

Great Barrington Libraries Borrowing Policy & Procedures

The Great Barrington Libraries are the public libraries for the Town of Great Barrington and the Village of Housatonic. All holders of CWMARS (Central & Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing) public library cards may borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries.

Obtaining a Great Barrington Libraries' Card:

Residents of Massachusetts: Residents of Massachusetts communities with public libraries certified by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners who do not have a library card with a public library belonging to CWMARS and/or those who have an academic library card are eligible for a free borrower's card from the Great Barrington Libraries.

To obtain a Great Barrington Library card, [apply online](#) or visit the library. You will need to show photo identification, along with proof of residence, in person at the library even if you use the online application. Photo identification can be a driver's license, passport, state identification, student or work identification. Proof of residence can be a current check or bankbook, voter registration card, current utility bill, a piece of postmarked local mail, digital receipts or bills.

Children and teenagers without identification may use their parents/guardians' identification. Children must be at least five years old to receive their own library card.

If a patron indicates that the identification process presents a hardship (i.e. is a participant in the state's Address Confidentiality Program), the library will attempt to make a reasonable accommodation.

Exempted Non-Residents of Massachusetts: Borrowers not residing in Massachusetts must pay a non-resident fee to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries, unless they can provide documentation demonstrating that they:

- own a vacation home or property in Massachusetts;
- are renting lodging in Massachusetts for at least 30 days;
- are residing in Massachusetts while attending school, a training program or summer camp lasting at least 30 days;
- work in Massachusetts.

Verification of exemption documentation may include all those listed for identification and residence above, as well as a lease or rental agreement, land deed, school identification card, official notice from a school, camp director or employer on letterhead stationery, or other similar means of documenting a temporary residence.

Non-Residents of Massachusetts: Borrowers not residing in Massachusetts who cannot provide the documentation detailed above that would exempt them from non-resident fees are considered out-of-state borrowers and must pay a fee of \$25.00, by way of cash or check, per twelve-month period in order to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries. Another member of the same family may use an out-of-state borrower's card.

Institutional Cards: Schools, daycare centers, nursing homes, businesses, and other similar organizations, may register for an Institutional Card by contacting the Library Director and signing an agreement stating that the individual(s) of the organization who are authorized to use the card will take responsibility for materials borrowed, including lost or damaged materials.

Borrowers' Responsibilities: Borrowers are responsible for all items borrowed on their cards, including replacement costs for items lost or damaged. Parents/guardians are responsible for any replacement costs incurred by children under the age of 18.

Borrowers are responsible for keeping their registration current. Any borrower who has mail returned to the library as undeliverable, has a phone number that is not current, or has an email address that is not valid, may be blocked from borrowing materials from the library until the registration is updated.

Borrowers are expected to present their library card to borrow materials from the Great Barrington Libraries. However, as an accommodation, the Great Barrington Libraries will accept some form of identification in lieu of a library card, as long as the card is not expired. Patrons who do not bring their library card or positive identification to the library with them may not be able to borrow materials.

Use of Another Borrower's Card: Great Barrington Libraries discourage the sharing of library cards between family members and friends. The person whose name is on the card remains responsible for the safe return of all borrowed materials. Great Barrington Libraries may request positive identification from any person checking materials out. A loan may be denied if the patron attempting to check items out is not the same person as

indicated on the borrower card presented, and has outstanding debt or blocks that would have prevented the loan on the patron's own card.

Confidentiality of Borrowing Records: In accordance with Chapter 78, Section 7 of Massachusetts General Laws, the borrowing records of individual patrons concerning types of materials and/or specific titles borrowed, and other records identifying the name of library users, is considered confidential by the Great Barrington Libraries. Only the Library Director may authorize dissemination of this information to a third party; this will be done only when required by law. Information about materials borrowed by minors may be granted to the legal guardians once those items are overdue.

Loan Periods and Borrowing Restrictions:

Item	Limit: 50 items total	Loan Period	Automatic Renewal	Lost Date	Replacement Charge
Books		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
eBooks					
eAudiobooks					
Magazines: kids & teens		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Magazines: adult		1 week	1 week	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Audiobooks	6	3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
DVDs	4	1 week	1 week	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Video Games		3 weeks	3 weeks	28 days after due date	cost to replace
Hotspots	1 per a household (each hotspot supports up to 10 connected devices)	2 weeks	2 weeks	24 hours after due date, at which time service will be turned off and the hotspot will become unusable	\$35.00
Museum Passes	1	1 day	none	24 hours after due date	cost to replace
Library of Things	1	3 weeks	none	24 hours after due date	cost to replace

Returns: Books and magazines may be returned at any time in the book drops outside the library buildings. However, audiobooks, DVDs and Hotspots should be returned to the circulation desks. Museum passes should be returned to the circulation desk at Mason Library in Great Barrington. Items from the Library of Things should be returned to the circulation desk at Ramsdell Library in Housatonic.

Blocks: A patron will be denied borrowing privileges if their account has unpaid charges for lost or damaged library materials.

Other Libraries: Other libraries may have different lending periods and replacement costs, and may have fines for overdue materials.

Extended Loan Periods:

For People with Disabilities: As part of the effort to ensure equal access to information and to ensure compliance with the American Disabilities Act, steps are taken by the Great Barrington Libraries to provide for reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities.

Certified Disabled: To be eligible for an exception to the Great Barrington Libraries' Borrowing Policy, the borrower must be able to provide certification of disability from a qualified health care or education professional (depending on disability), with appropriate justification from the borrower as to why the disability warrants the exception. Such justification should be directly related to the borrower's ability to process the material (i.e. dyslexia or other learning disability) and should stipulate whether this a one-time or ongoing request. Age alone does not qualify as a certifiable disability eligible for exception under this policy. First-time requests by certified disabled borrowers to negotiate exceptions to the library's Borrowing Policy must be done in person at the library.

Exceptions: Exceptions may be authorized by the Assistant Directors or Children's Librarian at the time the request is made if the request requires an immediate response; otherwise, the request should be deferred to the Director. Only the Director and Assistant Directors are authorized to negotiate open-ended arrangements. Such arrangements should be abstracted by library staff in a patron note on the CWMARS system to alert staff at subsequent transactions.

Limitations:

- Reserve Books: Items on reserve for others will not be granted extended loan periods regardless of the extenuating circumstances of the certified disabled requesting borrower.

- **Interlibrary Loan Materials:** Materials owned by other libraries will not be granted extended loan periods regardless of the extenuating circumstances of the requesting borrower because those lending periods are established by the lending libraries.
- **Total Item Limit:** Persons requesting items be granted extended loan periods under these guidelines will be limited to six items in circulation at any given time.

For Massachusetts Teachers: Massachusetts teachers may check out curriculum materials for an initial six-week period. Teachers are responsible for identifying themselves as such to the circulation staff and communicating that they are borrowing curriculum materials.

Obtaining Available Materials:

Holds: Most items in circulation owned by the Great Barrington Libraries or other Massachusetts public libraries in the CWMARS or virtual catalogue systems may be reserved or placed on hold. There is a limit of twenty holds per library card. A Hotspot should be picked up within two days of placing a hold, or it will be set aside for the next user.

Request for Purchase: Great Barrington Libraries welcomes suggestions for purchase of materials not in the collection. Please see the Recommendation for Addition to the Collection form in the Collection Development Policy.