

Policy: Circulation

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GENERAL CIRCULATION POLICIES

The Bristol Public Library maintains a collection of books and other materials for use by the public. Certain items in the collection are only available for in-house use but all other items are available based upon requirements listed in the sections to follow. All items in the Library are purchased according to the Library's Collection Development Policy.

LIBRARY CARD ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

Residency Requirements

To qualify for a Bristol Public Library card, a person must provide proof of residence at a permanent address within the cities of Bristol, TN and Bristol, VA, Washington and Scott Counties in Virginia, or be residents in the northeast Tennessee region defined by the Tennessee State Library and Archives as the Holston River Region. The Holston River Region is comprised of the following counties: Carter, Cocke, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington. Individuals who work in the cities of Bristol, TN or Bristol, VA but do not live within the areas shown above are also eligible to receive a library card upon proof of employment.

College students providing proof of enrollment in institutions of higher education within the service area are also eligible for full library card privileges at no charge.

Hotels, motels, shelters and other temporary housing are not considered permanent addresses except for residential managers of such facilities.

Post office boxes are acceptable as mailing addresses only and may not be used as proof of residency. A person using a post office box as a mailing address must also provide the library with written or electronic proof of an actual physical address.

Bristol Public Library cards can be issued to individuals outside of the above described service area for \$10 a year. Applicants must provide required documentation.

Internet-only cards are available for those who only need access to computers and the on-line services such as Tennessee Electronic Library, FindIt Virginia, and TN READS. There are no residency requirements for these cards.

General Card Requirements

Adults need to have two forms of identification, one of which has their local, current address printed on it (e.g. checkbook or utility bill). Children under the age of 18 must have permission from a parent or guardian to check out books and to use the internet computers. A parent or guardian must be present to show identification and sign for children under the age of 18 applying for a library card.

Library cards may be used at both the Bristol Public Library and the Avoca Branch Library, regardless of which library issued the card.

Patrons are responsible for informing the Library of change of address or phone number.

Accessing Library Computers

Bristol Public Library cardholders who wish to access computer resources in the library must do so by logging in with a valid library card or internet-only card. Guests are required to show a form of identification and will be issued a guest pass to use the public computers. Children under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian indicate on the library card application that they are allowed access to the internet.

No one may use another person's library account to access the internet. The patron is responsible for all use made of his or her library card. Please see the library's Internet Policy for further information regarding computer usage in the library.

Expiration and Invalidation of Library Cards

All library cards are valid for two years from date of issue. Non-resident cards are valid for one year from the date of issue.

The administration may revoke a library card at any time if the patron does not return overdue materials, does not pay outstanding fines, does not abide by other library policies, or habitually abuses library policies. The library reserves the right to suspend or revoke card privileges for any reason.

CIRCULATION OF MATERIALS

General Circulation Guidelines

Patrons are asked to present their card at the circulation desk at the time of checkout. If a card is not available, the patron must show identification prior to being allowed to check out materials. New cards may be purchased for \$1.00 to replace a lost card.

Most items check out for fourteen days. Materials, with the exception of items on hold, may be renewed twice for the same period as the initial checkout. Renewals may be obtained by various options. The library will assist in renewals at the Circulation Desk, by phone, or by email request. Patrons may self-renew eligible items either in the library at any catalog terminal or from an outside computer by accessing their account at https://owl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/BPL.

Requests for Holds

Patrons may place holds for items that are checked out or otherwise unavailable. Patrons may place holds on eligible items by phone, in person, or by computer by accessing their account at https://owl.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/BPL.

In order to find out what items a patron has on hold, the patron who is calling in must supply their name and the last four digits of their library card number.

All materials on hold for patrons will be kept at the Circulation Desk. When a reserved book becomes available, the patron will be contacted and informed of the hold expiration date. Failure to pick up reserves by the hold expiration date will result in a \$1.00 charge to the requesting account, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Return of Materials

Items that are checked out from the Bristol Public Library or the Avoca Branch Library may be returned to either location. For your convenience, book drops are available at each Library location.

OVERDUE LIBRARY MATERIALS

Overdue Guidelines

All materials are due on their due date. The receipt provided at the time of check out serves as the official notice to the patron of when materials are due. As a courtesy, the library will also attempt to notify the patron when materials become overdue; however, the library has no obligation to remind patrons to return materials. As a

courtesy, if a patron opts-in for text message or email notifications, the system will send a notice when a patron's materials are due in three (3) days.

In case of inclement weather or other emergencies, the library may, at the Circulation Supervisor's discretion, waive or reduce charges upon late return of non-renewable or previously renewed materials.

Overdue notices will be sent by mail or e-mail. The library attempts to send the cardholder up to four notifications of overdue materials. **The responsibility for returning borrowed materials and paying all fines and fees accrued is not conditional upon the cardholder receiving overdue notification.**

The library automatically suspends borrowing privileges if cardholder's charges for overdue fines, fees, and lost or damaged materials are \$15.00 or more. Staff restores borrowing privileges promptly when materials are returned, found, or paid for and accounts are settled.

Items that a patron claims have already been returned are marked "Claimed Returned" on the patron's circulation file. Staff will then search for the material in the stacks and remove the item from a patron's check out list upon finding the item. Materials marked "Claimed Returned" on a patron's account that are not found after three months will be billed to the patron's account.

Fines and Charges

The fine structure is set administratively. For details of charges, refer to the library's website. Overdue items returned in the book drop after hours but before opening will be checked in with the previous day's date. Charges for lost or damaged items are set administratively and include a replacement and processing fee.

Acceptable forms of payment include cash, check, and credit or debit card.

Refunds

The library will issue a receipt for each lost item paid for. If the item is found and returned within three months of receipt of payment, and if the item is in acceptable condition, a refund or fine credit will be issued. The processing fee is non-refundable.

Unclaimed refunds will be forfeited three months after the item's return.

Patrons may opt to have a refund placed on their account as a credit. This credit can then be used for future fines and/or fees. Refunds totaling less than \$5 will automatically be applied to the patron's account. Refunds will be applied to existing fines on the patron's account.