



Berks County Public Libraries Board Meeting
November 20, 2024 7:00 PM

In-person at System Headquarters: 1040 Berks Rd, Leesport, PA **and** virtually via Microsoft Teams

Call to Order & Reminder of How to Record Meeting Attendance on MS Teams

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Executive Session- if needed

Review of the August 21, 2024 minutes

Treasurer's Report

Correspondence

Administrator's Report

Committee Reports

Old Business

- Robesonia Community Library- Compliance Update
- Village Library of Morgantown- Compliance Update
- Womelsdorf Community Library- Compliance Update
- System Membership Policy- FINAL and Vote
- Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities- FINAL and Vote

New Business

- Borrowing Policy Revisions (approved by library directors 9.24.24)- FINAL and Vote
- Internet Access Policy- DRAFT
- 2025 Advisory Board Meeting Schedule- Vote for Public Meeting Notice

District Consultant Report

Announcements

- Next Advisory Board Meeting: February 19, 2025 at 7PM in-person at System HQ and virtually via Microsoft Teams
- BCPL Awards Ceremony: March 5, 2025 at 6:30PM in-person at System HQ
- Recognition of Ginny Hand's board service



BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Board of Directors Meeting
August 21, 2024 7:00PM
Hybrid Meeting
MINUTES

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors of Berks County Public Libraries was held using a hybrid format, in person and via the Microsoft Teams platform, on Wednesday, August 21, 2024.

Board Members Present: Helen Flynn - Vice President; Dr. Debbie Noel - Secretary/Treasurer; Mary Ellen Wells

Board Members Present Online: Ginny Hand - President; Xiomara Toledo; Arleny Pimentel

Board Members Absent: Jason Brudereck

System staff present: Stephanie Williams, Library System Administrator; Christie Brown, Deputy Administrator/Outreach Services Coordinator; Jeff Smilko, Technology Coordinator

District staff present: Becky Wanamaker, District Library Consultant

District staff present Online: Marissa Guidara, Youth Services District Consultant

Advisory Committee members present in person:

Mike Najarian, Bethel-Tulpehocken Public Library
Linda Roebuck, Muhlenberg Community Library
Leslie Pirl-Roth, Robesonia Community Library
Julian Marshall, Womelsdorf Community Library
Wendy Marshall, Womelsdorf Community Library

Advisory Committee members present online via Teams:

Jason E. Wenrich, Bernville Area Community Library	Alexa Cooney, Fleetwood Area Public Library
Nicole Sapna, Boone Area Library	Kathi Shaffer, Hamburg Public Library
Christine Mittura, Boone Area Library	Chelsea Williams, Hamburg Public Library
Rachel Stewart, Boone Area Library	Gerry Hynes, Kutztown Community Library
Rob Kistler, Boyertown Community Library	Julia Becker, Reading Public Library
Louise DeMatteo, Brandywine Community Library	Chris Thomas, Schuylkill Valley Community Library
Melissa Hartman, Brandywine Community Library	Laurel Quigley, Spring Township/West Lawn Wyomissing Hills Library
Mariel Jordan, Exeter Community Library	Cindy Line, Village Library of Morgantown
	Allison Plevrakis, Wernersville Public Library

Call to Order: Ginny Hand called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. The meeting was then turned over to Vice President, Helen Flynn.

Pledge of Allegiance: Helen Flynn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: In-person comments: NONE

Virtual comments: Comment from Jason Wenrich, Bernville Area Community Library:

"The Bernville Area Community Library in preparation for our Cookies with Santa and raffle have been sending out donation requests. One such request was to the Reading Royals.

Ms. Erin Ondik reached out to me and asked for some general information for the libraries of Berks County. The Royals are eager to help libraries and would even like to do a Library night this upcoming season.

They are also interested in helping with fundraisers, supplying books and are open to other opportunities.

Any interest from Library Executive Directors please reach out to Erin at eondik@royalshockey.com."

Approval of Minutes: Debbie Noel made one correction to the minutes of May 15, 2024, adding Mariel Jordan, from Exeter Community Library, as an attendee. Debbie moved to accept the minutes with the correction. Helen Flynn seconded. Mary Ellen Wells abstained. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Debbie Noel noted that the 60% of the 2024 budget has been spent to date. We continue a typical spend rate with no unusual expenditures.

Mary Ellen Wells moved that the report be accepted as presented. Debbie Noel seconded. The report was unanimously accepted.

Correspondence: We received correspondence from Mr. Roger Broome in June regarding his continued concerns about Exeter Community Library Association and a request for assistance. Stephanie Williams provided one suggestion of an organization who may be able to assist him.

We received correspondence from Heather Sharpe, Director of the Board of Library Development at the Office of Commonwealth Libraries regarding the 2024-2025 state aid projections, which include level funding for the public library subsidy at \$70.47 million dollars.

Administrator's Report: Stephanie Williams, Library System Administrator, shared her report. She highlighted the following items:

- We welcomed Christie Brown as the new Deputy Administrator- Outreach Services Coordinator. Looking ahead, Williams will continue to orient Brown to the Deputy Administrator role.
- The 4th Quarter System-wide Initiative for all member libraries is a Library Passport Challenge to incentivize community members to register for a library card and visit various member libraries throughout the county. Emily Orischak is working with the System's Outreach Department to produce materials for libraries to utilize in this initiative. Promotion of the challenge will be included in the annual fall advertising campaign to correspond with National Library Card Sign-up Month.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee

Debbie Noel reported the Finance Committee met in-person at System HQ on June 5 and finalized the 2025 Funding Formula and we are presenting it here today along with the 2025 Funding Formula Instruction Sheet.

Mary Ellen Wells moved to accept the 2025 funding formula and instruction sheet. Helen Flynn seconded. The Board approved the motion.

Nominating Committee

Helen Flynn presented the Nominating Committee update on behalf of Jason Brudereck. The Nominating Committee met virtually on August 14. A prospective candidate is in the process of submitting his application to Stephanie Williams. Once she receives it, it will be forwarded to the Commissioners for their consideration as we work to fill Ginny Hand's term that expires on December 31. Jason's reappointment to the Advisory Board for a second term is on tomorrow's Commissioner Meeting Agenda for their approval.

Old Business:

Village Library of Morgantown - compliance update

Carol Donahue, Library Director at Village Library, has applied and been accepted into the Library Technical Assistant Program at Northampton Community College. She will be taking her courses in the Spring 2025 semester. She will be taking the following courses:

Introduction to Library Science LIBT101
 Computers in Libraries LIBT 209
 Library Management LIBT207
 Technical Services LIBT203
 Reference Resources and Services LIBT115

Carol has been working on her CEs and has three (3) in Mandated Reporter Training. She still has seven (7) left to acquire by December.

Womelsdorf Community Library - compliance update

Julian Marshall, President of the Womelsdorf Board of Trustees, reported that they have hired their third Library Director in three months. The new Director will begin her employment on Monday, August 26, 2024.

Robesonia Community Library - Compliance Update - vote to withhold \$500

Leslie Pirl-Roth, Vice President of the Robesonia Board of Trustees, reported that the Library Director, Madison Riehl, has been working toward certification. Unfortunately, she was involved in an accident where she suffered a concussion. The Board is requesting an extension on the timeline for her completion. The expectation is that she will complete her requirements in the Spring.

Robesonia has not met the timeline for compliance. Therefore, the Board addressed the requirement to withhold \$500 in funding. Stephanie Williams suggested the Robesonia Board receive a letter from Ms. Riehl's medical provider noting her ability to complete the coursework and requested the letter be provided to the Advisory Board since this is an unprecedented situation. Stephanie also noted clarification is needed from Ms. Riehl regarding when her coursework will be completed. The documentation Stephanie received noted December 2024, not Spring 2025.

