



Circulation Policy

I. Library Cards: Eligibility & Registration

A Lincoln County Public Library card must be presented at any Library in the County to check out materials or use the Internet.

Eligibility may be established with the following:

- a valid (current) Driver's License or DMV identification, other official photo identification with pre-printed name and address
OR
- if the current address is not shown on any of the above, then two official (government, utility, billing company, or rental lease) current pieces of dated mail with resident's name, address can be used along with the Driver's License or DMV identification, other official photo identification with pre-printed name and address

A. Patron Types

Library cards will be issued according to the following patron types:

1. Youth

Children age 5 through 17 will be issued a Youth card. To establish eligibility to obtain a library card, the child's parent or legal guardian must furnish above proof of identification and address. The adult who takes responsibility for the child is responsible for all items checked out, fees, etc. The responsible party must have a library card before a card will be issued to the child. The child must be present in order to be eligible to receive a library card.

If the child (16 or older) has the required proof of identification and address to establish eligibility themselves then a responsible party is not required. The card holder will be responsible for all items checked out, fees, etc.

2. Adult

Persons age 18 and older will be issued an adult card with the required proof of identification and address.

If an adult is not able to provide correct proof of identification and address then a parent or legal guardian may provide that information and sign as the responsible party. Those accounts will be linked together.

B. Residency

1. Lincoln County Residents

- a. All county residents age 5 or older are eligible for free library cards. A valid NC driver's license or NC ID with correct address is required. Out-of-county residents who own property and pay taxes in Lincoln County will also need to present a business license or tax statement that shows their Lincoln County address.

- b. Acceptable forms of current address include:**
 - Driver's license or state issued ID with current address
 - Addressed check-book, local check cashing card if it has current address
 - Rental agreement
 - Addressed bills or correspondence received by the applicant through the US Mail
 - Voter registration card

2. Non-Residents

a. Free Registration. Students in Lincoln County Schools, students and teachers at Gaston College, people employed in Lincoln County and residents of counties which have a reciprocal lending agreement with Lincoln County are eligible for free library cards. A valid NC driver's license or NC ID with correct address is required. Proof of employment or a student ID will be required as applicable.

b. Annual Fee. Residents of North Carolina are eligible for a library card for an annual fee of \$15.00. A valid NC driver's license or NC ID with correct address is required.

3. Other Residents

a. Shelter Residents. Those living in a shelter must present proof from the shelter stating that they are a resident there. Only one item may be checked out at one time on a Restricted Checkout Card.

b. Group Homes for Adults/Limited Check out Card. Those living in group homes for adults who are unable to present proof of identification and address may be issued a Limited Checkout Card for limited checkout when they present proof from the group home stating that they are a resident there. Only ten items may be checked out at a time with this type card.

C. Other Card Types

1. Outreach Card

Outreach Cards are issued to homebound patrons who are served by designated Library staff and are used only by those staff.

2. Online Access Card

Online Access cards will be issued to patrons who wish to use the library's electronic resources only. Online Access cards cannot be used to checkout library materials.

D. Card Renewal

All cards are updated for information on an annual basis. Patrons are responsible for updating name changes, address changes, etc. as they occur; proof of address will be required to renew a card if mail to the existing address has been undeliverable. A youth card may be updated by the responsible party without the child being present.

All linked cards will be updated at the same time except for non-resident fee cards.

E. Replacement Cards

The charge for replacing a damaged, lost or stolen card is \$3.00. Cardholders are responsible for all materials charged to their cards up to the time when they report their card missing. When requesting a replacement card the card holder must provide proof of identification and address as stated in section *I. Library Cards: Eligibility & Registration*.

F. Right to Refuse Card Applications

The Library reserves the right to refuse to issue library cards if other members of the household have been denied borrowing privileges.

II. Loan Periods and Limits

The following loan periods and limits have been established to provide library users with an adequate amount of time to both use library materials and return them so that they are available in a reasonable amount of time for other users.

