

Circulation Policy

Western Allegheny Community Library's circulation department aims to provide the quick and efficient access of materials to the greatest number of people in a welcoming, interactive environment that respects diversity and ensures privacy of patron information.

Applying for a Library Card

Library cards are available free of charge either in person or when an online registration form is filled out, with the required documentation. Children ages two (2) and older may apply for their own library card. Library cards shall be valid for three (3) years. Active accounts will be automatically renewed. An individual may not use another borrower's card.

To get a library card:

- Fill out the library card registration form online or ask to register at the library's Circulation Desk.
- Account verification requires that you present either government-issued photo ID or proof of your current mailing address. Either your library card or valid ID is required for all transactions concerning library books and materials. Each registered borrower assumes full responsibility for the materials and fines charged to the card.

Designated Proxy Borrowers

Patrons often request other family, friends, neighbors, etc., to pick up their materials at the Circulation Desk. Patrons may authorize someone to check out library materials in their name and have full access to their record, only after they are designated as a proxy. Under this agreement, the cardholder is responsible for any fines or fees associated with materials checked out in their name.

Designated Proxy Borrower forms are available at the Circulation Desk for any cardholder to name any person or persons that are permitted to pick up and place holds, pay fines and access account information. Designated Proxy Borrower names can be added to a patrons account via a telephone request once ownership of the account has been satisfied. A paper copy of the Designated Proxy Borrower form will be mailed to those individuals who may not be able to make it into the library. The Designated Proxy Borrower status will be *pending* until the signed form is returned to the library.

Materials Check-out

The Western Allegheny Community Library allows customers to borrow unlimited library materials as long as their account is in good standing. In order to check-out materials a customer must have their library card or a valid form of identification. Only the actual cardholder may check out materials on their account, with the exception of minor children, by proxy request or if the person checking out materials has the card holder's actual card in hand (implied permission).

Renewing Items

Items will automatically renew up to six times if no one has the item on hold.

Returning Items

Items checked out from Western Allegheny Community Library may be returned to any Allegheny County library location. There is a book drop accessible on the exterior of the library. Some items are marked, "Please Do Not Place in Book Drop", these items must be returned to the Circulation Desk **inside** the Library. Library customers are also able to return any library materials at the library Circulation Desk during regular business hours.

Items checked out during outreach visits or on the library Book Bus should be returned to that location if possible.

Items returned with missing parts will be kept on the patron's record until all parts are returned. If possible, the item will be renewed to allow time for the patron to return missing parts.

Items returned in damaged condition will remain on the record and the patron will be billed.

Long Overdue/Billed Items

In order to maintain the collection for our customers, borrowed materials without holds which have not been returned or renewed within 60 days after the due date will be billed to the customer. The replacement cost will be assessed. The customer must pay this amount or return the item, if found.

The Library will attempt to contact patrons up to three times regarding overdue items, but it is the patron's ultimate responsibility to take note of due dates and return items in a timely manner. Failure to receive notices from the Library is not grounds for dismissal of fees or fines.

Claims Returned

If a customer feels certain that they have returned an item; but Library records indicate that it has not been returned, the library staff will:

1. Initiate a library search for the material
2. If the item is not found, the item will be renewed once to allow the customer time to search for the item.
3. If the item is still not found, library staff will mark the item as *claimed returned* and notify the customer.
4. The Systems Specialist will run quarterly *claims returned* reports. The claims returned items will be searched for and checked in, if found on the shelf. If not found after 6 months the items will be withdrawn.

Holds

Customers may ask that an item that is checked-out, or available at another library be placed on hold and that they be notified when it is available. Holds may be made online on the Library's catalog or app, or by phone, voicemail, email, or at the Library Circulation Desk. Once the customer is notified that the item they requested is available they have seven days to pick it up.

After seven days, the item is returned to the shelf or passed to the next person who has requested the item. The original hold will be removed. If the customer cannot be notified within seven days due to incorrect or outdated contact information, the hold will be removed and passed on to the next person. In extenuating circumstances, staff may decide to hold the item for more than seven days.

Designated Proxy Borrower Notes

- As of January 1, 2021, all patrons must have a Designated Proxy Borrower form filled out to have someone else checkout their items, pick up or place holds, pay fines, or inquire about account information. This does not apply if they have the cardholder's library card on hand (implied permission). All proxy forms will be kept in a file at the Circulation Desk.
- A borrower may add or remove a proxy at any time. Please have them fill out a new proxy form and date. Attach new form to the previous one as a record.

Library of Things Checkout

- Library of Things (LOT) items are available for circulation and must be picked up and returned directly to Western Allegheny Community Library.
- To ensure fair access for all patrons, customers may check out up to two (2) Library of Things items per checkout transaction. LOT items must be borrowed in person and returned to the Circulation Desk.
- Some LOT items may require additional agreements or condition checks at the time of checkout or return.



WESTERN ALLEGHENY
COMMUNITY LIBRARY

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PATRON POLICY

- ***Exceptions***

Special circumstances requiring more than two LOT items (e.g., events, family gatherings, or community programs) may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Library Director or a member of the leadership team.

**Approval is based on availability, staff discretion, and the purpose of the request.*