Mary Ellen Wells made the motion to table any discussion to withhold funds pending documentation from Robesonia outlining a clear timeline for completion. Ginny Hand seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public comment Policy - Mary Ellen moved to accept the final draft of the Public Comment Policy. Debbie Noel seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business:

Two documents, The Berks County Public Library System Membership Policy and The Berks County Public Library System Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities, were presented for members of the BCPL Board to review for approval at the next meeting.

The Delivery Policy for Inclement Weather was addressed by the Board via email during the emergency hot weather that occurred over the summer and was presented this evening. - Mary Ellen wells moved to ratify, confirm, & approve the updates to the Delivery Policy for Inclement Weather. Ginny Hand seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

District Consultant Reports: *Becky Wanamaker, District Library Consultant provided the following report:*

- As mentioned earlier this year, some transitions have been happening with the district's Libby/Overdrive collection, and we are now moving forward with a shared collection concept that exists to supplement the collections of our libraries as a whole. All libraries are currently contributing towards the ordering of materials handled by the district consultants, and we are focused on keeping the holds list under control and cultivating a robust and widely-useful collection.

- One of the ways the system and district are currently partnering is on an upcoming training - 'Cultivating a Positive Library Culture'. We're excited to be working with a local HR specialist (Paragon Consulting) for a session on professional anti-workplace bullying, use and misuse of authority, and leading with emotional intelligence. This topic was suggested to us based on some concerns happening at one of our libraries, and relates so well to needs and developments happening all throughout our organizations. We're super excited to be able to offer this, and believe it will be beneficial for all of our libraries. It's coming up Tuesday September 17 at 10 am, and is open to all directors, managers, and board members.

Announcements:

Julian Marshall reported that Commissioner Michael Rivera stopped at the Womelsdorf Library and they had a good conversation about the need for continued support for Berks County libraries.

Adjournment: Mary Ellen Wells moved for adjournment. Ginny Hand seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Noel
Secretary, BCPL Board

***Upcoming Meeting Dates:
November 20, 2024 7:00 PM
System Headquarters: 1040 Berks Road, Leesport PA 19533***

**BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES
NOVEMBER 2024 BUDGET REPORT AS OF 10.25.2024**

COUNTY					
	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>	<u>UNREALIZED</u>	<u>SPENT</u>	
REVENUE					
COUNTY FUNDING	\$ 3,950,424.00	\$ 3,950,424.00	\$ -		
GIFTS AND MEMORIALS / FINES AND CHARGES	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
MUNICIPAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00			
TOTALS	\$ 3,950,724.00	\$ 3,950,724.00			
EXPENDITURES					
SERVICES TO MEMBER LIBRARIES					
CIRCULATION SERVICES	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 1,598.19	\$ 1,201.81		57%
CONTINUING EDUCATION	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 250.00		83%
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,642.16	\$ 857.84		75%
INTERLIBRARY LOAN	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -		100%
MATERIALS PROCESSING	\$ 21,800.00	\$ 20,383.34	\$ 1,416.66		94%
PROMOTION	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ -		100%
SPECIALIZED RESOURCES	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 833.00	\$ 167.00		83%
DIRECT PATRON SERVICES					
AUTOMATED NETWORK	\$ 67,727.04	\$ 67,727.04	\$ -		100%
COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ -		100%
GASOLINE	\$ 14,196.00	\$ 7,263.16	\$ 6,932.84		51%
IDS/OCLC	\$ 20,399.00	\$ 15,776.72	\$ 4,622.28		77%
SOFTWARE (Renewal)	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,007.86	\$ 592.14		63%
SOFTWARE MAINTENANCE	\$ 34,599.00	\$ 22,186.24	\$ 12,412.76		64%
TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 16,358.99	\$ 7,641.01		68%
VEHICLE GPS MONITORING	\$ 884.00	\$ 718.00	\$ 166.00		81%
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	\$ 4,150.00	\$ 4,150.00	\$ -		100%
VEHICLE SUPPLIES	\$ 150.00	\$ 55.70	\$ 94.30		37%
GENERAL EXPENSES					
ADVERTISING	\$ 300.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 50.00		83%
ASSOCIATION DUES	\$ 3,275.00	\$ 1,874.00	\$ 1,401.00		57%
CONFERENCE & TRAINING	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,178.34	\$ 1,821.66		54%
CONTRACTS (Pest Control, Copier Maint., Trash, Recycling Removal)	\$ 4,890.00	\$ 4,237.62	\$ 652.38		87%
INDIRECT COSTS / BUILDING USAGE	\$ 556,177.96	\$ 416,588.30	\$ 139,589.66		75%
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 4,600.00	\$ 4,253.25	\$ 346.75		92%
POSTAGE	\$ 573.00	\$ 447.81	\$ 125.19		78%
TELEPHONE	\$ 3,634.00	\$ 2,460.91	\$ 1,173.09		68%
TRAVEL	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,523.62	\$ 1,976.38		44%
UTILITIES	\$ 25,255.00	\$ 14,924.48	\$ 10,330.52		59%
FUNDING DISTRIBUTION					
COUNTY/CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	\$ 900,000.00	\$ 900,000.00	\$ -		100%
COUNTY LIBRARY AID	\$ 1,260,981.00	\$ 1,062,433.83	\$ 198,547.17		84%
WAGES / BENEFITS	\$ 970,483.00	\$ 734,362.44	\$ 236,120.56		76%
TOTALS	\$ 3,950,724.00	\$ 3,322,235.00	\$ 628,489.00		84%

COUNTY COORDINATION AID

	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>SPENT</u>
<u>REVENUE</u>				
COUNTY COORDINATION AID	\$ 346,415.00	\$ 346,415.00	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 346,415.00	\$ 346,415.00	\$ -	
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>				
BESTSELLERS RESERVE POOL	\$ 6,458.00	\$ 6,219.24	\$ 238.76	96%
BOOKPAGE	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,168.00	\$ 332.00	91%
EARLY LITERACY OUTREACH CRAFTS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
EARLY LITERACY OUTREACH SUPPLIES	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
EBOOK (OVERDRIVE)	\$ 3,459.00	\$ 2,406.04	\$ 1,052.96	70%
LIBRARY AWARE	\$ 14,200.00	\$ 13,800.00	\$ 400.00	97%
MARKETING & OUTREACH	\$ 20,205.00	\$ 17,556.13	\$ 2,648.87	87%
MOVIE LICENSING	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
SPARK	\$ 69,000.00	\$ 68,250.00	\$ 750.00	99%
SUMMER QUEST LIBRARIES DISTRIBUTION	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 22,977.28	\$ 2,022.72	92%
SUMMER QUEST MARKETING	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 4,800.00	\$ -	100%
DELIVERY VAN REPLACEMENT	\$ 63,356.00	\$ 63,356.00	\$ -	100%
WAGES / BENEFITS	\$ 70,359.00	\$ 54,985.53	\$ 15,373.47	78%
WEBSITE SUPPORT / SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$ 66,078.00	\$ 50,932.08	\$ 15,145.92	77%
TOTALS	\$ 346,415.00	\$ 308,450.30	\$ 37,964.70	89%

STATE AID

	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>	<u>UNREALIZED</u>	<u>SPENT</u>
<u>REVENUE</u>				
STATE AID	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ -	
TOTALS	\$ 1,411,451.00	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ -	
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>				
STATE AID DISTRIBUTION	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ -	100%
TOTALS	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ 1,411,452.00	\$ -	100%

