



REGISTRATION AND CIRCULATION POLICY

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Registration and Circulation Policy

Resident

The Bentonville Public Library is supported by taxes paid by residents of the City of Bentonville. Library privileges are available at no charge to residents of Benton County, Bentonville City employees, educators in Bentonville schools, business owners, and those owning real property in the City of Bentonville.

Non-Resident

Non-residents include all patrons living outside, but adjacent to Benton County. A non-resident fee will be charged annually to all non-residents, which covers all members of the patron's household. The non-resident fee is determined by the library administration and approved by the Library Advisory Board and City Council.

Digital Access Library Cards

- A. Non-library cardholders are welcome to use Library resources on-site and online through a "digital access library card." Access includes computers, the internet, printing, databases, and downloadable. Checkout privileges of physical materials are not provided to digital access library cardholders.
- B. Patrons requesting a digital access library card are required to register and provide government-issued photo identification.
- C. Generic "Student Cards" issued to patrons under the age of 18 for temporary use of the Library's Family Friendly computer terminals.
- D. Digital access library cards are issued for 12 months, with the option for yearly renewal.
- E. If the patron lives locally, for example in Washington County or Missouri, they must obtain a non-resident Bentonville Public Library card.
- F. If deemed appropriate by Library administration, computer/internet access may be provided for one day and possibly subject to a cost-recovery fee.

Age Requirements

Library cards are available for children ages five years and older. A parent or legal guardian's signature is required for all library card applicants under the age of 18. By digitally signing the registration form at the time of application, parents/guardians acknowledge responsibility for the items borrowed, fees incurred, their children's selection of materials, and computer and internet usage.

Institutional Cards

- A. An institution includes facilities such as businesses, organizations, and educational institutions that meet the library's eligibility requirements.

Eligibility

- B. Cards will be issued to institutions within the City of Bentonville at the discretion of the Library Director. Cards will be always kept on file at the library and will be updated annually.

Letters of Application

- C. A senior supervisor of the institution must write a letter of application to the Library Director. The letter must be written on the institution's letterhead. A statement should be included indicating the institution's responsibility for paying fines, as well as those charges incurred for lost or damaged materials. A list of persons authorized to use the card must also be included.
- D. The institution must promptly notify the library if any persons are to be added or deleted from its list.

Reciprocal Cards

As Bentonville Public Library attempts to meet varied patrons' needs of the Northwest Arkansas community, the library may elect to enter reciprocal agreements with other local libraries. Reciprocal agreements expand the reach of community library services. Considerations for entering such agreements include balancing potential costs and impact on library services.

Corporate Cards

Bentonville Public Library offers Corporate Cards for individuals participating in an internship program with local businesses, organizations, and institutions.

Tech Card Program

- A. Bentonville Public Library provides digital content for students and teachers through our Tech Card program. The goal of the Library's Tech Card program is to give equal access to reputable online resources.
- B. Since 2014, the Tech Card program has expanded from Bentonville Public Schools to charter and private schools, non-profit agencies serving youth, and a select group of community college students.
- C. As part of the Tech Card program, the library features core databases provided through the Arkansas State Library's "Traveler" project and subscribes to supplementary products. Students, teachers, and school media specialists across Benton County have access to a variety of resources at a dedicated "Student Portal" on Bentonville Public Library's website.

Library Card Expiration

- A. Library cards are renewed annually. At renewal time, borrower information is verified, and fines and fees must be paid in total; the same card is used.
- B. Resident, non-resident, and institutional Library cards are valid for 12 months.
- C. Digital Access Library Cards are valid for 12 months and are eligible for renewal at the discretion of the Library Administration.
- D. Corporate cards are valid for 6 months and renewals are at the discretion of the Library Administration.

Identification and Proof of Residence

- A. Identification and specific documentation to verify residence are required to obtain a full-service library card.
- B. Identification can be established through a current driver's license, government-issued identification, military identification, travel visa or passport, or other valid picture identification.
- C. Additional forms of identification may be accepted and approved at the discretion of the Library Director if no valid picture identification is available.
- D. Some examples of specific documentation to verify residence include, but are not limited to utility bills, rental or lease agreements, or property tax receipts.

Denial of Library Card Application

- A. If at any time during the registration process, a library staff member has reason to believe erroneous information is being supplied, the patron's application will be verified before extending borrowing privileges.
- B. Library cards will not be issued to applicants unable to supply current identification and/or proof of residency, depending on the type of card.

Misuse of Library Privileges

Abuse of Library privileges can result in the library card being revoked or suspended. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1. Persistent late returns resulting in the unavailability of items for other patrons.
- 2. Persistent return of materials in poor conditions resulting in unavailability of items for other patrons.
- 3. Multiple occurrences of fine waivers; or
- 4. Incidents of inappropriate internet use.

