

Library Card Eligibility and Registration

A library card is available free of charge to anyone who is able to show proof that they live in, own property, work in, or own a business in Franklin Township. All applicants need to apply in person unless they have permission from the Head of Circulation to register as homebound. A parent or legal guardian's signature and proof of residency are required to register a minor (age 17 and younger) for a library card. Minors must be present at the time of registration. The library requires all cardholders to provide a valid home or personal cell phone number.

All applicants must be able to show photo ID and proof of address. The library will not accept a P.O. Box address as proof of address. A current driver's license with a Franklin Township street address will satisfy registration requirements; however, if that is not available, the library will also accept another form of photo ID along with one of the following as proof of address:

- Ownership deed with a Franklin Township street address.
- Most recent property tax bill.
- Bank statement, utility bill, telephone bill, or other monthly bill with a current Franklin Township street address. Bills cannot be more than 30 days old and must contain the applicant's name.
- High school or college transcript/school correspondence containing the applicant's address, issued within the past six months.
- A lease containing the applicant's address. However, privileges will only be granted for a maximum of one year or until the lease expires, whichever comes first.

Reciprocal borrowers may apply for privileges if they are in good standing with their home libraries. Borrowing limits may apply. (See below for more information on "Reciprocal Borrowing.")

Individuals who work in town and who do not qualify for a reciprocal membership may obtain a free card with us if they can show proof of address and a current paystub from a local business. Borrowing limits may apply. Membership must be renewed annually.

Non-residents who do not otherwise qualify for a free library card may purchase an annual membership for \$50.00 or a half-year membership for \$25.00. These fees are reviewed periodically and may be subject to change.

By registering for a library card, the cardholder agrees to:

- Accept responsibility for any use of the card.
- Present the card when required for transactions.
- Follow all library policies and procedures.
- Pay all fines and fees.
- Report promptly if the card is lost or if stolen or there is a change of address or telephone number.

The library provides all new users with a free wallet and keychain copy of their library cards. There is a \$3.00 charge to replace a lost card. Library cards must be periodically updated. Patrons may be required to show photo ID and proof of residency to renew borrowing privileges. We cannot register new users or replace or update memberships the last 15 minutes that the library is open.

Circulation Policies

The library requires that patrons present their library cards in order to check out or renew loans. In addition to the physical card, the library will also accept copies saved to Smartphones using a loyalty card app so long as the app creates a scannable barcode. Patrons are limited to a one-time checkout using their driver's license per year. This restriction protects patrons' rights to privacy and their accounts from misuse. If the one-time exception has already been used, staff can offer to set the items aside for 24 hours if the patron wishes to return later with a library card. The library reserves the right to limit the number and type of items that can be set aside.

Borrowing Limits and Fees

Material Type	Loan Period	Renewals*	Number of Items	Daily Overdue Borrowing Fee	Maximum Overdue Fee
Book Club Kits**	42 days	0	1	\$2.00	\$50.00
Children's books & magazines	21 days	2	No limit	\$0.10	\$6.00
Children's media (i.e. audiobooks, CDs and videos)	21 days	2	No limit	\$0.20	\$6.00
Current issues of magazines and newspapers	In library use only	--	--	--	--
Entertainment videos – new titles***	2 days	0	1	\$1.50	\$10.00
Entertainment videos – older titles***	7 days	2	10	\$1.00	\$10.00
Inter-Library Loans	14 days	0	3	\$1.00	\$50.00
Kindle e-readers**	14 days	Upon approval	1	\$2.00	\$50.00
Magazines – back issues	21 days	2	No limit	\$0.20	\$3.00
Museum passes**	1 day**	0	1 per 30 days	\$25.00	\$50.00
New Arrivals	14 days	2	No limit	\$0.20	\$10.00
Reference -- Circulating Adult collection (pink labels)	3 days	0	1	\$2.00	\$50.00
Reference -- Non-Circulating Adult and Children's collections	Upon Approval	Upon Approval	Upon Approval	\$0.20 per hour	\$50.00
Township Government Meeting Minutes	3 days	0	1	\$2.00	\$50.00
ALL OTHER COLLECTIONS	21 days	2	No limit	\$0.20	\$10.00

* See below for more information on "Renewals."

** Museum passes and Book-Club Kits can only be borrowed by permanent residents and paid members. See Museum Pass FAQs (available on the library's website) for more information.

*** For more information, see "Video Club" below.

Checking Out & Returning Media Items

Library policy requires that staff count all media items (CD-ROMs, sound recordings, videos, etc.) before they can be checked out to a patron and again before being checked back in. If material is returned without all of its pieces or replaced with non-library materials, it will remain on the patron's account until the problem is resolved. Library staff will attempt to contact the patron for the return of missing items.

