



To

SPOTSWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

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548 Main Street
Spotswood, NJ 08884
732-251-1515
www.spotslibrary.org
read. To learn. To discover.

Circulation Policy

Libraries are built on a foundation of trust and respect for our patrons. We lend items trusting that these will be returned on time and in good condition so we can, in turn, lend these again to others. Our policies are the guides we use to treat everyone fairly and with respect.

Library Cards

Statement of Responsibility

All library card holders will:

- Accept responsibility for any use of their library card and agree to abide by library policies and procedures
- Present their library card for all account transactions
- Pay for all lost or damaged materials and pay all fines and fees incurred on their card
- Report lost or stolen cards immediately
- Report changes of name, address, phone number and email promptly
- Accept responsibility as parents or guardians for all fees, lost or damaged items on their children's library cards until 18 years of age

The library acknowledges that all materials may be checked out to any valid library card holder.

Borrowing Records

The Library does not automatically maintain records of what individuals have borrowed and returned in the past, except when overdue fines have not been paid when due, and/or lost materials have been paid for. All information on the individual cardholder is confidential except for notification and collection of overdue materials. Patrons have the option to turn on their own Reading History.

Types of Library Card

- **Resident/Property Owner**

All Spotswood residents are entitled to a free Spotswood Library card based on proof of residency. Proof may be a driver's license, tax bill, lease, utility bill, bank or credit card statement, or rental agreement. A government issued photo ID is also required.

Children under the age of 18 must have their application signed by a parent or guardian, who must show proof of residency.

Resident library card applications can also be filled out online. You will be assigned a temporary library card number. Bring your temporary card number and bring it with photo ID and proof of residence to the Circulation Desk to receive your library card.

- **Works in Spotswood**

Non-residents who are not eligible for a card at another STELLA Library and, who work in Spotswood are entitled to a free, one-year, renewable card, that is good for programs and

services at the Spotswood Library only, and which may be used only by the person in whose name the card is issued. When applying for or renewing the card, the non-resident must show proof of current employment. Proof must be a recent pay stub from their employer showing the address of the Spotswood business. Proof of home address is also required. If the home office of a company is not based in Spotswood, proof of employment can be a letter from the company indicating the location of the Spotswood office.

- **Non-Resident Cards**

Non-residents, who are not eligible for a card at another STELLA Library, may currently purchase a card for \$50.00 per year. Additional family members residing at the same address can receive a free card by visiting the library with the non-resident and showing proof of address. Non-resident cards must be renewed once a year. This card is good for all the services and programs of the Spotswood Public Library only. The fee for this card is reviewed by the Board periodically to ensure that is equivalent to what Spotswood residents are paying in taxes for library services. Proof of home address is also required.

- **Computer Use Card**

Non-residents, who are not eligible for a card at another STELLA Library, may get a computer use card which can only be used to access computers or printing. There is no charge for a computer use card.

Patrons may not have more than one STELLA Library card.

Renewing Cards

Resident/Property Owner cards are valid for three years from date of issue. Works in Spotswood and non-resident, cards are good for one year. A photo ID and current proof of residence or employment is required to renew a card. Fines and fees do not have to be paid to renew a card, but anyone with more than \$10 in fines will be blocked.

Blocked Cards

Spotswood Library cardholders are blocked from further transactions when a card registers more than \$10 in fines, fees or lost materials. Borrowing privileges are restored when materials are returned, found, or paid for and accounts are settled.

Replacement of Cards

The Library charges a \$2 non-refundable replacement fee for lost library cards. At no time is any individual permitted to have more than one valid library card.

Use of Cards by Others

Library cards are issued to individuals. Patrons must use their own library card to check out materials. Exceptions:

- A library card may be given to a friend or family member to pick up the cardholder's holds. No other materials can be checked out by the friend or family member.
- Parents may check out materials on their own card for their children's use.

The Library is not responsible for checking that the person who has the card in their possession is the cardholder. The cardholder is responsible for the use of their card and any fees incurred.

Lost or Stolen Cards

Cardholders must immediately report a lost or stolen card. Cardholders are liable for materials charged out from the time of loss to the time reported.

PIN numbers

All cardholders are issued a 4-digit PIN. PIN numbers are used to access the Library's computers; to review your account, renew items or place items on hold using our online catalog; and to use our online resources. Staff members cannot access cardholders' PIN numbers, but they are able to reset them once the account holder is verified.

Loan Periods, Fees, Borrowing Limits

Material Type	Loan Period	Renewals
New Adult Books & Audiobooks	14 days	3
Adult Books & Audiobooks	21 days	3
Magazines	14 days	3
ABR/ESL	21 days	3
CDs	14 days	3
New Blu-Rays & DVDs	3 days	None
Blu-Rays or DVDs	7 days	None
DVD Sets	14 days	None
YA Fiction & Nonfiction	21 days	3
New Juvenile Books & Audiobooks	14 days	3
Juvenile Books & Audiobooks	21 days	3
Interlibrary Loans*	varies	None
Museum Passes	3 days	None
Chrome Books	2 hours	None

* Loan Periods for Interlibrary loans are set by the lending library.

Items cannot be renewed if another customer has a hold on them.