Use of Materials Policy

- A. The Bentonville Public Library provides equal access to information, for all people within the community, in a variety of formats. For more information about Library collections, refer to the Library's Collection Development Policy.
- B. Collection usage is protected under patrons' right to privacy but may be susceptible to certain provisions for the disclosure of library records according to [A.C.A. § 13-2-704](#).
- C. As the Library is funded by the citizens of Bentonville through local tax dollars, an ongoing effort is made to recover overdue materials and collect fines and replacement fees when necessary.
- D. Failure to return Library materials in proper condition, within overdue time periods, or to pay outstanding fines/fees, may result in legal penalties, civil remedies, or the use of an approved collection agency.
- E. Patrons owing the library outstanding fines/fees may be subject to an administrative cost-recovery fee if the account is submitted to a collection agency.

- F. Reserves, loan periods/limits, and renewals for special collections, interlibrary loans, and shared library collections may differ from these standard policies.
- G. Fines and fees are approved by the Library Advisory Board and City Council.

Circulating Materials

- A. Materials for checkout include, but are not limited to, fiction and non-fiction books, large-print, audiovisual items, and magazines.
- B. The library may also circulate various items such as technology, special kits, and other miscellaneous items.

Electronic and Downloadable Resources

- A. The library selects electronic resources to complement and supplement traditional print materials.
- B. A valid, unrestricted Library card is required to access the library's subscription-based online resources (databases), downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, music, and videos.

Holds/Reserves

- A. Holds may be placed on all circulating items. Patrons will be notified when reserved items become available.
- B. Library administration reserves the right to limit holds if deemed necessary by educational support, special circumstances, patron abuse of service, or other reasonable instances.

Checkout Periods and Limits

The library establishes regulations for the loan of materials including circulation processes, renewal processes, and fees for late returns.

Renewals

The library establishes regulations for the renewal of library materials. Unrestricted circulating items may be renewed. Restrictions may include reserved, recalled, or lost items.

Overdue Materials

- A. [A.C.A. § 5-36-115](#) makes it a violation of law to fail to return books or property of the Bentonville Public Library after having been placed on notice.
- B. Overdue materials may be subject to overdue fines charged per item, per day.
- C. Overdue notices/reminders are processed and sent to the patron via mail, telephone, email, and/or text messages.

Lost Items

- A. Library administration establishes regulations for lost Library materials.
- B. Library materials are classified as lost when they are not returned to the library within a designated time from the original due date.

- C. Patrons will be billed the replacement cost, processing fee, and overdue fine amount for each lost item.
- D. Additional cost recovery fees may apply if an account is submitted to the collection company employed through Bentonville Public Library.
- E. The processing fee for lost/damaged magazines, board books, and mass-market paperbacks is not charged.

Return of Lost and Paid for Items

- A. Refunds to patrons for “lost/paid for items” which were later found and returned to the library are at the discretion of the Library Director.
- B. Deciding factors include items replaced by the library; age and relevancy of items; condition of returned item; and the one-year closing date on refunds.
- C. Approved refund amounts are for replacement costs minus processing fees and overdue fines.

Damaged Items

- A. Patrons are responsible for the proper use and care of Library materials checked-out or used in-house.
- B. Damage or destruction of Library materials will result in processing fees and replacement costs for those items deemed beyond repair.
- C. Library staff will be guided by [A.C.A. § 13-2-506](#) when patrons damage Library materials.

eCommerce Payment Procedures

- A. The library will not charge a “transaction fee” to patrons for credit card transactions.
- B. A minimum threshold is established to offset vendor charges to the library and is included in the library’s fee and fine schedule.

Refund Policy

- A. Disputed fines and fees that are considered legitimate charges will not be refunded.
- B. Refunds for overpayments related to human or technical error will be issued to the patron’s credit card via a “credit” within 7 to 10 business days.
- C. Refunds for lost items that are returned to the library are subject to established policies.

Suspension of Borrowing and Computer Privileges

- A. Library privileges will be suspended for patrons when the total costs incurred reach an established balance that is approved by the Library Advisory Board (i.e., \$10 / card). This threshold is included in the library’s fee and fine schedule.
- B. Circumstances may warrant the suspension of Library privileges to all cardholders living at the same physical address. “Same address” suspensions are at the discretion of the Library Director.

- C. Deciding factors include improper use of Library cards, irresponsibility of “same address” patrons, parents, or legal guardians; or total costs incurred for “same address” cardholders have reached the established threshold.
- D. When total costs are brought down under the established threshold, Library privileges may be reinstated.
- E. The library offers opportunities for patrons to make payment arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

Waiving Fines or Fees

- A. Circumstances may warrant the decision to waive a patron’s fine(s) or fee(s).
- B. The decision to waive is at the discretion of the Library Director or Librarians.
- C. Deciding factors may include but are not limited to staff or system error and uncontrollable acts of nature.