Renewing your Checkouts:

Most library materials can be renewed two times unless they are on hold for another patron. Book-Club-Kits, Circulating Reference, Interlibrary Loans, new entertainment videos and Museum Passes cannot be renewed. Patrons who want to renew a Kindle will need to contact the Reference Desk for assistance with this special request.

For eligible materials, renewal requests may be made online, in person or by calling the library. When calling to speak with a staff member, patrons may renew a single item by reading aloud the item's barcode or renew multiple items by reading their card number. Patrons are only allowed a one-time exception to renew by telephone without their library cards if they are able to verify their full contact information. Renewals in person can be done using either the patron's library card or by scanning the individual items.

For most materials, once the renewal limit has been reached, patrons may re-borrow an item if there are no holds on it and his/her card is not blocked because of fees. If the item is on hold for another user, patrons will not be able to renew it. After returning the item, patrons may place it on hold to try borrowing it another time. Materials that are not eligible for renewal cannot be returned and immediately re-borrowed. This is to provide access to the materials to all our users. If a patron owes \$10.00 or more in library fees, he/she will not be able to renew online. Please call the Circulation Desk for further assistance. Items must be renewed on time to avoid being assessed fees. Items that cannot be renewed must still be returned on time to avoid being assessed fees.

Library Courtesy Notices:

Library notices are sent to patrons as a courtesy. Failure to receive the notice does not absolve the patron of responsibility for paying library fees.

For patrons who request email notifications, the library will attempt to send out a courtesy reminder two days before items are due.

For all patrons, the library will also attempt to send out several reminders for overdue items. If you think that you have received an overdue notice in error, contact the library as soon as possible to avoid being assessed fees:

1. The first notice will be sent via telephone call or email when items become four days overdue.
2. A second reminder will be sent via telephone call or email at 14 days overdue.
3. A third notice will be mailed at 21 days overdue.

Circulation Policies

4. A bill for replacement costs will be sent when items are 28 days overdue and assumed lost. Items returned within 14 days will only be subject to borrowing fees.
5. A second reminder billing notice will be sent to accounts owing \$24.99 (or less) at 43 days overdue.
6. Accounts owing \$25.00 or more will be sent to Collections. Accounts owing \$50.00 or more will also have a Family Block added to the address.

The library will attempt to send all patrons with unpaid fees of \$10.00 or more a reminder.

Borrowing Fees for Overdue Items:

Cardholders are responsible for returning or renewing their borrowed materials on time. Overdue fees will be charged for the additional time that cardholders have the item past its due date (aka overdue.) Overdue fees accrue at different rates for different materials. (Please see the "Borrowing Table" below for more information.)

At four weeks overdue, item(s) are assumed lost and the account is billed for replacement. A billing notice is mailed stating the replacement cost of the item. At six weeks overdue, the bill for assumed lost items may be sent to Collections. (See above for more information on "Collections.") Items will still be accepted back and the cardholder only subject to the overdue fees if the item(s) are returned in a reasonable amount of time.

If you think that you have received a notice or been billed in error, please contact the Circulation Desk for assistance.

Fees for Lost or damaged items:

If patrons lose or damage library materials, they must pay the replacement cost. For most materials, this amount will reflect the original retail value. For older materials with no price listed in the system, staff will charge the standard out-of-print fee. (See "Fee Schedule" available at the Circulation Desk.) If the damaged item contains mold it will be discarded; otherwise, damaged items will be kept for 30 days from the date billed in case the patron wants it after payment is made.

Sending Accounts to "Collections"

Library users that owe the library \$25.00 or more in unpaid fees will be reported to the library's collection agency, Unique Management Services Inc. Fees for lost or damaged items must be paid within 14 days. All other fees must be paid within 60 days.

For each account sent to Unique, the library is billed \$10.00. The library is willing to work with users who return long overdue materials, but this portion of the bill must be paid by the user. The Library does not report debts to credit agencies; however, your account will remain blocked until the bill is resolved in full.

“Family” Blocks

The library reserves the right to block all residents at an address if one resident has overdue items or outstanding fines of \$50 or more. Household residents in good standing may borrow one book at a time, but they will not be allowed to borrow any media. The “Family” Block can be removed once all materials are returned and all fees on all accounts are paid in full.

Payments and Refunds:

The library will accept cash, checks, money orders, or cashier’s checks. The library reserves the right to refuse bills larger than \$20. The library cannot accept payment by credit or debit card.

The library does not refund fees for damaged materials or for materials that are returned/renewed late. If you believe that you have been mistakenly charged a fee, please contact the Circulation Desk for assistance *before* making any payments.

Refunds for lost materials will be made if an item is found within six months of the original payment date, is in good condition, and has not been withdrawn from the catalog. Overdue fees will be deducted from the refund for lost materials. Refunds will not be issued for items that are returned damaged.