Borrowing Limits

There is a 50-item limit on the number of items allowed to be borrowed at one time. Reference books, and the latest magazine issues cannot be borrowed. The library reserves the right to limit the number of books on a subject or by one author, due to high demand.

Requests/Holds

- Cardholders may place requests for materials any time on the library website www.spotslibrary.org; or, during library hours, by telephone to the library (732-251-1515), or in the library themselves at a library catalog terminal or with staff assistance at the circulation desk.
- Cardholders will be notified by phone or email when a requested item is ready to be picked up. Holds will be held for 5 days from the date of notification. After that time, an item not claimed is returned to the shelf or given to the next customer.
- Cardholders may not check out an item that is on hold for another cardholder.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Interlibrary loan, or ILL, is the borrowing and lending of materials between libraries. The purpose of interlibrary loan is to obtain materials to meet customer needs when local resources are inadequate. A resident card holder in good standing with a current Spotswood Public Library card may request material using interlibrary loan. Fines and overdue fees must be cleared before an interlibrary loan request will be processed. Interlibrary loan requests may be made **in person** at the Circulation Desk. Patrons who regularly request items and then fail to pick them up may be denied access to this service.

The Spotswood Public Library is not responsible for arrival times of material.

ILL items may generally be kept for a period of two weeks. If the item is needed for a longer period of time, the Spotswood Public Library must be contacted at least 3 days before the end of the loan period to ensure enough time for the lending library to respond to the request.

The Spotswood Public Library will abide by all conditions set by the lending library for the use of its materials.

The borrower is responsible for lost or damaged books. A bill will be requested from the lending library and the customer will pay this bill in a check made out to the lending library. If the customer does not make payment, Spotswood Public Library will assume responsibility, and the patron's card will be blocked.

Lost and Overdue Materials

Duplicate copies of lost and overdue notices are generated by the STELLA circulation system. Notices are sent to both the library user and the library. However, the responsibility for returning borrowed materials and paying all fines and fees accrued is not dependent upon the cardholder receiving overdue notification.

Claims Returned Materials

If a library cardholder notifies the library that an item was previously returned or never checked out when the circulation system indicates that the item is checked out to them, the library staff on duty will check the shelf for the item*. If the item is found on the shelf, the library will waive any fees that have accrued in the system for the item. If the item is not on the shelf, the staff will ask the patron to look for the item again and make a note on their record.

If the patron still cannot find the item and still claims that the item was returned, library staff will set the item to the status of claims returned and notify the Library Director. This will not affect the patron's borrowing privileges. Staff will check the shelves on a weekly basis for the item for up to 30 days. If the item is found, the item will be removed from the patron's record with no fees assessed. If the patron finds the item during the 30 days and then returns it, no charges will be assessed. If neither the Library nor the patron find the item after 30 days, the item status will be changed to Lost, and the bill for the item and the processing fee will be waived. A patron is limited to two incidents of claiming missing materials have been returned. If the patron claims to have returned more than one item at the same time which cannot be located, this will count as once claims returned incident. Starting with the third incident and any incidents of claims returned thereafter, the patron will be billed in full for the item plus the processing fee.

*Spotswood Library staff can only mark a Spotswood item claims returned. For items that are owned by another library in STELLA, the patron will have to contact the owning library and they will determine how the situation is to be resolved.

Charges for Lost, Damaged, or Unreturned Materials

Restitution must be made for lost, damaged or unreturned materials. Library materials are meant for the use, research, or entertainment of all. Lost, damaged, or unreturned materials breach this trust. Until restitution is made the Spotswood Public Library will block the delinquent cardholder from further transactions, including participation in library programs and the checkout of more materials.

Restitution for lost or damaged materials should be equivalent to the replacement cost of the materials, with the addition of a processing fee. The current processing fee is \$5 per item. The processing fee is non-refundable. The processing fee will be reviewed periodically.

The borrower does **not** have the option of replacing lost/damaged material with a donated copy. The Library reserves the right to choose replacements that best suit community needs.

When there is question as to whether an item has been damaged beyond further library utility, the Library Director will be the final arbitrator. If the item can no longer be used in the collection, the customer will be responsible for the complete replacement cost of the item, plus a processing fee. Similarly, if an item has some damage, but is still usable, the library director will determine the appropriate fine for the damages. In the latter case, the assessment of damages will be decided on an individual basis -- based on the extent of the damage and the cost of the item.

Refunds

The library does not refund the cardholder the price of lost, unreturned or damaged items that were paid for by the patron in the event that s/he finds the lost item. Once the cardholder pays for a lost, unreturned or damaged item, the item becomes the property of the cardholder.

Returning Library Materials

- Materials can be returned to the circulation desk when the library is open.
- The outside book drop is always open for most materials.
- Museum passes must be returned to the circulation desk.

Photocopying and Printing Fees

- Black and white \$.15
- Color \$.25

Faxing Services

As of July 2025, the fee for sending or receiving faxes is set at \$1.00 per page. Faxes can only be sent to numbers in the US or 800 numbers.

This policy was reviewed and approved by The Spotswood Library Board of Trustees at a regular meeting on September 18, 2014. Revised: April 21, 2016, February 2, 2017, June 20, 2019, October 17, 2019, December 19, 2019, July 28, 2025