

**Caroline County Library**  
**CIRCULATION POLICY**

**Policy Statement**

The Caroline County Library welcomes the use of the library by individuals of all ages to support their personal, educational, and professional needs. The purpose of the library's circulation policy is to make the best possible use of the library's collection by the greatest number of borrowers. Individuals who are issued a library card agree to abide by these regulations.

**Policy Regulations**

*Library Cards*

- Eligibility
  - Caroline County Library cards are available at no charge to:
    - Residents of Caroline County
    - Non-residents who own property within Caroline County
    - Non-residents who are employed in Caroline County
    - Non-residents who have library cards from either the Pamunkey Regional Library or Central Rappahannock Regional Library.
  - Other non-residents must pay an annual fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) in order to obtain a library card.
  - Temporary residents, such as visitors or houseguests, will not be issued a library card.
- Registration
  - Individuals wishing to register for a library card may do so at any Caroline County Library location.
  - Verification of identity and residence is required to obtain a library card.
  - Applicants must complete a registration form and present proof of identity and current address. A photo ID with current address is preferred.
    - Identity can be verified by presenting a:
      - Current driver's license
      - Any current picture ID issued by a governmental agency
      - School ID
      - Military ID
    - Residence can be established through:
      - A piece of mail received at the current street address with a recent postmark
      - A lease agreement
      - Current vehicle registration.
    - Non-residents must also present proof of their connection to Caroline County, such as
      - A current paid tax statement
      - A pay stub, business ID, or other proof of employment

- A library card issued by Pamunkey Regional Library or Central Rappahannock Regional Library.
  - For children under 18
    - Applications must be completed and signed by the parent, guardian or other eligible adult as the responsible party.
    - By signing, the responsible party is agreeing to assume responsibility for proper use of the library card, as well as payment of fines or fees for lost or damaged materials.
    - The responsible party must also have a library card in good standing and present their identification as outlined above.
    - Once a child reaches age 18, they must re-register under their own signature as an adult. Any fines or other charges become the responsibility of the applicant.
  - For those patrons experiencing homelessness, the library will accept proof of school enrollment or temporary or transitional housing access as proof of residence. A valid active email address or cell phone number is preferred as a point of contact to the account holder.
- Renewal
  - All library cards expire on an annual basis.
  - Resident cardholders must renew their cards at a Caroline County Library location.
  - A library card or valid photo ID must be presented.
  - Patrons will be asked to verify their address and other contact information.
  - If a patron has become a non-resident, they are required to visit a library branch to pay for a non-resident card or show proof that they are eligible for a free card under the above criteria.
  - Accounts that have not been renewed and have no other activity may be deleted after five (5) years. Accounts that are blocked due to lost or damaged book fees will not be deleted.
- Replacement Cards
  - No fee shall be charged for the initial library card; however, one dollar (\$1.00) will be charged for any replacements.
  - Lost or stolen cards should be reported as soon as possible to prevent unauthorized use of the library card account. Patrons are responsible for any items checked out on their library card before the card is reported lost or stolen.
  - To get a replacement card, patrons will be asked to show a current photo ID.
- Responsibilities
  - By registering for a library card, individuals agree to abide by the policies of Caroline County Library.
  - Each individual who wishes to borrow materials, use public computers, or utilize the library's e-resources must have their own card. Sharing library cards or checking out materials or computer passes for another individual will not be permitted, except when a parent or guardian borrows materials for their very young children.
  - All cardholders agree to return all materials in good condition and to pay all fines and fees associated with the account.

- A patron shall be responsible for all materials charged on his/her card even if he/she lends that card or materials to another person.
- Borrowing privileges may be suspended, revoked or denied to anyone whose current or previous record as a library borrower reveals willful or habitually careless disregard for the protection and return of borrowed materials or for the evasion of payment for assessed damage to library property.
- Borrowing privileges may also be suspended, revoked, or denied to anyone who uses another person's library card or computer pass with or without their permission and to any patron that lends their library card or computer pass to another person in order to evade payment of fines or other fees.

#### *Check Out Privileges*

- A patron must present his/her own library card or photo ID in order to check out library materials or use a public computer.
- Individuals who are visiting Caroline County for a short period of time may be allowed to check out a public computer for use by presenting a current photo ID. They will not be able to check out any other library materials.
- A patron is responsible for all materials checked out on his/her library card.
- Borrowing privileges, including those for public computer usage, may be suspended for overdue materials or fines. Privileges will be restored once all overdue items are returned or otherwise accounted for and/or the fines are paid or waived.

#### *Check Out Limits*

- Patrons are classified into several different borrower types according to their library usage. These types determine their check out limit. A patron may request to change their borrower type at any time.
  - Adult and Juvenile borrowers are limited to a total of ten (10) items.
  - Avid Readers are limited to a total of fifteen (15) items.
  - Teachers may check out up to twenty (20) items.
- All patron types are limited to five (5) movies per household.
- Limits may be overridden at the branch manager's discretion, or may change as defined by the current library automation system.

#### *Loan Periods*

- The following loan periods have been established to provide library patrons with an adequate amount of time to both use library materials and return them so that they are available for use by other patrons.
  - Books and audiobooks are due three (3) weeks after the checkout date.
  - Movies are due five (5) days after the checkout date.
  - Items designated as Reference or Genealogy cannot be checked out and must be used while inside the library.
- If the due date falls on a Sunday or a holiday when the library is closed, the due date will be extended to the following day.
- Renewals
  - Items may be renewed twice in person, over the phone, or using the library's website.