Requesting an Item Be Held for You:

“Holds” can only be checked out to the card that was used to place the hold.

Patrons may place holds on most items in our catalog. Items from the following collections cannot be placed on hold:

- New release entertainment movies
- Items in the Historical collection
- Interlibrary Loans (ILL)
- Magazines or periodicals
- Reference materials

Patrons should call the branch, or the Adult or Children’s reference desks for assistance if they need an item pulled immediately. Otherwise, on-shelf requests will be pulled the following day.

Patrons will be notified the day after their holds become available for pickup and will have three days from the date of notification to pick up their holds. Patrons may request additional time if needed by calling the Circulation Desk.

- Day 1 – Hold becomes available
- Day 2 – Notice sent
- Day 5 – Final pickup date, hold expires

The library will charge a \$1.00 fee for each expired available hold request. Patrons can avoid this fee by canceling their hold requests before the final pickup date. Requests can be canceled online using the MY ACCOUNT feature available on our website, using our Bookmyne app or by calling the Circulation Desk. Patrons may also request additional time to pick up their holds at no additional charge by calling the Circulation Desk.



Preference will be given to the patron who has the book in hand. If a patron brings an item to the counter that is on hold for another user staff will override the hold and allow the item to be checked out. The person on hold will be notified when the item is returned.

The library reserves the right to cancel an on-shelf hold if a patron fails to pick up the same requested item two times in a row, or if they fail to pick up three different requests in a row. Patrons are asked to wait 24 hours before placing an item on hold that they just returned. The library reserves the right to cancel these holds.

Video Club:

Non-Video Club members aged 18 and older can rent entertainment videos for a small fee due at the time of checkout. Cardholders in good standing may also purchase membership to the Video Club for a one-time, non-refundable fee. Members of the Video Club may borrow one New Release and up to ten older videos at a time at no charge. Additional videos can be rented for a small fee due at the time of checkout. Video Club membership fee is good for 60 years from the date of purchase. Memberships are only available to patrons 18 years and older unless a parent or legal guardian gives consent. Parents/legal guardians must have a library card in good standing before membership can be purchased for a minor. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for video selections made by minors.

New Releases circulate for two days, cannot be renewed, and are fined \$1.50 per item each day overdue. The availability of these videos is on a first-come-first-served basis. Patrons cannot place holds on these items. All other entertainment videos circulate for seven days, are eligible for two renewals, and are fined \$1.00 per item each day overdue. If the borrowing limits have been reached videos must be checked in by a staff member before additional videos can be borrowed. Videos can be returned at either our Somerset or Franklin Park locations. If the library is closed, patrons should return videos in the exterior drop boxes to avoid late fees.

Reciprocal Borrowing:

Your home library card can be used to obtain free borrowing privileges at a number of surrounding area libraries. This is known as Reciprocal Borrowing. A current list of participating libraries is available on our website. Reciprocal borrowing privileges vary with each individual library in our network and may not all be available to patrons who purchase non-resident cards.

To register at a reciprocal library, you must do so at a time when both libraries are open. Your library account will need to be verified as active and in good standing before you will be allowed to register or renew your reciprocal card. You will need to have your home library card with you at the time of registration. Reciprocal borrowing privileges must be updated/renewed according to each individual library's policy.

Please note that reciprocal borrowers may have limited access to some reciprocal libraries' services. You will need to check with the individual libraries where you wish to register for more details. Accounts at the different reciprocal libraries are separate; items borrowed from us must be returned directly to us.



Borrower Confidentiality

In general, only the staff and the cardholder have access to information about a cardholder's library record. New Jersey Statute 18A: 73-43.2 requires that library records that contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of libraries are confidential and shall be disclosed only in very specific circumstances:

- The records are necessary for the proper operation of the library;
- Disclosure is requested by the user; or
- Disclosure is required pursuant to a subpoena issued by a court or court order.

Additionally, under the federal USA PATRIOT Act of 2001, disclosure of library records may be required when a search warrant or court order is presented to the library.

The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a child(ren) under 11 years of age is(are) entitled to information relating to the use of the minor child's card, as this is deemed as essential and necessary for the proper operation of the library. However, if a child (patron) is over 11 years of age, the library will not disclose information regarding the account with anyone other than that patron, unless that patron authorizes such disclosure.

When patrons telephone for information about items being held, titles will be given if the caller supplies the appropriate library card barcode number. Library staff may confirm that items are being held for a person whom the caller names, but may not reveal the titles unless the caller provides the library card barcode number. A patron may pick up items on hold for others if he or she presents the other individual's library card.

When patrons telephone to renew items, the caller must supply the appropriate library card barcode number or item ID. In person, patrons may renew or check out items for others if he or she presents the other individual's library card.

Revised 05/13/2021