

Circulation Policy

The Bitterroot Public Library's Circulation Policy is designed to provide a fair and fiscally responsible framework for the sharing of items in the library collection, while reducing barriers to using the library and promoting conscientious use of a community resource.

Library Cards

- Persons age 18 and older may get a library card by presenting picture identification. Persons must be a resident or property owner in Ravalli County or employed in Ravalli County to be issued a library card. Persons not living full-time (at least six months per year) or owning property in the county will be issued a temporary card or may pay \$25.00 for a regular library card that expires after six months. No refunds will be provided.
- Temporary cards are restricted to two library items checked out at a time, and do not allow the checkout of special items or equipment (e.g. telescopes, laptops, hotspots, etc.) or Interlibrary Loan items. Temporary cards are set to expire after 6 months and may only be renewed in person.
- Persons under age 18 may receive a library card by having the application signed by a parent or legal guardian who meets the above criteria who then shall be financially responsible for items checked out to minor children.
- Persons must be present to receive a library card, however exceptions will be made for certain circumstances such as homebound individuals, military deployment, school outreach, etc. for individuals who reside in or own property in Ravalli County, or who are employed in Ravalli County. No cards will be issued digitally to persons who do not meet the aforementioned criteria.
- The library card and account are for use by this user only. Library users may enable second-party pick-up on their account, which allows others to pick up items they have placed on hold at the library. If a library user needs someone to select items and check them out, they will need to provide that person with their physical library card. This is to ensure confidentiality of library accounts, prevent confusion and limit misuse.

- It is the responsibility of the library patron to keep a current name, address, telephone number and email address registered with the library.
- There is no charge for an initial library card registration or an address change.
- A replacement card will be issued at no charge to patrons who have lost their card.
- Cards with no fees and no activity in three years will be removed from the system.

Check out periods

- Patrons are responsible for returning library materials in good condition on or before the date due.
- New materials and DVDs are checked out for 14 days. Materials are designated new for approximately six months and are cataloged as new when they have been recently published and/or acquired by the library
- Wireless hotspots, laptops, and other special items have a checkout period varying from 7 to 14 days. The due date of the item will be provided at the time of check out and overdue fines may apply.
- All other materials are checked out for 28 days.
- Persons with unpaid fines and/or fees exceeding \$10.00 cannot check out other materials until fines/fees are less than \$10.00.
- For library users unable to make payments to get their account under \$10.00, their card status will be changed to temporary with no expiration date. Once they have made payments and the balance on the account is under \$10.00 they will return to a normal library card and its privileges.

- Renewals may be granted two times only if there are no holds on the requested materials.
- Patrons with email notification will receive a notice the day before an item is due. Patrons with phone notification will receive a phone call the day after an item is due.
- One overdue notice is sent when an item is 14+ days overdue. One lost letter is sent when an item is 35+ days overdue. One long overdue letter will go out at 90+days overdue.
- Materials 28 days or more overdue will be assumed lost and charged accordingly.
- Patrons that return items that have been marked as LOST are granted a one-time waiver if the items are returned in good condition. Patron contact information will be confirmed. The Lost Item Returned note will be deleted after one year.
- Library card privileges will be changed to those of a temporary card for patrons that have returned LOST items a second time. This status will remain effective for six months and limit the borrower to two items; after six months full privileges will be reinstated.
- Items 3 months or more over due will be purged from the catalog. A note will remain on the account until the item is returned/paid for.
- If the letters or emails are unsuccessful, staff will attempt to contact the patron via phone. If staff are unable to confirm contact information, the account will be blocked and a note will be placed on the account specifying the reason.
- Patrons are limited to 3 claims returned items on their account at one time, after which they will be billed for the missing item.

Fees on overdue, damaged and lost materials

- No fines are charged for most overdue items. Library users are expected to return items on time or renew them in person, over the phone, or electronically to ensure smooth operations.
- Overdue fines may apply to wireless hotspots, laptops and other special items.
- Interlibrary Loan items accrue fines of \$1 per day.
- Cost for lost or irreparably damaged materials will be the cost of the item.

When costs are not known, the default costs will be:

- \$28.00 for BOOKS
- \$26.00 for DVDS
- \$15.00 for CDS
- \$75 for KITS
- \$100 for MEDIA EQUIPMENT
- \$30 for AUDIO-RECORDINGS (audio books)
- Special items or unique materials will be charged accordingly.
- No processing fees will be assigned to lost items.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees Sept. 2022