

# **Greensburg Hempfield Area Library**

## **Eligibility for Borrowing and Services Policy**

**Policy Number: 01**

**Date Last Updated: July 14, 2025**

**Purpose:** To set guidelines for lending of GHAL materials.

**Statement of Policy:** A Westmoreland County Libraries (WCL) card permits the borrowing of GHAL materials. Library users are responsible for all Library property charged out on their cards. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for materials charged out to minor (under the age of 18) children. According to Pennsylvania Law, failure to return Library property after notice to return it is a crime (18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 6708,) as are Library theft (18 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 3929 .1) and willful damage of Library property (24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 4427).

### **References**

- Access Pennsylvania Statewide Library Card Program Guidelines
- ALA Code of Ethics
- ALA Library Bill of Rights.

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#### **RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT**

1. Applicants for Westmoreland County Libraries (WCL) cards must provide proof of their identity and their residency. Two forms of I.D. are required, one with current address.
  - A. Proof of residency may include a driver's license, State I.D., utility bill, rent receipt, school report card or tax receipt.
  - B. A photographic I.D. card is required, but other forms of identification may also be accepted in special circumstances.
  - C. College students or a temporary resident must provide a local and a home address.
2. WCL cards are issued free of charge to anyone with proper identification.
  - A. Children must be five (5) years of age to obtain a WCL card from GHAL. Children under the age of 16 must have a parent or legal guardian accompany them to obtain a library card.
  - B. GHAL users may have only one card at a time. If a card is lost, a replacement card may be issued for a fee.
  - C. Cards are issued to individuals only. Cards are not transferable. The GHAL will work with schools and local groups, but responsibility for borrowed materials rests with individual borrowers.

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- D. Cards are not issued to third parties, but applications may be distributed and collected by teachers or other authorized persons responsible for groups. In these cases, the GHAL will issue the card to the applicant and deliver it to the school/teacher where the student applicant has registered. It is the responsibility of the school/teacher to deliver the card to the applicant.
3. Registration is valid for 2 years if the cardholder remains in good standing. Accounts that have not been used for 3 years will be purged from the system.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF BORROWERS**

1. Borrowers must be currently registered with WCL to borrow materials from the GHAL.
2. By obtaining a library card, holders accept responsibility for all materials borrowed on their cards. Parents or legal guardians who endorse a child's library card application accept responsibility for all materials charged out to that card.
3. Borrowers need to take care of GHAL materials borrowed on their cards. If materials are lost or damaged beyond repair, the GHAL may charge the user the replacement cost, processing fee and overdue fines of the items.
4. Borrowers are responsible for returning GHAL materials on time so that others may use them.
5. It is the responsibility of the borrower to notify the GHAL regarding name, address, email, or telephone number changes.
6. Borrowers are responsible for paying any fines/fees associated with overdue materials, lost and/or damaged books and other GHAL materials. Failure to pay fines may result in loss of borrowing privileges. Failure to pay for lost and/or damaged GHAL materials may result in loss of borrowing privileges and/or legal action. The loss of privileges applies to the entire household of the cardholder.

### **MATERIALS ACCESS POLICY**

1. The GHAL will regularly review its lending rules, procedures, and fine and fee schedule. A copy of current rules, fines, and procedures will be available in the Library and given to each new card holder.
2. Overdue notification is by email for patrons with a valid email address or by US mail if no email address is listed. These notifications are sent by WCL.
  - The first overdue notice is 7 days from the due date.
  - The second overdue notice is 14 days from the due date.
  - Bills for overdue or lost items are mailed after 30 days. Bills include a processing fee.

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- Patrons with items 65 days overdue are automatically reported to a collection agency.  
A fine is added to the delinquent account.

The GHAL will maintain accurate records of overdue materials and fines.

3. The GHAL considers all records relating to patron registration and the subsequent use of and circulation by patrons of materials provided by the GHAL to be confidential.  
(Reference: Policy #3, Confidentiality)

- A. The library takes seriously the privacy of patrons' library records. The library does not keep track of what patrons borrow after the borrowed material is returned. However, the library's automated system has a feature called "Maintain Reading List" that allows the borrower to track his/her checked out items. Participation in this feature is entirely voluntary and must be elected. Patrons may start or stop this feature at any time. If patrons elect to start this feature, they are agreeing to allow the automated system to store data. This saved data is applicable to all local, state, and federal laws, and under those laws, could be examined by law enforcement without the patron's permission. If this is a concern, the patron should NOT use this "Maintain Reading List" feature.

#### **INTERLIBRARY LOAN (ILL)**

1. If material(s) needed by cardholders in good standing are not available from either the GHAL or WCL, items in which the publication date is older than one year may be borrowed via inter-library loans from libraries outside of Westmoreland County. If obtainable, the materials will be sent to GHAL. The patron must return materials to the GHAL circulation desk, NOT the Book Drop.
2. Responsibility for these materials is the same as with GHAL materials with respect to fines and payment for lost items.
3. Length of circulating time varies according to the item, current demand, and policies of the library that lends it.
4. Material requested through ILL may take a minimum of two weeks to receive. Some may be on order longer, depending on factors such as demand and number of copies at the lending library.

#### **PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH**

1. Programs are provided yearly for adults and children. All programs are advertised.
2. The Library Board has approval rights on all programs.