SYSTEM HEADQUARTERS PERFORMANCE STATISTICS 2024

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Year to Date 2024	Year to Date 2023
Member Services:														
Co-op Number of Titles Ordered	56	2	7,085	2,780	2,252	2,074	2,845	3,065	2,588				22,747	20,681
Items Cataloged (Copy Cataloging)	2,228	142	574	3,278	3,947	3,226	3,691	3,393	3,796	4,554			28,829	35,789
Items Cataloged (Original Cataloging)	17	10	13	63	66	74	100	86	47	148			624	659
Library Sent Items	229	984	1,055	1,029	1,276	806	900	1,079	1,628	1,103			10,089	7,494
Library Sent- Discs Cleaned	45	41	40	60	26	29	89	55	26	43			454	421
Crates Delivered	3,222	2,802	2,885	3,225	3,126	2,908	3,381	3,185	3,033	3,288			31,055	32,836
Technology Remote/Call Support	71	60	59	55	78	53	67	62	70	68			643	
Technology Site Visits	11	13	17	18	20	19	20	20	23	15			176	
Publicity Requests - Pass through to Print Shop	8	5	2	7	4	12	10	17	11	8			84	64
Publicity Requests - Original Design	3	2	0	2	4	0	0	1	1	2			15	41
Community Engagement Specialist Programs - Held	3	3	6	3	3	1	1	1	3	3			27	15
Community Engagement Specialist Programs - Attendance	42	66	112	62	58	6	0	0	52	62			460	354
Outreach Services and Events:														
Circulation - Floating Collection	540	470	539	483	541	574	656	691	591	728			5,813	5,494
Community Events	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3			6	9
Community Event Attendance	0	92	0	125	0	0	0	233	0	1,158			1,608	842
Outreach Events	1	0	3	4	3	2	1	1	2	2			19	20
Outreach Event Attendance	21	0	22	402	53	21	12	8	3	222			764	1,231



ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

August 2024 – November 2024

Administrative and Support Services

The Commissioners' Town Hall Meeting series wrapped up this month. The Town Hall Meetings will resume on January 14, 2025 at 6:30PM at Bernville Area Community Library. The series will continue to be hosted at various library locations throughout 2025.

Stephanie Williams submitted the System's 2024-2025 Plan for State Aid in advance of the October 30, 2024 deadline. Williams provided New Director Orientation to Boone Area Library in September. Williams completed her annual 1:1 library visits with directors in October. Common discussion themes were advocacy, training needs, and board governance among others.

Millie Padilla-Santos processed the 2024 fourth quarter checks for distribution to member libraries in October. Padilla-Santos also worked with Williams to submit the department's final 2025 budget request to the County's Budget department. Looking ahead, Williams will provide New Director Orientations to the Exeter and Robesonia Libraries respectively. Williams will begin reviewing libraries' submissions of the 2024 Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities Checklist items next month. Williams will continue working with several HQ staff to prepare for resource sharing with Wyomissing Public Library, to be implemented in January 2025.

Bibliographic Services

The Bibliographic Services staff continued their work in managing the backlog after the migration to Evergreen. Madison Kochel joined a group of other Spark library staff as an independent contractor in assisting the consortium with upcoming projects related to training, cataloging and documentation as needed.

Gaines purchased twenty Whazoodle Speaker Sidekicks from Playaway to add to the Accessibility and Supportive Learning Collection. Designed to guide kids ages 3-12, these audio devices offer a learning approach that engages children through stories, activities, physical movement, interactive games, guided meditation, and immersive nature soundscapes. This holistic, screen-free experience fosters learning and development in a uniquely fun and engaging way. No Wi-Fi, no downloads, or extra pieces necessary.

Gaines also purchased thirty-two Wonderbook Read Along titles to add to both the Accessibility and Supportive Learning Collection and the Floating Collection. Designed for all ages, Wonderbooks are print books with a ready-to-play audiobook inside. Readers press play to read along with the book. Some titles also include large print text for readers with low vision.

Looking ahead, Gaines will work closely with Christine Reichart and the Spark team to complete end of year acquisitions tasks, as well as, prepare for the new budget year.

Outreach Services:

Christie Brown visited three member libraries in August and September to hold voter outreach events in cooperation with the Election Services department. Information about registering to vote, voting procedures, and mail-in ballots was provided, along with individual assistance with registering and requesting mail-in ballots.

Brown and Cheryl Williams attended the Connections Work Job Fair on October 7th, the Senior Expo on October 8th, the Berks County Fair's Fall Fest on October 12th & 13th, and the BeWise conference on October 24th. We are planning to attend the Agriculture & Natural Resources Career & Job Fair in November.

Prison Book Club has been on a temporary hiatus since August due to construction in the multi-purpose room where book club meets.

StoryWalks® for Berks Nature and the Reading Public Museum and a new Story Trail at Berks Heim were installed as planned. We have begun preparations for the next StoryWalks® with *A Snowy Day* for Berks Nature and *Senorita Mariposa* for the Reading Public Museum. We will be working with the Berks County Parks Department to create the next Berks Heim Story Trail.

C. Williams resumed visits to Head Start classrooms in September and will continue visiting through May 2025.

Community Relations

The Library Passport Challenge initiative will be winding down in the coming weeks, with winners of four prizes drawn from each category raffle. Since the end of August, Emily Orschak has worked to supply libraries with Challenge materials. Orschak supplied additional materials upon request and implemented advertising efforts to promote the initiative. As of October 15, 86 tickets have been received from a handful of libraries, along with six completed passports.

Orschak is also working with several System and library staff in the planning of the BCPL Awards and Staff Development Day events that will both occur in 2025. Looking forward, Orschak will assist in the promotional efforts of resource sharing implementation with Wyomissing Public Library.

Technology

Jeff Smilko and Roy Fulkersin continued to support the member libraries' technology needs by responding to all help desk calls, patching all patron PCs and servers and maintaining network infrastructure such as switches, routers and wireless access points.

The duo configured and deployed all new patron and staff PCs, laptops and monitors at Exeter and Muhlenberg libraries, making sure the new equipment works with all current systems such as PC Reservation, LPT1 printing, web filtering and scanning.

The duo completed deploying new 22" widescreen monitors at all libraries, switching out all Circulation desk and Directors' monitors. Fulkersin completed a system-wide project

replacing all older 4:3 aspect ratio monitors at the libraries with more modern 16:9 aspect ratio monitors. Smilko completed the system-wide project of replacing all the libraries' managed switches to Gigabit switches, increasing all libraries total bandwidth.



BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES SYSTEM MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Full Members

The benefits of full membership in Berks County Public Libraries (BCPL) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Share in state and county funding according to the distribution formula determined by the System Advisory Board
- Participation in the shared integrated library system and bibliographic services
- Professional consulting by System staff
- Delivery services as defined in current Delivery of Library Materials Plan
- Share in benefits of grants awarded to the System
- Eligibility for annual awards
- Assistance in development of promotional materials
- Access to continuing education programming
- Other benefits as the System Advisory Board may enact

To retain full membership in BCPL, libraries must:

- Meet or exceed applicable state standards
- Achieve *Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities*
- Participate in the Access PA database
- Participate in the Statewide Library Card program
- Adopt county-wide borrowing policies
- Maintain efforts to secure local funding
- Offer borrowing and return privileges to all County residents
- Abide by System/District interlibrary loan protocols
- Directors and Youth Services Staff (or representatives) attend at least 80% of scheduled Director's and Youth Services Meetings
- Participate in all four System-wide Initiatives provided in one calendar year
- Comply with such other requirements as state laws and System Board policies may establish

Rights and Responsibilities of Member Libraries

A member library shall:

- Retain control of and title to all property, endowments, gifts, and other locally raised funds and dedicate the use of these to public library service
- Make collections and services available on an equal basis to all residents served by the System
- Submit annual reports through the System as required by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries
- Support the System in securing necessary funds for System-wide services
- Maintain an agreement with municipal officials of the municipality or municipalities within the designated service area to provide residents with public library services
- Annually approach these same officials for financial support

- Meet state standards as they apply to the System and to the member library according to its service area

Affiliate Members

A new or existing public library may apply for affiliate membership in Berks County Public Libraries when it has:

- An ADA compliant site in which to serve the public and house the collection
- Equipment and furnishings (shelves, charging desk, etc) adequate for providing basic services as defined by the Pennsylvania Library Code
- Collection of recent, useful books and other materials
- Resolutions or statements of intent from the municipalities in the desired service area to provide annual financial support for the library in the amount of \$5 per capita
- Evidence of a membership/fund-raising drive that reaches every household in the desired service area

To make application for affiliate membership, the library organization must submit a written request for placement on the agenda of a regularly scheduled System Board meeting. This request should be made 30 days prior to the desired meeting date and include details concerning the elements listed above. In addition, the written request must include the library organization's statement of intent to meet the requirements for full membership within three years.

Affiliate members will receive the following benefits:

- Professional consulting by System staff
- Inclusion in the van delivery service route
- Access to continuing education programming
- Assistance in developing promotional materials

Affiliate members must:

- Achieve state standards within three years
- Comply with *Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities* within three years
- Conform to System service policies
- Maintain local funding

An affiliate member may apply for full membership status when it is eligible for state aid; this eligibility is defined in Section 303.2 of *The Library Code*.

Additions to Assigned Service Area of a Full Member Library

A library that is a full member of the System may request that a municipality be added to its legal service area under the following conditions:

- 1) the library meets all state standards that apply for the service area population that will result (i.e. director certification level, hours open, collection size);
- 2) the library provides evidence of a membership/fund-raising drive that reaches a majority of the residents in the municipality to be added;

- 3) the municipality issues a resolution or statement of intent to provide annual financial support for the library in an amount no less than the average annual support provided by the other municipalities in the library service area.

How "average annual support" will be determined: The most recently completed state report will be used to determine the amount of financial support from each of the municipalities in the library service area. The figures will be added together and divided by the number of contributing service area municipalities to arrive at the average.

The member library should notify the System Administrator of its plan to make a service area change request at least 30 days before the next scheduled BCPL Board meeting in order that the request may be forwarded to the System Board for review. A vote of the Advisory Board at a regularly scheduled meeting is required to approve the change.

Amended September 2010
Amended November 20, 2019
Amended XX/XX/XXXX



BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities For System Member Evaluation

1. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Boards of member libraries conduct the business of library governance in accordance with the following procedures:

- 1) Board meetings, with the library director in attendance, are held regularly with a quorum and not less than six times a year;
- 2) An annual notice of the board meeting schedule is published in the appropriate local newspaper no later than two (2) weeks before the first meeting of the year;
- 3) Approved library board meeting minutes must be posted on the library's website within two months of their approval and maintained throughout the calendar year that is being reviewed on the Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities Checklist. Approved library board meeting minutes for the year(s) prior to the calendar year being reviewed may either be posted on the library's website or made available to the public in an alternate manner determined at the library's discretion. If the library elects to make the prior years' approved board meeting minutes available through a means other than the website, the location and/or process for the public to obtain such minutes must be noted on the library's website. Approved library board meeting minutes must be posted on the library's website within two months of their approval;
- 4) All forms and reports, as required by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries or by the System are submitted by established deadlines and audits by September 15 annually;
- 5) The calendar year is the library's fiscal year;
- 6) Any changes in library hours, including holiday hours, other than summer changes, are to be reported to the System Administrator by December 1 and become effective the following January 1. Any other changes require a thirty (30) day written notice to the System Administrator, the District Consultant's Integrated Library System Administrator and the Office of Commonwealth Libraries;
- 7) The board operates according to written bylaws which are reviewed annually. Review of the bylaws must be noted in meeting minutes and copies of the bylaws with revised/reviewed dates must be updated on the library's website and when revised, submitted to the System;
- 8) The library may use its discretion to either post s-its approved budget on the library's website on an annual basis, with revisions posted as needed, or note the process the public should follow to request a copy of the approved library budget. ;
- 9) The library has a mission statement which is reviewed annually. Review of the mission statement must be noted in meeting minutes and copies of the

mission statement with revised/reviewed dates must be updated on the library's website and when revised, submitted to the System;

10) The library carries Directors and Officers insurance for Board members and secures necessary bonding for Board Treasurer and employees as appropriate;

11) 80% attendance at bi-monthly System/District joint Director's Meetings and District Youth Services meetings held at System Headquarters is required.

Compliance with all 11 elements listed above in addition to all other areas of the Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities is required. To confirm compliance as well as all other board actions called for in this document, a packet with materials must be ~~submitted~~ to the System Office by ~~December 31~~ established deadlines noted on the URR Checklist form, of each year along with the Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities compliance check list found on the System's Intranet site, called The HQ. This is updated yearly by the System Administrator.

2. POLICIES

The board and library director jointly plan and develop policies; a suggested list can be found in Appendix B. System-wide service and circulation policies conform to standardizations adopted by majority vote of the Library Directors and by signed agreements of participation in the Integrated Library System network. Internet policies are in keeping with the System-wide policy which ~~appears as Appendix E of these Responsibilities~~ can be found in Appendix E.

All policies and approved board meeting minutes are to be available to the public upon request and are posted on the Library's website within two months of their approval.

Each local Board determines the review cycle for each policy. ~~The~~ Policy Review Checklist can be found on the System's Intranet site, called The HQ. ~~The HQ intranet and copies are kept on file at the System Office.~~

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Board members plan and develop a personnel policy for employees not covered by contractual agreements or the personnel policies of municipal government. Personnel policies are to be reviewed annually, and revised as needed and in accordance with changes in state and federal employment regulations.

Samples and additional information about these policies are available from the System Office.

Achievement Compliance requires policy development and review in each of the areas indicated. Reviews should be noted in meeting minutes and copies of revisions and/or new policies, if any, ~~submitted~~ to the System Office when approved.

3. SYSTEM PARTICIPATION AND TRUSTEE EDUCATION

Library boards are represented by at least one trustee at all BCPL Advisory Board meetings. These trustee representatives compose the BCPL System Member Representatives referenced in the BCPL Bylaws. Each library annually designates one trustee and one alternate to serve as the representative to the System Member Representatives. A library director cannot serve as the library's representative at any Advisory Board meeting.

Member libraries must send no less than two (2) board members from each library to a state ~~or~~ System sponsored continuing education event annually. State sponsored continuing education events include those hosted virtually on the Office of Commonwealth Libraries sponsored sites, Webjunction or Niche Academy. These events must be at least one hour in length. Copies of completion certificates must be submitted to the System as proof of completion for this requirement.

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The BCPL System Administrator, in collaboration with the District Consultant, will annually conduct a New Trustee Orientation before the end of the first quarter. This orientation will review both System and District ~~s~~services as well as the funding formula and trustee responsibilities. All trustees are entitled and encouraged to attend as part of their annual continuing education requirement. All newly seated board members are expected to attend within their first year of serving as a board member.

4. PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The library has a strategic plan which includes goals and measurable objectives tailored to meet the needs of the community; the plan is reviewed and updated annually as part of a continuing process of evaluation.

~~Achievement Compliance~~ requires creation of a planning document which incorporates the elements listed. Materials and assistance in developing strategic plans ~~are~~is available from the System office. A written evaluation of progress toward library goals must be ~~submitted~~ent to the System Office by January 31 ~~following~~ of each review year. New plans must be submitted to the System Office once ~~local Boards formally adopt the Plan~~formally adopted by local Boards.

5. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The library actively promotes its services and programs through an ongoing public relations ~~plan~~program utilizing sources of print, broadcast and online media. This ~~program~~plan also includes the following:

- a) Presentations to organizations such as service clubs, municipal governments within the library's mandated service area, and other community groups;
- b) Posters, flyers, brochures, and bookmarks advertising library services;
- c) Posting events to the shared System website events calendar (for libraries hosted on the berkslibraries.org website);
- d) An annual report made available to the public on the library's website by March 30 of the year following (i.e. 20242 annual report published by March 20253);
- e) Libraries participate in all System-wide Initiatives coordinated by the System Office.

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Library Director attends a minimum of ten (10) hours of continuing education annually; the library board or municipal authority provides paid time off and reimbursement of expenses including mileage reimbursement for this training.

All Library Directors are trained by District and/or System personnel in the use of the Integrated Library System and by System staff for all other network services. This requirement shall also apply to any other staff that may be responsible for library operations in the absence of the library director. ~~Member libraries will comply with state requirements for staff continuing education.~~

All new Directors must complete a BCPL orientation within the first three months of employment. Other staff responsible for library operations in the absence of the Library Director must attend a BCPL orientation within the first six months of becoming the interim director.

Member libraries will comply with state requirements for staff continuing education. All library staff who work at least 20 hours per week in direct support of library service shall attend six hours of qualifying continuing education every two years.

7. COLLECTIONS

At least 3% of the library's materials are weeded annually.

As per PA State Code 9335 b (2) "annually spend not less than 12% of its operating budget on collections", and The System recommends a minimum of 10% of total materials expenditure for Juvenile items and 5% on Young Adult items for a balanced collection.

~~Achievement of this Guideline is determined by performance recorded on monthly statistical reports to the System and fiscal reports to the Office of~~

~~Commonwealth Libraries.~~ Weeding should be done in accordance with the criteria outlined in **CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries** (revised and edited by Jeanette Larson); this tool is available for download at <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew>.

8. PROGRAMMING

~~e) — The Library participates in a schedule of ongoing activities reflecting community interests and develops and maintains community partnerships of mutual benefit.~~ The Library participates in the annual Collaborative Summer Library Program (also known as Summer Quest) and complies with reporting requirements of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, ~~and the System Office.~~

b) The Library develops a calendar of ~~youth children~~, teen and adult programming that supports life-long learning and the PA Forward framework based on community need.

~~e) — The Library participates in a schedule of ongoing activities reflecting community interests and develops and maintains community partnerships of mutual benefit.~~

~~d) The Library participates in all System-wide Initiatives coordinated by the System Office.~~

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9. SERVICE AREAS

Service areas of each member library are defined by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries and accepted by the BCPL System and member libraries. Member libraries should follow the procedure outlined in the Library Membership Policy (Appendix F) if they are interested in adding an unclaimed service area in Berks County.

Libraries should make every effort to host programs or events or create financial partnerships with organizations and businesses within their defined service areas. A library that plans to host programs and events and create financial partnerships with organizations and businesses in Berks County at a location outside of its defined service area should consult the service area's library during the planning process. If the service area's library objects, the libraries should try to resolve disputes themselves before the event takes place.

If the libraries cannot agree on a resolution for a service area dispute, the service area library will notify the System Administrator in writing and copy the other library. The System Administrator and the Executive Committee of the BCPL Advisory Board will resolve the dispute within 10 business days from receipt of written notification. They will then notify both libraries in writing of the resolution.

10. LIBRARY FACILITIES

The member library, or the municipality owning the library's facility, must notify the System Administrator in writing of any proposed new construction or expansion projects that increase the library's usable floor space. This requirement does not apply to routine maintenance projects and renovation projects that do not increase the library's usable floor space.

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Effective January 2014
Revised November 2014
Revised August 19, 2020
Revised August 16, 2023
Revised XX, 2024

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

BCPL- Berks County Public Libraries

System Headquarters- Berks County Public Libraries administrative unit located at 1040 Berks Road, Leesport, PA 19533

ILS- Our Integrated Library System used at Member Libraries for daily library functions such as check-in, check-out, holds, etc.

~~ILS System Administrator- this District role oversees the integrated library system~~

System Administrator- this role is the department head of the County Library System, Berks County Public Libraries

Appendix B: Library Service Policies

Policies should address the following topics; other issues may be included as local boards determine to be appropriate.

The below policy types are based on recommended best practices for libraries and not an endorsement or requirement for BCPL System Membership.

1. Organization
 - a. Mission Statement/Vision Statement/ Core Values Statement
 - b. Board Governance
 - i. Bylaws
 - ii. Conflict of Interest
 - iii. Meetings of the Board/Right to Know officer, Policy/Minutes Repository
 - iv. Retention of Documents
 - v. Whistleblower policy
 - vi. Equal Employment Statement
 - vii. Board Job Description
 - viii. Library Director Evaluation Policy
 - ix. Volunteer Policy
 - c. Fiscal Authority and Responsibility
 - i. Annual Fee/Charges schedule
 - ii. Fraud prevention
 - iii. Purchasing and Petty cash
 - iv. Monetary Donations, Gifts and Cash Bequests
 - v. Limitations of Acceptance of Gifts
 - vi. Solicitation and Sales Policy
2. Public Service Policies
 - a. Library Patrons
 - i. Confidentiality of Patron Records*
 - ii. Parental Access to Children's Records
 - iii. Non Resident Borrowing Policy
 - iv. Internet Access Policy**
 - v. Unattended/Abandoned Children
 - vi. Patron Behavior Policies
 - vii. Programming Policy
 - viii. Use of Personal Equipment and Devices
 - ix. Patron Complaints/ Response to Complaints
 - x. Test Proctoring
 - b. Facilities
 - i. Hours of Operation
 - ii. Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather
 - iii. Safety and Security Policies
 - iv. Meeting Room Policies
 - v. Bulletin Board, Display and Exhibit policies
 - vi. Library Equipment and Use
 - c. Integrated library system Borrowing Policies***

- i. Registration
 - ~~1.~~ ~~Residency Requirements for Non-fee cards~~
 - ~~2.1.~~ Out of County residents
 - ~~3.2.~~ Cards for Minors
 - ~~4.3.~~ Expiration and Invalidation of Library Cards
 - a. Rescindment and Re-instatement of Borrowing privileges
 - ~~5.4.~~ ~~Teacher or Group Home Cards~~~~Extended Borrower and Outreach Borrower cards~~
 - ~~6.5.~~ Temporary/Internet Access only cards
 - ~~7.6.~~ Transfer of Cards- use of cards by family members
- ii. Circulation Policies
 - 1. Loan Periods/Maximum items (by item type, by patron type)
 - 2. Renewals
 - 3. Requests for Holds
 - 4. Interlibrary Loan
 - 5. Lost and Damaged materials
 - 6. Refunds
 - 7. Claimed returns
 - 8. Staff Override permissions
- d. Collection Management
 - i. Selection objectives and priorities
 - ii. Retention of Materials/ Weeding
 - iii. Censorship/Request for Reconsideration
 - iv. Donations