- After the second renewal, patrons must return items to the library. These items may not be checked out again on the same day by the same patron. Branch managers may, at their discretion, override this limit if the patron can demonstrate a need for the particular item.
- Items that are reserved for another patron may not be renewed.
- Patrons that create a nuisance by preventing other patrons from using library materials through multiple renewals, placing holds on recently returned items, waiting until the grace period to renew or return materials, or other ways not expressly forbidden in this policy may have a temporary block placed on their renewals. During this time, patrons will still be able to check out and reserve items, but will not be able to renew them.

### *Reserved Materials*

- All circulating items may be reserved or placed on hold for patrons to pick up.
- The patron must have a valid library card in good standing in order to place a hold. They must also have a phone number or valid email address on file.
- Reservations can be placed in person, over the phone, or using the library's website.
- Patrons will be called when reserved/hold items arrive in the specified branch and will receive email notification if they have an email address on file.
- Items will be held at the front desk for five (5) days. If not checked out within five days, items will be returned.

### *Overdue Items & Fines*

- Items not returned or renewed by the due date are considered overdue. It is the responsibility of the patron to return items on time.
- Multiple notices by telephone, email, or postal mail are performed in an effort to recover items. Patrons are responsible for having current information on file to receive these notices.
- Fines are charged for overdue materials once they have been checked in at the library. Patrons cannot pay for fines before the items have been returned.
- Fines rates:
  - Books and audiobooks are charged ten cents (\$.10) per day.
  - Movies are charged one dollar (\$1.00) per day.
  - A day is considered any day that the library would normally be open.
  - The maximum fine amount for each item is five dollars (\$5.00) or the cost of the book, whichever is the lowest.
  - The maximum fine amount allowed on a patron account for overdue items is twenty dollars (\$20.00). This maximum does not apply to lost or damaged materials.
- The library allows a five (5) day grace period without fines.
  - Items returned or renewed within this period will not be charged the overdue fines.
  - Once the grace period is over, fines will be generated from their original due date, not the end of the grace period.
- Items that are renewed after their due date will be charged for the days between the due date and the date that it was renewed.

- Borrowing privileges will be suspended if more than three (3) items are overdue, any items are long overdue, or there is a fine balance of more than five dollars (\$5.00).
- Payment arrangements or the waiving of fines can only be made with approval of the branch manager or library director.
- Unpaid fines for overdue materials remain on a patron's card for a period of three (3) years from the date that they are generated.
- Fine Free Week
  - Only items returned during Fine Free Week will have their overdue fines waived.
  - Pre-existing fines or fees for lost or damaged items will not be waived.
  - The dates for Fine Free Week are at the discretion of the library director.

#### *Long Overdue Items*

- An item is considered long overdue if it has not been returned three (3) months or 90 days after its due date.
- If a long overdue item is returned, it must be checked by the branch manager or other staff member to make sure that it is still in good condition.
  - If the items are considered to be in good condition, the patron will only be charged the overdue fines.
  - Items in poor condition will be treated as damaged.

#### *Lost or Damaged Items*

- Library materials are considered lost six (6) months or 180 days after their due date. Patrons may also notify the library that they have lost an item before that period has ended.
- Damaged materials are those that are returned in poor condition, e.g. water-damaged or chewed books, torn pages, writing or highlighting on or inside books, scratched or missing CDs, cracked DVDs, etc.
- Patrons are responsible for the full replacement cost of any lost or damaged items. If no price is listed on the record, then the library director or branch manager will determine the cost.
- Damage that is limited to the item's dust jacket or jacket cover only will result in a charge of three dollars (\$3.00) to cover the cost to reprocess the item. Damage to the covers of paperback books generally is continued throughout the item, but will be assessed on an individual basis.
- No refunds will be offered if a lost item is found and returned later.
- Patrons may keep any lost or damaged materials for which the full replacement cost has been paid.
- Replacements of lost or damaged items will not be accepted as payment under any circumstances. In some cases, the library may prefer to substitute more current titles in place of the lost or damaged item.
- Unpaid charges for lost or damaged items remain on the patron's account indefinitely and may be reported to a collection agency.

#### *Claims Returned*

- If a patron notifies staff that he/she returned an item that has not been checked in, staff will check the shelves at all branches for the item.

- If the item is found on the shelf, the item will be checked in and any fines removed from the patron's account.
- If the item is not found, staff will change the status of the item to "claims returned".
- For the first instance of "claims returned", the patron will not be charged for the replacement cost of the item.
- For all other instances, the patron will be responsible for the full replacement cost of the materials.

#### *Interlibrary Loan*

- A patron may request materials through interlibrary loan when they are not available at any of the Caroline County Library locations.
- New releases, movies, and audiobooks are not eligible for interlibrary loan.
- The library will attempt to get any books requested, but not all titles will be available.
- The patron must have a valid library card in good standing in order to request an interlibrary loan. They must also have a phone number on file.
- The interlibrary loan fee is intended to cover the costs of postage for each item. This will be determined according to the current USPS library rate.
- All materials borrowed from other libraries must be picked up and returned to the Caroline County Library. Patrons will be called when items arrive.
- Due dates, renewals, and requirements for in-house use are set by the lending library and cannot be changed by Caroline County Library.
- Items will be held at the front desk for five (5) days. If not checked out within five days, items will be returned. Patrons are responsible for the interlibrary loan fee whether or not the book is picked up.
- If an item is returned late, lost, or damaged, the patron is responsible for any fines or fees charged by the lending library. These may be in excess of what Caroline County Library charges for its own materials.

#### *E-Resources*

- In order to access electronic resources provided by Caroline County Library, a patron must have a library card in good standing, as well as a PIN number on file.
- Individual databases or other e-resources may have additional requirements for use, such as signing up for an account or use inside the library only.

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