

Geauga County Public Library  
Operating Policy Manual

SECTION: ELIGIBILITY, REGISTRATION AND USE OF LIBRARY CARD  
NUMBER: 711  
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Permanent residents of Ohio are eligible for a free library card. Persons who go to school in Ohio, work on a permanent basis in Ohio, and those who own property in Ohio are also eligible for a free library card. Only one card is allowed per individual, with the exceptions 3 for Me library cards issued to youth aged 17 and under with borrowing privileges restricted to three (3) titles only. Geauga County Public Library honors the library cards of other CLEVNET libraries for the circulation of materials. Special cards, such as the 3 for Me card and those issued to institutions, and temporary patrons are governed by procedures set forth by library administration.

**APPLYING FOR A LIBRARY CARD**

To apply for a library card, adults aged 18 or older must fill out an application and present valid identification and current proof of address if address is not listed on the identification. Acceptable forms of identification include but are not limited to a driver's license, state ID card, passport, and US Military ID. Acceptable proof of a current address is either a printed personal check showing the address on the application or an envelope, utility bill, or postcard with a recent (within last 30 days) postmark received at the address shown on the application. A birthdate and signature accepting financial responsibility for borrowed materials are required for a library card.

Patrons without proper current identification may be temporarily registered. Temporarily registered patrons are generally permitted one transaction with a maximum of two items borrowed.

If an applicant is under the age of 18 the signature of a parent or legal guardian, to accept financial responsibility for borrowed materials, is also required. Parent or guardian must show valid identification.

Until a child has reached the age of 18 years, the parent or guardian is responsible for selections and fees.

Additionally, youth aged 17 and under may apply for one 3 for Me card with borrowing privileges restricted to three titles only. The 3 for Me card can be used as a primary library card or as a secondary library card. Youth may apply for this card without the signature of a parent or guardian.

Library card privileges must be renewed every three years. Valid identification and current proof of address may be requested when renewing library privileges.

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### **BORROWER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Borrowers must present a valid library card when charging out materials. If the patron does not have the library card but still wishes to charge out materials, valid identification will be accepted. Borrowers are responsible for paying any fines or other charges imposed for the late return of materials, loss, or the damage of library materials. Parents or guardians who sign a library card application on behalf of an applicant aged 17 or under are financially responsible for all materials borrowed on the card. Borrowers are responsible for reporting any changes in the account information in a timely fashion.

It is the patron's responsibility and choice as to who has access to their library card. A patron may allow a family member or friend to use his or her library card to check out materials, pick up materials on hold, and pay fines that are outstanding on that card. The Library reserves the right to ask a borrower for identification to verify identity before charging out materials.

### **FORGOTTEN, LOST, OR STOLEN LIBRARY CARD**

If the borrower's card is lost or stolen, it is the borrower's responsibility to report the loss or theft to Geauga County Public Library or to another CLEVNET member library immediately. A police report is required when a patron claims materials were checked out without permission. A new library card must be issued for lost, damaged or stolen cards. All charges or loans attached to the lost card will be transferred to the new card.

### **BORROWING GUIDELINES**

A total of one-hundred (100) circulating items may be on a borrower's record at any given time. Loan periods depend upon the type of material being loaned; borrowers should note the due dates on the receipt provided at checkout. The Library upholds the circulation policy and loan periods for items owned by CLEVNET member libraries although they may differ from the loan periods of Geauga County Public Library. Most GCPL materials are renewable, and, depending on the item, may be renewed up to five times, provided there are no reservation requests (holds) pending and the patron has not accumulated more than \$24.99 in fines and/or fees on the account.

### **FINES & FEES**

A fine is a fee assessed for overdue library materials. Fines are assessed on a daily basis with a maximum rate based on the overdue material. Fines are not charged on days the library is closed. Once library materials are overdue, the cardholder will be charged cost of the lost or damaged item(s). The library will accept payment for lost or damaged materials, overdue fines and fees associated with materials owned by other CLEVNET member libraries at any GCPL

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location. The Library will not waive any fines or fees associated with materials owned by other CLEVNET member libraries. If an item owned by another CLEVNET member library is found at a later date, the patron must return the item to the owning library to request a refund. GCPL will not issue refunds for materials owned by another library system. GCPL does not issue refunds if a lost item is paid for and found or returned at a later date.

The library does not charge overdue fines for circulating materials borrowed by patrons aged 60 and over, or those who are permanently disabled. To qualify for a disabled card, the patron must present a permanent Golden Buckeye card issued by the Ohio Department of Aging at the time of application. Patrons aged 60 and over or those who are totally and permanently disabled are still responsible for lost item charges.

Once an item is fourteen (14) or more days overdue, the library will send the first overdue notice to the borrower. When an item is forty-two (42) days overdue, the item is marked lost and the patron is charged for the item. When an item does not have a cost associated with it in the online catalog, the borrower is responsible for the replacement cost. In the event that a borrower believes that an item was returned on time, the borrower should contact the owning library to ask staff to check the shelf for the item.

### **LOSS OF BORROWING PRIVILEGES**

A patron is unable to borrow materials when fines and/or fees are in excess of \$24.99, 50 or more items are overdue, more than 100 items are checked out, the patron's library card has expired, or the account has been referred for material recovery services. Youth aged 17 and under whose borrowing privileges have been suspended are eligible to apply for the 3 for Me card.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS**

In keeping with the library's Policy on Confidentiality and the Privacy of Library Records, family members or friends are not given information about the accounts of the borrowers whose cards they are using, except in situations specified by Section 149.432 of Ohio Revised Code, e.g., a parent can get the account information of a minor child. A parent or guardian may request overdue information and information about current items charged out on a minor child's library card, if the parent or guardian has the minor child's card, or the parent or guardian has photo identification with same address as that listed in the minor child's registration and proof of parentage or guardianship satisfactory to the Library.