**Must conform to Section 428 of The Library Code*

***Must conform to the BCPL System Internet Policy in Appendix E*

**** Must conform to ILS policies as stated in- BCPL ~~B~~orrowing ~~P~~olicy*

Appendix C: Personnel Policies

A personnel policy should address the following:

Filling vacancies (recruitment, selection, appointment)

Personnel procedures

- Job descriptions

- Probation

- Performance evaluation

- Conduct on duty

- Grievance procedures

- Personnel records

- Resignation and dismissals

Salaries, position classification

Benefits

- Insurance

- Retirement

- Worker's compensation

Hours, schedules

Staff development

- In-service training

- Certification

- Professional affiliations

Vacation and leave

- Vacation

- Sick leave

- Holidays

- Personal leave

- Professional and educational leave

- Jury duty

- Maternity and paternity leave

Appendix D: Training for Network Services

Training in the use of technology and network services shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

ILS policies and procedures

Email overview

Training will be scheduled at a time mutually convenient to library personnel and System staff, in conjunction with District Library Center staff as needed. Newly hired library directors without prior ILS experience must complete training within 60 days of employment in a System library. Training on Acquisitions and Cooperative Purchasing will also be given at this time.

Appendix E: Internet Policy

POLICY ON INTERNET ACCESS FOR BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Purpose

The public libraries of Berks County are committed to the promotion of lifelong learning. As part of that commitment, the libraries will provide public access to the diverse and unique resources available via the internet and the World Wide Web.

Children and the Internet

The *Children's Internet Protection Act* (pub. L. 106.554) requires that a library receiving federal funds must "have in place a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any computers with Internet access...." In compliance with this provision of federal law, the public libraries have installed a filtering mechanism on all computers and library provided internet connections to protect young users from inappropriate material.

Parents are reminded that filtering is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not completely eliminate that possibility. Filters may also block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Parental supervision of young children searching the Internet is strongly advised.

Rights of Adults

Adults (those 17 and older) may request unfiltered access to the Internet for any purpose that does not violate the law or the libraries' policies. The filter on an individual library-owned computer will be disabled in response to such a request. Library staff may not disable the filter on patron-owned laptops or other wireless access devices.

Right to Privacy

All library users have the right to expect that their information-seeking activities in the library are private and confidential with the understanding that no records of internet use are being retained. While the Berks County Public Libraries and member libraries do not retain internet usage records or history and works to protect patron's privacy, they are not responsible for insuring the privacy of any information or data sent or received by patrons while using the libraries PC's, laptops, tablets, network, or Wi-Fi.

Conditions and Terms of Use

1. Information available via the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks; use of such information must not violate any copyright or trademark law.

2. Because the Internet allows access to ideas, information and commentary from sources around the world, the libraries cannot control its content. Therefore, individual users must accept responsibility for determining the validity and accuracy of information located on the Internet. The libraries are not responsible for any use made of information obtained from Internet resources.
3. The Internet and its available resources may contain material and ideas that are controversial and conflict with the personal beliefs of users. Parents or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the information selected and/or accessed by their children.
4. Viewing of certain materials in the public library may be considered improper in time, place or manner. Libraries reserve the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or involves user behavior that violates library policy.
5. Patrons may not use public library Internet connections for any commercial or for-profit purpose.
6. A cost-recovery fee for print-outs may be charged.
7. The County of Berks, Berks County Public Libraries, member libraries, member library board members, or any employees are not responsible for damages to patron owned equipment including but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell/smart phones, gaming devices, lot devices, etc. while using the libraries wireless internet connection. This includes but is not limited to, damage caused by configuration changes, viruses, spyware, malware, or other malicious code received via the libraries wireless connection.
8. Printing is not available through the library's wireless connection.

Limitations

Some libraries do not provide access to subscription services, e-mail, or chat lines; use of such web-based services as "Hotmail" may be permitted at the discretion of the local library.

User Responsibilities

1. Users will sign an Internet use agreement; agreements for those under 18 years of age will require parent or guardian signature.
2. Users must observe time limits and other procedural guidelines set by individual libraries for use of the Internet terminals.

3. Users are responsible for damage to equipment beyond what occurs with normal usage; hardware and software may not be abused, modified, or destroyed.

Staff Assistance

Library staff have received training in Internet searching and are capable of offering basic instruction in how to navigate. However, due to limited staffing and time constraints, patrons are encouraged to take the initiative and explore on their own.

Policy on Internet Access revised and approved by the Berks County Public Libraries Board of Trustees 11.20.2019

Appendix F: Library Membership Policy

BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES SYSTEM MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Full Members

The benefits of full membership in Berks County Public Libraries (BCPL) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Share in state and county funding according to the distribution formula determined by the System Board
- Participation in the shared integrated library system and bibliographic services
- Professional consulting by System staff
- Delivery services as defined in current Delivery Policy
- Share in benefits of grants awarded to the System
- Eligibility for annual awards
- Assistance in development of promotional materials
- Access to continuing education programming
- Other benefits as the System Board may enact

To retain full membership in BCPL, libraries must:

- Meet or exceed applicable state standards
- Achieve *Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities*
- Participate in the Access PA database
- Participate in the Statewide Card program
- Adopt county-wide borrowing policies
- Maintain efforts to secure local funding
- Offer borrowing and return privileges to all County residents
- Abide by System/District interlibrary loan protocols
- Directors and Youth Services Staff (or representatives) attend at least ~~80~~75% of scheduled Director's and Youth Services Meetings
- Participate in ~~all System-wide Initiatives in a calendar year minimum of four System-wide activities a year (initiatives, partnerships, etc.)~~
- Comply with such other requirements as state laws and System Board policies may establish

Rights and Responsibilities of Member Libraries

A member library shall:

- Retain control of and title to all property, endowments, gifts, and other locally raised funds and dedicate the use of these to public library service
- Make collections and services available on an equal basis to all residents served by the System
- Submit annual reports through the System as required by Commonwealth Libraries
- Support the System in securing necessary funds for System-wide services

- Maintain an agreement with municipal officials of the municipality or municipalities within the designated service area to provide residents with public library services
- Annually approach these same officials for financial support
- Meet state standards as they apply to the System and to the member library according to its service area

Affiliate Members

A new or existing public library may apply for affiliate membership in Berks County Public Libraries when it has:

- An ADA compliant site in which to serve the public and house the collection
- Equipment and furnishings (shelves, charging desk, etc) adequate for providing basic services as defined by the Pennsylvania Library Code
- Collection of recent, useful books and other materials
- Resolutions or statements of intent from the municipalities in the desired service area to provide annual financial support for the library in the amount of \$5 per capita
- Evidence of a membership/fund-raising drive that reaches every household in the desired service area

To make application for affiliate membership, the library organization must submit a written request for placement on the agenda of a regularly scheduled System Board meeting. This request should be made 30 days prior to the desired meeting date and include details concerning the elements listed above. In addition, the written request must include the library organization's statement of intent to meet the requirements for full membership within three years.

Affiliate members will receive the following benefits:

- Professional consulting by System staff
- Inclusion in the van delivery service route
- Access to continuing education programming
- Assistance in developing promotional materials

Affiliate members must:

- Achieve state standards within three years
- Comply with *Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities* within three years
- Conform to System service policies
- Maintain local funding

An affiliate member may apply for full membership status when it is eligible for state aid; this eligibility is defined in Section 303.2 of *The Library Code*.