A. Loan Periods

Most circulating items are checked out for 21 days with the following exceptions:

- DVDs – 7 days, 1 renewal
- High Demand and Bestsellers– 7 days, 1 renewal

B. Limits

A maximum of 30 items may be checked out to a card at any time. Note that only 10 items may be checked out to a Limited Checkout Card, 5 items to a Temporary Resident Card, and 1 item to a Restricted Card. The following limits also apply:

- DVDs – limit of 6.
- Books on CD – limit of 30.
- Music CDs – limit of 6.

C. Renewals

Items may be renewed the following ways:

- online – with library card number and PIN
- in person
- by phone

D. Non-Circulating Items

For preservation and access purposes, certain items may not be checked out:

- Magazine and newspaper titles
- Reference books
- Materials housed in the Lincoln County Room

E. Return of Items

Items may be returned to any Library in the Lincoln County system regardless of where they were checked out. They may either be brought into the Library during business hours or placed in the outside drops 24 hours a day. Fines for overdue items should NOT be put in the drops.

Patrons are responsible for materials until they are checked in. Patrons who return items in the outside drops before entering the Library may have to wait until the drop is emptied to checkout if they have reached the limit for certain material types.

III. Fines and Fees

A. Overdue Materials

Overdue fines are assessed for items returned past their due date. Fine rates are as follows:

- DVDs (3 days overdue)— \$2.00
- High Demand Items – (10 days overdue) \$2.00
- Other Library Materials – (10 days overdue) \$1.00
- Interlibrary Loan materials - \$1.00/day
- Items Overdue for 28 days or longer – replacement cost of item, \$5 processing fee and applicable overdue fines. (Patrons are responsible for processing and overdue fees on these items even if they are returned)

B. Long Overdue Materials

- Materials that are 28 days overdue are automatically declared lost.
- Patrons will be billed for the replacement cost of the item, a \$5.00 processing fee and any applicable overdue fines.
- If a lost item is returned after the patron's account has been billed, the replacement cost for the item will be waived (provided it is in good condition) but the patron will be responsible for paying the processing fee and fines.

C. Verbal Reminders

Patrons will be verbally reminded about any outstanding fines or fees on their account each visit.

D. Overdue notices

Courtesy reminders are sent to patrons who have requested email or automated phone notifications (if a valid email address or phone number has been provided) 3 days before an item is due. Overdue notices are delivered primarily by email or automated telephone 14 days after an item is due. Overdue notices are sent as a courtesy and failure to receive a notice will not be considered grounds for waiving a fine, as library users are responsible for keeping track of the due date of their library material. After 28 days all overdue items will be declared lost and the patron will be billed for each item.

E. The Safekeeping of Materials

Patrons are responsible for the safekeeping of materials checked out on their library card.

1. Lost Materials

Patrons who lose materials will be charged the list price of the book plus a \$5 processing fee.

2. Replacement Copies.

The library does not accept replacement copies in lieu of paying for lost or damaged materials.

3. Damaged Materials

When materials are damaged, there will be a charge for the repair of the item or the cost of replacement plus a processing fee if the item cannot be repaired.

F. Natural Disaster or Unforeseen Circumstance

If materials are damaged or lost due to a natural disaster or some unforeseen event (fire, flood, storm, death, etc.), a written request for amnesty may be approved by the Library Director with proof of disaster or death.

G. Forms of Payment

The Library will accept the following forms of payment

- Cash.
- Personal check made out to the "Lincoln County" for the exact amount of the fines.
- Credit cards are accepted at the self-checkout terminals. A minimum charge of \$5 is required.

H. Refunds

Patrons returning lost items are eligible for a refund if the item is **returned within six months of its due date**. The refund will equal the replacement price they paid for the item minus the \$5 processing fee and any overdue fines. Refunds will be issued by the County Finance department.

