

Chapter 5: Circulation services

Confidentiality of library records

BCLS maintains the confidentiality of library records in accordance with all pertinent laws and statutes.

Library records may be disclosed only if the library determines that one of the following applies:

- The records are released to the person to whom the information relates
- The person to whom the information relates has provided written permission to release the records to a third party
- The Texas Attorney General has determined that the information should be released
- The records are released under a court order or subpoena

Applications for patron accounts

Any resident of the state of Texas is eligible to open a library account with BCLS in accordance with the procedures and guidelines of the system. Accounts for minors – children under the age of eighteen – are considered joint accounts and are owned by the adult who assumes financial responsibility for all materials borrowed on the account.

Educators

As a professional courtesy, educators may be issued a separate library account with increased circulation periods and item limits.

Proof of employment must be provided along with all other application requirements set forth in policy. Homeschool educators must provide curriculum program affiliation as proof of employment. If the applicant has a personal library card, that card must be in good standing.

Educators with a class size greater than 10 may have a total of 100 items, with a maximum of 15 DVDs, checked out at any one time for a period of no more than 45 days with no renewals. Educators with a class size of 10 or fewer may have a total of 50 items, with a maximum of 8 DVDs checked out at any one time for a period of no more than 45 days with no renewals. The number of items on a particular subject may be limited at the discretion of the branch lead. Current Bluebonnet or 2X2 titles may not be checked out with the educator account.

Borrowing library materials

Eligible patrons may borrow a total of 50 items per account at one time; however, additional limits apply to certain collections (these limits apply to non-digital materials):

- Reference materials do not circulate
- Current Bluebonnet titles are limited to two per account

- All videos are limited to 15 per account.

Non-digital materials circulate as noted below. Library staff may override these limits in special circumstances.

- Mobile hotspots and routers circulate for two weeks.
- Equipment circulates for three days.
- ILL items generally circulate for two weeks, but the lending library may set its own circulation period.
- Vehicles circulate for one week.
- Some Library of Things (LOT) may circulate for less than two weeks.

All BCLS materials can be returned to any branch of the library system, unless otherwise noted at check-out. ILL materials must be returned to the branch from which they were borrowed. Fines and fees for overdue, damaged and lost materials will be assessed according to the fine and fee schedule approved by the Brazoria County Commissioners' Court.

Fines and Fees

Patron accounts will accrue daily fines for certain items not returned by the due date. Additional fees may be charged for lost or damaged items. ~~Fines for overdue traditional materials accrue at \$0.10 per day per item (max \$5.00 per item).~~ Fines for overdue non-traditional materials and interlibrary loans accrue at \$1.00 per day per item up to the total replacement cost. Fines and fees will be assessed at the branch where the materials are returned regardless of material type or origin of the circulation. If a patron pays the full replacement cost of an item, the patron owns the item and may do with it as they wish.

BCLS accepts cash, check and credit card payments. Additional fees will apply to credit card payments. In lieu of payment for lost or damaged items, BCLS will – at the branch lead's discretion – accept a new (or like new) copy of the item. The replacement must be the exact same version as the lost/damaged item as verified by the item's ISBN or UPC. All other fees will still apply.

Fees for special services and supplies may apply. For more information consult library staff. Fees are as follows:

Cleaning fee	\$20.00
Lost/damaged processing fee	\$3.50, nonrefundable
Lost/damaged books	List price of the item
Lost/damaged audiovisual materials	Replacement price
Lost/damaged nontraditional materials	List price plus supplementary costs
Lost/damaged ILL materials	Fee set by lending institution

Lost/damaged cases <u>packaging</u>	Replacement price
Lost/damaged hanging bags	\$3.50
Lost ILL band	\$1.00
Lost/damaged periodicals	Cover price or \$5.00
Recovery service	\$102.00
Returned check fee	\$30.00
Unretrieved ILL	\$5.00

approved by Commissioners' Court 09/~~21xx~~/~~2021~~20xx

Refunds

Barring rare and exceptional circumstances, BCLS does not issue refunds for lost or damaged library materials. Once a patron has paid for the lost or damaged item, it becomes their property. If the item is located at a later date, it remains the patron's property.

Claims Policy

BCLS allows patrons to claim items they feel were never actually borrowed, returned but not checked in by staff, or returned with missing pieces.

- Accounts in good standing are allowed a maximum of three active claims. Once that limit is reached the patron's borrowing privileges will be suspended until at least one of the claims has been resolved.
- Accounts may accumulate up to 30 active and resolved claims. After which, borrowing privileges will be permanently suspended.
- The collection at all branches will be searched for 60 days.
- If the item(s) is found in the library, it will be checked in and the fines waived.
- After 2 years if the item(s) is not found by the patron or the library, the patron will be charged for the item(s).
- Patrons are responsible for inquiring into the status of claimed item(s).
- Item(s) with a *lost* status cannot be reset to a *claimed* status.

Recovery service

BCLS has contracted with a recovery service for the recovery of lost items and overdue fines and fees. This process will be instituted after eight weeks when BCLS notices have been sent. All notifications are sent as a courtesy. A lack of notification does not negate the patron's financial responsibility.

The recovery service conducts all its attempts to recover the outstanding balance within a 17-week period; after which, the account may be credit reported. For more information contact Unique Management Services.

Patrons may request the collection service activities be suspended for the following reasons:

- The patron and branch lead have agreed to a repayment plan.
- Special and/or extenuating circumstances (such as long-term or catastrophic illness, natural disasters, etc.) have occurred.

TexShare library accounts

BCLS participates in the TexShare library card program sponsored by TSLAC. This program provides free reciprocal borrowing privileges to registered borrowers of member libraries, academic and public. For a complete description of this program visit the TexShare page at www.tsl.texas.gov/texshare/index.html.

The TexShare card allows BCLS patrons to borrow materials from all other participating libraries in Texas. Typically, libraries do not permit TexShare card holders to download digital materials. BCLS patrons with accounts of at least six months and in good standing (no overdue or lost books and library fines of less than \$10.00) may obtain a TexShare card. TexShare cards expire one year from the date issuance.

TexShare cards may be issued only to adult patrons as defined by BCLS policy or to juveniles if the card is signed by a parent or guardian. Materials borrowed from other TexShare libraries should be returned in person or by first class mail by the borrower to the lending library. The borrower is responsible for any expenses associated with returning the item including fines accrued due to delivery delays.