

Interlibrary Loan Policy

Reading Public Library

Reviewed and Approved 11/17/2025

Definition

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library. Interlibrary Loan encompasses transactions among libraries not under the same administration, system or school district.

The Reading Public Library (RPL) staff will make every effort to utilize the resources of its own library before resorting to ILL. Therefore, in compliance with the Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States and the District ILL Policy, RPL generally will not request ILL materials that are part of its own collection or that of other Berks County Public Libraries..

Borrowing Privileges

Berks County Public Library patrons in good standing are eligible for ILL. Patrons attending an institution of higher learning must request ILL from the school they attend, and patrons from outside Berks County must request ILL from their home library. Patrons with E-Cards are not eligible for ILL services. No more than five (5) ILL Requests may be on a patron's record at a time. Upon receipt, individuals are responsible for the safety and proper handling of their ILL materials. Patrons will be held financially responsible for damage to or loss of an ILL item. Continued disregard of due dates, accumulated fines, and the mishandling of ILL materials are sufficient reasons for suspension of ILL borrowing privileges.

A patron may make a request or obtain more information regarding this service by contacting RPL's Reference Department or branch libraries.

Limitations

The following items will not be requested through ILL:

- Best sellers and newly published titles (within six to twelve (6-12) months)
- Materials owned locally (available within the Berks County Public Library System)
- Newly released or popular audio-visual items (within twelve (12) months)
- Rare books (special collection materials and archival items)
- Textbooks or course materials needed longer than four (4) weeks (limited to in library use only))
- Electronic books or licensed computer software data files
- Reference materials
- Periodicals and journals (full issues/bound issues)
- Mass market paperbacks
- Multiple copies of any one item

Please note: Large/oversized volumes or multiple volume sets should not be requested through ILL, if it can be avoided. This type of material is difficult to obtain and expensive to ship.

Fees

Every effort will be made to obtain requested materials at no cost to our patrons from other libraries. Occasionally, however, a lending library will charge a lending fee ranging from \$10.00 to \$50.00. Since lending fees are passed on to patrons, it is very important for patrons to indicate how much they are willing to pay for a requested item.

A \$5.00 Administrative Fee will be charge for ILL items not picked up by the date specified. Patrons returning ILL items after the due date will incur a fine of \$1.00 per day. Patrons will be charged all fees assigned by the lending library for lost or damaged materials.

Lending and Borrowing

RPL generally allows fourteen to twenty-one (14-21) business days to receive an item if the requested ILL item is found and is available for shipping by the lending library. However, due dates for ILL items are determined by the lending libraries, not RPL. Most libraries will lend an item for two to four (2-4) weeks. It should be noted that only one (1) renewal can be given on an ILL book, if applicable. Audio-Visual (AV) materials may not be renewed.

ILL items must be returned to the RPL branch that loaned it. ILL items may not be returned in the book and A/V drop boxes.

Journal Articles

Copyright Law Guidelines (section 108g(2)) permit a requesting library to receive five (5) articles annually from a single journal title. It prohibits systematic photocopying of copyrighted materials but permits interlibrary loan arrangements that do not have as their purpose “that the library receiving such copies for distribution does so in such aggregate quantities as to substitute for a subscription to or purchase of such work.”

Confidentiality:

As with the circulation records of libraries, ILL requests are held in the strictest confidence. To make an ILL Request or to obtain more information regarding this valuable service, please contact RPL’s Reference Department at (610) 655-6355.