I. Return Check Fee

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for returned checks.

- J. All money collected by the library is regularly deposited into county accounts through the finance department. Designated revenue generated through gifts, grants, and other resources is appropriated for expenditure at the request of the library.

IV. Special Services

A. Holds

Any circulating item may be placed on hold at the request of a patron. When it is available, the patron will be notified and be given 10 calendar days to pick up the item (ILL items will be held for 7 days). Library notifications are delivered through email or automated telephone system. If the patron does not pick up the item within 3 days the hold will be cancelled. Holds are limited to 5 per card at any one time (Note: Limited Checkout and Restricted Checkout cards are limited to 1 hold at any one time; Temporary Resident cards are limited to 1 hold at any one time).

Items may be placed on hold the following ways:

- online – with library card number and PIN
- in person at the circulation desk
- by phone

Holds may be placed on cards with a blocked status, but the account must be cleared before the patron can check the item out.

B. Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Lincoln County Public Library borrows materials for its patrons from other libraries in North Carolina, the Southeast or wherever materials are available.

- Interlibrary loan service is available to Lincoln County Public Library patrons with a valid library card. **(ILL requests will be denied if a patron's account has an expired registration, overdue library materials, or accrual of unpaid fines and fees. The Library reserves the right to limit or deny ILL service when circumstances regarding user status warrant such restrictions)**
- New library card holders must wait 3 months before placing any ILL requests.
- Most libraries will not loan recently published (last 12 months), high demand or rare items.
- A \$5 fee will be charged for each ILL request and must be paid before the request is placed.
- Materials that are in the Lincoln County Public Library collection will not be borrowed from other libraries unless the material is deemed lost.
- Interlibrary loan requests are generally filled in 10-14 days, but occasionally can take longer.
- A maximum of two items may be requested and/or borrowed at any given time.
- Materials will be allowed 14 days check out from the date received.
- The due date is set by the lending library.
- Requests for interlibrary loan renewals must be made **3 business days** before it is due. Requests for renewal must be made directly to the Technical Services Department. Renewals are granted by the lending institution and cannot be made automatically.
- There is a charge of **\$1 per day for each item overdue**.
- The patron is responsible for paying any and all service charges assessed by the lending library, i.e. copy, FAX, or postage fees, overdue fines, replacement costs for lost or damaged items, etc.

C. Personal Identification Number (PIN)

A PIN will be assigned to patrons upon request. The PIN will allow the patron to access their account online to renew items, place holds and view other account information. The PIN may be up to 8 alpha or numeric characters. Patrons may request a PIN in the following ways:

- in person at the circulation desk – with library card
- by phone – with library card number

V. Denial of Borrowing Privileges

- To ensure that no one library user accrues an excessively high fine, library users will have their borrowing privileges denied when they have one item that is overdue by 28 days or when their fines exceed \$10.00. Borrowing privileges may be denied if linked accounts have items overdue by 28 days or when their fines exceed \$10.00. If attempts to contact a patron fail, their account may be blocked; when this is the case, the library user must present current acceptable identification before being permitted to check out any more materials
- The Library reserves the right to prohibit the use of a library card if any card linked to that card has excessive fines exceeding the maximum amount of \$10.00 and/or overdue items (more than 28 days old) checked out on the library card.

VI. Responsibility

Library users are responsible for all materials checked out on their card or on the cards of children for whom they have assumed responsibility. If library users allow others to check-out materials on their card, those materials are still the responsibility of the card owner. Lost cards should be reported immediately; library users are responsible for all materials checked out on their card up to the time that they report the card as lost.

VII. Confidentiality of User Records

The Library shall not disclose any Library record that identifies a person having requested or obtained specific materials, information, or services, or as otherwise having used the Library, except as provided under these circumstances:

- When required by the Library for Library operation
- With written consent of the user; and/or
- Pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or where otherwise required by law. All subpoenas, court orders, etc. should be directed to the Library Director.