



COLUMBIA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Circulation Policy

Adopted by the Columbia County Library System Board of Trustees

Date of Adoption: 1/6/2026

Effective Date: 1/6/2026

Date of Last Revision: 1/6/2026

Columbia County Library System is a participating member of PINES statewide consortium. PINES libraries adhere to uniform circulation policies and procedures as documented at <http://pines.georgialibraries.org/circulation>.

Section 1: Library Card Registration

A library card entitles the cardholder to borrow any circulation materials. Additionally, a library card provides off-site access to online resources available at Columbia County Libraries.

The following types of cards are available from the Columbia County Library System and below are the requirements to obtain one.

- 1.1 Library cards are free to all residents of Georgia. Persons who attend school, own property, or are employed full-time in Georgia are eligible for a free PINES card. Patrons of both PINES and non-participating Georgia public libraries may receive a PINES card. Users from non-participating Georgia libraries shall have the same privileges as PINES users. Most PINES cards are valid for 2 years.
- 1.2 An applicant for a new card is required to provide proper identification, which includes a photo ID showing current local address OR photo ID and one item from the PINES approved list showing current, local address. Original documents are required. Acceptable IDs include valid driver's license, valid voter registration card, valid Matricula Consular, checks with pre-printed addresses, utility bill, tax receipt or other piece of mail that shows the patron's name and current address.
- 1.3 There is no minimum age for a child to receive a PINES card. A parent or guardian must show proper ID to register a child. A parent or guardian must sign the application for all children under 18 years of age.
- 1.4 Signing a PINES card application denotes acceptance of responsibility for all fines and fees for lost or damaged materials. A valid library card is required to check out materials.
- 1.5 Property owners who do not reside in Georgia are required to show proof of Georgia property ownership, such as a tax bill or deed. Non-Georgia residents who are employed in Georgia or attending school in Georgia are required to show proof of that employment or enrollment.
- 1.6 Out-of-state cards are available to persons living outside Georgia who do not meet the above criteria for a \$25 annual fee, payable at the time the card is issued. A temporary card is available for a \$12.50 fee and is valid for 6 months.

Section 2: Renewal of Existing Cards

All cards may be renewed, using the same eligibility criteria for acquiring a new card. The cardholder's record and the records of any child under 18 years of age must be cleared of all overdue charges and/or bills before the card can be renewed.

Section 3: Lost, Stolen or Damaged Cards

- 3.1 There will be no charge to replace all lost cards.

- 3.2 There will be no charge for a damaged card, if the cardholder returns the damaged card.
- 3.3 The library must be informed immediately if a library card is lost or stolen, to prevent usage and bills by an unauthorized person. Items borrowed without permission with a lost or stolen card will be handled in the same way as “Lost and Damaged Items”. There will be no charge if the library is presented with a police report within 30 days of the theft, and the cardholder’s insurance does not cover the claim. The processing fee(s) will also be removed.

Section 4: Change of Address, Telephone, Email or Name

If card holders change addresses, contact information including email address or name, they are responsible for contacting the library to update their user record.

Section 5: Circulation of Materials

A current library card must be presented to borrow circulating materials.

5.1 Loan Periods

Materials from the collection circulate (for certain materials) as follows:

Audiobooks and CDs	14 days, 2 renewals
Audiobooks/Downloadable	variable due dates
Books	14 days, 2 renewals
DVDs	14 days, 2 renewals
Music CDs	14 days, 2 renewals
State Park Pass	7 days, 1 renewal
Zoo Atlanta Pass	7 days, no renewals

- 5.2 Materials will not be renewed if there is a “hold” placed on the item. Renewal requests on eligible materials may be made in person, online, or by calling the library.

Section 6: Fines, Fees and Bills

- 6.1 To encourage the prompt return of material, the library has established a schedule of fines for those patrons who fail to return library materials by the date due.
- 6.2 **Overdue notices are sent as a courtesy. Failure to receive notices does not exempt patrons from the responsibility for library materials or overdue fines.**
- 6.3 A patron may pay all or a portion of overdue fines at any PINES participating library. Fines will be retained by the collecting library regardless of the owning library. Returned materials which are owned by other PINES libraries will be promptly returned via PINES courier service.

6.4 Library Card Blocks: A patron must present a PINES library card in good standing in order to borrow materials. A patron's library card will be blocked from additional borrowing if the patron owes \$10.00 or more in unpaid fines and/or fees. A library card cannot be renewed until all fines and fees are paid in full.

Section 7: Lost and Damaged Items

7.1 Damages to library materials are assessed according to the cost of the item plus processing fee.

7.2 If the total replacement price as posted in the PINES database is assessed for severe damage to an item, the patron may keep the item after paying the replacement price.

7.3 Claims Returned Items

7.3.1 A cardholder may request a shelf check on an item still charged to his or her record, if the cardholder believes that the item has been returned.

7.3.2 The claims returned item will not block the customer's borrowing privilege.
If the item is still not found after 180 days (6 months), the customer is responsible for clearing and paying the lost (claims returned) item from their account.

Section 8: Replacements and Refunds

8.1 The library does not accept a replacement copy of an item, whether lost or damaged, in lieu of money.

8.2 If a lost item is "found" and returned within 180 days (6 months) of payment, a refund will be given, *minus* the overdue fines which have been accrued and the processing fee. The found

material may be returned to any PINES library, with the understanding that the owning library will be the final authority on whether the material is in acceptable condition for return. The owning library will issue a refund check to the patron via U.S. Mail. The refund check will be payable to the library cardholder on whose record the materials were circulated.

- 8.3 Materials lost due to natural disaster will be exempt from charges. Theft of materials will be exempt from charges if the item(s) are listed on an official police report within 30 days of the theft, and the cardholder's insurance does not cover the claim. The report must be presented to the circulation supervisor or library manager.

Section 9: Confidentiality of User Information

Georgia law makes confidential circulation and similar records which identify the user of Library materials. Library patrons have a privacy expectation in the information requested on their applications for borrowers' cards, the information they seek from the Library, and the materials they use in the Library or borrow from the Library.

1. Circulation and registration records for an individual are not public records and must be maintained as confidential information.
2. Library staff may use circulation and registration records for Library purposes only.
3. Circulation and registration records must not be discussed with other Library patrons and should not become the subject of casual conversation among staff members.
4. Library staff will not make inquiry into the purposes for which patrons request information, books, or other materials, except for the purpose of assisting the patron to find information, books, or other materials.
5. Access to an adult cardholder's record is limited to the cardholder, and access to a minor's record is granted to the minor's parent or legal guardian (but not to a sponsor who is not a parent or legal guardian). "Minor" means a person under the age of 18.
6. The parent or guardian of a student who is age 18 or older is not entitled to review the student's circulation and registration records.
7. A patron's possession of another person's card is considered permission to use it for borrowing materials. Such possession is not deemed permission to obtain information concerning the record, such as personal information, items charged, bills, holds, or other similar information.
8. All inquiries from law enforcement officials or other third parties for user information must be referred to the Library Director.
9. Confidential patron information may only be disclosed:
 - a. To Library staff members in the ordinary course of business and with a reasonable need to know;
 - b. To attorneys representing Columbia County Library System;
 - c. Upon written consent of the account holder or the parents or legal guardians of minors;

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- d. Upon appropriate court order or subpoena as determined by the Library Director, in conjunction with legal counsel.