certain circumstances, Bucks County public libraries will grant a library card applicant's request that his or her actual birth date not be recorded in the person's library card record. When this exception is made, the birth date is recorded in the library's database as 01/01/real year of birth.

Bucks County public libraries will require that all parents and legal guardians provide the actual birth date on applications for library cards issued to children, defined as those age 15 or younger.

Bucks County public libraries reserve the right to refuse to issue a library card or bar an applicant from using library computers if the applicant does not provide a document upon request proving that he or she is age 18 or older.

Card Expiration and Renewal

Residents

Resident cards are valid for three years from the application date.

Cards may be renewed in person at any Bucks County public library. Card holders will be asked to verify current contact information. If there is no change in address, verbal verification is sufficient. If there has been a change of address, the card holder must provide proof of residence as listed for first time applicants.

Non-residents

All types of non-resident and Access Pennsylvania cards are valid for one year from the application date. This includes student, property owner, business owner, employee and non-resident fee cards.

Cards may be renewed in person at any Bucks County public library. Card holders will be required to verify current contact information by providing evidence of current status as a Bucks County student, property owner, business owner, or employee at the time of renewal.

Change of Name or Address

Library cardholders are responsible for notifying the library of any change of name, address, email address, telephone number, or other personal data. This can only be done in person, with identification and proof of residence as listed above.

When postal mail sent to the library cardholder is returned as “undeliverable,” the library card is suspended until the cardholder verifies contact information in person at the library.

Lost, Stolen or Damaged Cards

To prevent and limit misuse, library cardholders are urged to notify the library as soon as possible when a card is lost or stolen. The library will immediately suspend a library card when notification is received.

Library cardholders are responsible for all material checked out on a lost or stolen card up to the time the library is notified of the loss or theft.

The library card replacement fee is \$3.00. The replacement fee is waived when the need for replacement results from normal wear and tear or extenuating circumstances.

Users must clear all outstanding fees and fines over \$5.00 and must clear overdue items before a replacement card is issued.

Denial of Service

Library card privileges may be revoked or denied for due cause including, but not limited to, failure to return library materials or pay related charges, and failure to comply with the User’s Code of Conduct.

The following internal and external documents apply to the Circulation Policies and Regulations:

- The Library Code, Title 24, Pennsylvania Statutes, Chapter 16, Libraries
- The Library Code, Title 24 § 4428, Pennsylvania Statutes, Library Circulation Records
- Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Title 18, § 6708, Crimes and Offenses
- Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Title 18, § 3929.1, Library Theft
- Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Title 18 § 5903, Obscene and other Sexual Materials and Performances
- Guidelines for Access Pennsylvania Statewide Library Card Program

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