Additions to Assigned Service Area of a Full Member Library

A library that is a full member of the System may request that a municipality be added to its legal service area under the following conditions:

- 1) the library meets all state standards that apply for the service area population that will result (i.e. director certification level, hours open, collection size);
- 2) the library provides evidence of a membership/fund-raising drive that reaches a majority of the residents in the municipality to be added;
- 3) the municipality issues a resolution or statement of intent to provide annual financial support for the library in an amount no less than the average annual support provided by the other municipalities in the library service area.

How "average annual support" will be determined: The most recently completed state report will be used to determine the amount of financial support from each of the municipalities in the library service area. The figures will be added together and divided by the number of contributing service area municipalities to arrive at the average.

The member library should notify the System Administrator of its plan to make a service area change request at least 30 days before the next scheduled BCPL Board meeting in order that the request may be forwarded to the System Board for review. A vote of the Advisory Board at a regularly scheduled meeting is required to approve the change.

Amended September 2010
Amended November 20, 2019
Revised XX/XX/XXXX



Berks County Public Library System

Borrowing Policies

Library Card Registration

The Berks County Public Library System (BCPL) provides services to all residents of the County of Berks without discrimination in fulfillment of its mission to develop services, resources and collections to meet the cultural, informational, educational and recreational needs of its diverse community.

All library transaction records are confidential under Article IV. Section 428 of the Public Library Code (24 PA C.S.).

BCPL member libraries issue library cards to establish a patron account, facilitate loan of materials and use of online resources, and to enable the member libraries to keep a record of which materials are on loan to patrons. Individuals who live, own property, work, or attend school in Berks County are eligible for a free library card. This card is also referred to as an Adult/Juvenile/YA 3 year or Academic/Employment library card.

Library cards are valid for use at all BCPL member libraries and Reading Area Community College.

To borrow materials from a BCPL member library, a person must register for a library card. Applicants must present proper proof of residency and identity, and complete and sign a library card application. By virtue of registering for a card, the applicant agrees to accept responsibility for all fines, fees, or charges incurred through library transactions. Applicants are able to obtain a registration form online; but must present proof of residency and identity before receiving a physical library card.

Anyone under the age of 18 may receive a library card after completion of an application by a parent or legal guardian presenting proper proof of residency and/or identity. At their discretion, member libraries may allow those under the age of 18 to assume responsibility and register for their own card. By virtue of registering, the person agrees to be financially responsible for all fines and other charges incurred. At the discretion of the Library Director and under certain circumstances, another adult may register as the responsible adult on behalf of a minor child. By virtue of completing registration for a minor the adult agrees to be financially responsible for the use of the card and all fines and other charges incurred pursuant to the Borrowing Policies. The adult applying for a juvenile card on behalf of a child must be in good standing (no fines/fees over \$10). A juvenile card will be linked to the library card account of the signing adult. Member libraries may require adults registering on behalf of a minor child to apply for a library card if an account is not already opened.

Upon turning 18, a minor who has a library card will need to apply for a new card or update their current card and thereby assume financial responsibility for the new account.

BCPL member libraries and staff do not act *in loco parentis*.

BCPL member libraries are participants in the ACCESS PA Statewide Library card program and adhere to its rules and regulations for free reciprocal library cards. Pennsylvania residents who hold a valid library card from an out-of-county library or a State library card are eligible for a BCPL library card without fee. This card is also referred to as an Adult/Juvenile/YA 1 year library card. Such non-residents of Berks County are required to register and provide proof of identity.

Non-residents of Pennsylvania may be issued a borrower card upon providing proof of identity in the same manner as county residents in addition to proof of local academic/employment status. This card can be used only in BCPL member libraries. These cardholders receive an Adult/Juvenile/YA 1 year library card.

Library Card Information

Identity and Residency Requirements

The applicant must provide full legal name, address and date of birth.

Applicants are encouraged to provide valid photo identification that verifies name and current address. At their discretion, member libraries may accept other documentation to verify current address.

Adult 1 year and Juvenile/YA 1 year

This card type is issued to any patron who lives outside of Berks County and allows the cardholder to borrow physical materials at any BCPL location. This card does not include access to any digital/downloadable media type nor provide the ability to utilize out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL) to request materials from libraries outside of the Berks County Public Libraries System with the exception for those who work or attend school within Berks County. This card does not give access to the ACCESS PA Statewide Library Card program.

Adult 3 year and Juvenile/YA 3 year

This card type is given to individuals who live in Berks County. Cardholders can access and borrow physical materials including but not limited to books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, museum passes, etc. In addition, patrons can access countywide digital/downloadable services and any specialty resources provided by the registering library. Cardholders may request out-of-System Interlibrary Loan (ILL) materials available from libraries outside of the Berks County Public Libraries System. Adult/Juvenile/YA 1 year library cardholders will be granted full-service access upon confirmation of their Academic/Employment status within Berks County.

Institutional and Homeschooling Requirements

Institutions may receive an Extended borrower card, providing the Director or other authorized person of the agency signs the application and commits to the financial responsibility of all fees and charges incurred pursuant to the Borrowing Policies.

Homeschooling educators may apply for an Outreach borrower card upon presentation of an affidavit as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and issued by the local school district. The affidavit covers the school year, and the borrower card registration must be renewed annually. An outreach card enables the cardholder to borrow up to 150 items at one time and place 50 hold requests.

Because Pennsylvania Law does not require homeschooling educators working with children younger than 8 to have an affidavit, those educators working exclusively with students under 8, may receive an Outreach card at the discretion of the Library Director.

Internet Only

Internet only cards enable users to access digital materials only. In order to obtain an internet only card, users are encouraged to provide proof they live, work or attend school in Berks County.

Limited 6 months

Member libraries may issue limited 6 month library cards with specific restrictions or limitations to new library patrons; no more than 5 holds and 5 items checked out a time. These cards lose their good standing after \$5.00 in fines or fees are accrued.

Cardholder Responsibilities

Cardholders should present a valid library card in order to check out materials and to use library computer resources. If a library card is not available, the cardholder must provide an ID and proof of address that exactly matches the address on the account. Library cards are not transferable and may only be used by the person to whom it is issued or with the following exception stated in the next paragraph.

Adult cardholders can designate others to pick up holds, check out items, or place holds for them by completing the "Allow others to use my account" section of their registration. This authorization is specifically noted in the cardholder's account. Designated persons may be asked to provide photo identification to verify they are authorized to use the cardholder's account.

A cardholder is responsible for all materials checked out on their library card and on the cards of minor children for whom they have assumed responsibility on a library card application.

Cardholders are responsible for all charges on their account including payments for any lost or damaged items borrowed on their card.

Cardholders are responsible to report address, telephone and/or email changes.

Lost or stolen library cards must be reported immediately so that the card can be invalidated. The owner of the card is responsible for all items checked out on the card until the card is reported lost or stolen.

Suspension of Cardholder Privileges

A cardholder's account is considered delinquent when items are overdue or money is owed. This status may affect the cardholder's ability to borrow materials, place holds or use electronic/digital resources.

Privileges will be suspended when:

- There are accumulated charges of more than \$10.00.
- The count of overdue items on the cardholder's account exceed 10.
- The count of items checked out on the cardholder's account exceed 50.
- There are fines and fees from a previous calendar year. A library may require accounts to be paid in full by the end of each calendar year before items may be borrowed in a new calendar year.

Expiration of Library Cards

All library cards must be renewed every three years. If there has been no activity on the account, and there are no outstanding charges or unreturned materials, the account is

considered inactive after three years and deleted after seven years.

Material Loan Periods

Loan periods

- 21 days - audio materials, books, DVD series, and magazines.
- 7 days – DVDs and Museum and other Admission Passes.

Non-standard item loan periods, including loans from the Library of Things collection, are set by owning libraries.

Hold Limits

Most cardholders can request 20 items of any type. These hold limits cannot be overridden.

Renewals

Most materials, unless on reserve for another patron, will be automatically renewed for up to two additional loan periods. An additional subsequent renewal may be available; please consult your library for more information. Renewals for longer loan periods are granted on an exception basis.

Nonrenewable items may include Museum and other Admission Passes, HotSpots, electronic devices, and out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL). For more information, contact your local library.

Items may be renewed at the library, online through the library website, or by phone. The cardholder's barcode number is required for telephone renewals.

Maximum number of items

The maximum number of physical items that can be borrowed is determined by each library card type. Some limits do vary by library. Please consult your library's local service policies to learn the limits on the number of items that can be borrowed.

- Adult 3 year and Juvenile/YA 3 year - 50 items
- Adult 1 year and Juvenile/YA 1 year - 50 items, no access to digital materials unless the Academic/Employment status is confirmed
- Extended – 200 items
- Outreach - 150 items
- Limited 6 months - 5 items
- Internet only - 0 items, access to digital materials only

Placing a Hold (or Request/Reserve)

If an item is not available at the time and place that it is sought, cardholders can place a hold (request/reserve) on the item at any member library, by phone, or online. Cardholders will be notified when the item is available.

Items placed on hold (requested/reserved) may be picked up at the BCPL library that was specified at the time the hold was placed. Member libraries may restrict or limit pick-up options for certain items. Held items must be picked up within 7 days of notification. Hold periods for special materials may vary by library.

Fines

Cardholders are responsible for returning library materials on time. There are no overdue fines on standard library materials such as Books, Audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, or Magazines. Member libraries may charge fines on special materials, out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL), and Library of Things.

Fines are calculated based on the open dates of each individual library and vary by material type. The current fine table, as amended from time to time is posted at the Circulation Desk and online.

- Museum and other Admission Passes - \$1.00/day Overdue Fine
- Special Materials (such as hotspots, tablets, etc. that only a few libraries carry), out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL), and Library of Things. Overdue Fines are determined by the library that circulates the items.

Overdue Notices

Cardholders are notified when items checked out become delinquent. A billing invoice is sent if, after 2 overdue notices, the items have not been returned. Patrons receive overdue notices from the library using the notification preference listed in their library card account.

- 5 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent an overdue notice.
- 15 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent a second overdue notice.
- 30 days after an item has become due, patrons are sent a billing notice.

Section 6708 of Title 18, Pennsylvania Code makes it a summary offense to retain library property after being notified to return it.

Fees may be charged for

- Lost/damaged museum pass and all other lost/damaged items: Replacement value of the item.
- Special materials, including but not limited to Library of Things, related to the maintenance, cleaning or upkeep of the item.

Damaged items

Damaged materials will be immediately discarded if moldy, infested, or in a condition that will jeopardize library staff or other materials. After paying any related fees for a damaged item, a patron may request to keep the item. Please consult your library's local disposal policy for more information.

Returns and Book Drop Policy

Most items belonging to any Berks County public library may be returned at any Berks County public library. Book drops are available at each library for the return of materials when the library is closed. Exceptions may include museum passes, e-book readers, hotspots, Library of Things, and out-of-System Interlibrary Loans (ILL). These items must be returned inside the lending library at the circulation desk.

Please note: RACC's Yocum Library has their own Circulation Policy. Please check www.RACC.edu for the policy.

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Revised 1/27/2015

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Revised 11/20/2019

Revised 11/17/2021

Revised 2/15/2023

Revised 2/21/2024

Revised 5/15/2024

Revised XX/XX/2024

POLICY ON INTERNET ACCESS FOR BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Purpose

The public libraries of Berks County are committed to the promotion of lifelong learning. As part of that commitment, the libraries will provide public access to the diverse and unique resources available via the internet and the World Wide Web.

Children and the Internet

The *Children's Internet Protection Act (pub. L. 106.554)* requires that a library receiving federal funds must "have in place a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any computers with Internet access...." In compliance with this provision of federal law, the public libraries have installed a filtering mechanism on all computers and library provided internet connections to protect young users from inappropriate material.

Parents are reminded that filtering is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not completely eliminate that possibility. Filters may also block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Parental supervision of young children searching the Internet is strongly advised.

Rights of Adults

Adults (those 17 and older) may request unfiltered access to the Internet for any purpose that does not violate the law or the libraries' policies. The filter on an individual library-owned computer will be disabled in response to such a request. Library staff may not disable the filter on patron-owned laptops or other wireless access devices.

Right to Privacy

All library users have the right to expect that their information-seeking activities in the library are private and confidential with the understanding that no records of internet use are being retained. While the Berks County Public Libraries and member libraries do not retain internet usage records or history and works to protect patron's privacy, they are not responsible for insuring the privacy of any information or data sent or received by patrons while using the libraries PC's, laptops, tablets, network, or Wi-Fi.

Conditions and Terms of Use

1. Information available via the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks; use of such information must not violate any copyright or trademark law.

2. Because the Internet allows access to ideas, information and commentary from sources around the world, the libraries cannot control its content. Therefore, individual users must accept responsibility for determining the validity and accuracy of information located on the Internet. The libraries are not responsible for any use made of information obtained from Internet resources.
3. The Internet and its available resources may contain material and ideas that are controversial and conflict with the personal beliefs of users. Parents or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the information selected and/or accessed by their children.
4. Viewing of certain materials in the public library may be considered improper in time, place or manner. Libraries reserve the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or involves user behavior that violates library policy.
5. Patrons may not use public library Internet connections for any commercial or for-profit purpose.
6. A cost-recovery fee for print-outs may be charged.
7. The County of Berks, Berks County Public Libraries, member libraries, member library board members, or any employees are not responsible for damages to patron owned equipment including but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell/smart phones, gaming devices, Library of Things devices, etc. while using the libraries wireless internet connections. This includes but is not limited to, damage caused by configuration changes, viruses, spyware, malware, or other malicious code received via the libraries wireless connections.
8. Printing is ~~not~~ available through the libraries' wireless connections based on fees set by each member library.

Limitations

Some libraries do not provide access to subscription services, e-mail, or chat lines; use of such web-based services as "Hotmail" may be permitted at the discretion of the local library.

User Responsibilities

- ~~1. Users will sign an Internet use agreement; agreements for those under 18 years of age will require parent or guardian signature. Users will digitally accept the Internet Access Policy before gaining access to any public library Internet connection.~~

Approved by the ~~Board of~~ Berks County Public Libraries Advisory Board 2/18/2009
 Revised 11/20/19
 Revised XX/XX/XXXX

2.1. _____ Users must observe time limits and other procedural guidelines set by individual libraries for use of the Internet terminals and wireless networks.

3.2. _____ Users are responsible for damage to equipment beyond what occurs with normal usage; hardware and software may not be abused, modified, or destroyed.

Staff Assistance

Library staff have received training in Internet searching and are capable of offering basic instruction in how to navigate. However, due to limited staffing and time constraints, patrons are encouraged to take the initiative and explore on their own.



2025 BCPL System Advisory Board Meetings:

Meetings will be held at 7:00 PM virtually on Teams **and** at the Berks County Public Libraries System Headquarters at 1040 Berks Road, Leesport, PA 19533:

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

2025 BCPL System Advisory Board Finance Committee Meetings:

Meetings will be held at the Berks County Public Libraries System Headquarters at 1040 Berks Road, Leesport, PA 19533:

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 12PM in-person only

Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at 12PM in-person only

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at 12PM in-person only