

# LIBRARY PATRON POLICY

Within the library facilities, the use of the library collection is free to all. Library cards must be presented to check out material.

## Library Cards

Adult patrons and the parents or guardians of card holders under the age of 18 attest to the following disclaimer on all library card applications concerning adherence to library policy and copyright law:

“I understand I am responsible for this card and all materials checked out on this card until this card is reported lost or missing. I am further responsible for any charges that may result from late return, loss, or damage of materials borrowed. This privilege allows me to use the Public Internet computers and I agree to abide by the Internet Use Policy.”

### Resident Card

Library cards are issued free of charge and are valid for three (3) years to residents of Wells County who do not live within the city limits of Markle. All adults are required to show proof of address.

Teens' cards are issued to children ages 12 through 17. Kids' cards are issued to children ages 4 through 11. Teens' and Kids' cards require a parent/guardian's signature and proof of address. These cards have limited borrowing privileges, as set by the library director.

Any card not barred or blocked by the library's system is considered in "good standing." Cards in good standing are eligible for renewal at no charge and have access to all physical and electronic materials in accordance to their age group.

### Property Owners

Non-residents who pay property or personal property tax in Wells County are issued a library card valid for three years. Non-residents need to show tax receipts at time of card renewal. Property Owner cards in "good standing" have the same benefits of a resident card.

### Paid Non-Resident Card

Non-residents may have the privilege of borrowing library materials by purchasing a Wells County Public Library Card. These fees are non-refundable and cards are valid for one (1) year. Paid non-resident cards in "good standing" have the same benefits of a resident card.

### **Teacher Card**

Individuals who teach in Wells County may have a library card for classroom use to be renewed annually on September 1<sup>st</sup> that is good for one (1) year. Teacher cards in “good standing” have the same benefits as a resident card. Teachers may not borrow items for personal use on their teacher card.

### **Institution Card**

Nursing homes, non-profits, and other service organizations in or serving Wells County may be issued a card at the discretion of the director, branch manager, or circulation manager. This card is good for one (1) year from the date of issue and may be used for the benefit of the institution and its patrons, but not the personal use of the staff. Institution cards in “good standing” have the same benefits as a resident card.

### **PLAC Card**

The *Public Library Access Card (PLAC)* is the name for the statewide library card enacted by the Indiana General Assembly in 1993 ([Indiana Code 4-23-7.1-5.1](#)). The PLAC program allows an individual to purchase a card which allows them to borrow materials directly from any public library in Indiana. Any individual who holds a valid Indiana public library card may obtain a PLAC card. Each PLAC card is valid for 12 months after issued and have the benefits of a resident card with the exception of hotspots and electronic materials.

### **Reciprocal Card**

Residents or property owners of the Huntington City Township Public Library district serving Huntington Township, the City of Huntington and the Town of Markle, Indiana, and residents or property owners of the Wells County Public Library district serving Wells County, Indiana, shall have reciprocal borrowing privileges. The reciprocal patron’s privileges will be the same as a resident patron with the exception of hotspots and electronic materials.

### **Student Card**

Students in grades K-12, who attend a Wells County school but live outside of Wells County or within Markle city limits, may have a library card for use during the school year only. Current proof of attendance is required. Borrowing privileges are the same as the age appropriate resident card.

### **Digital Card**

This card only allows access to our electronic materials. It is valid for three (3) years. Residents, property owners, and all students and teachers at Wells County schools are eligible. Those who already possess another Wells County Public Library Card of any kind will not be granted a digital card.

## **Patron Policy for Young Children, Parents, Dependent Adults & Caregivers**

Out of concern for the safety and security of children and dependent adults, the Wells County Public Library abides by the following policy.

- Children under 6 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or adult caregiver at all times while in the library. Parents may not leave their young children unattended while using other areas of the library or attending meetings.
- Children ages 6 and older may use the library unattended as long as they are engaged in activities associated with the use of a public library. Adult caregivers are encouraged not to leave children age 6 to 10 more than an hour unattended, as their attention spans are limited and they may become bored or disruptive after extended periods of time.

Those responsible for minor children or dependent adults should know

- A child or dependent adult who is disruptive or who is not reading, studying, using library equipment, or playing quietly may be asked to leave the library.
- If necessary, a library staff member will contact the police department to report cases of unattended children.
- In all situations, the parent or adult caregiver who has brought minor children or dependent adults onto the library premises or who has otherwise directed or allowed minor children or dependent adults onto the library premises shall be responsible for the care and safety of those individuals.
- The library is not responsible for the care and safety of minor children or dependent adults traveling to and from the library premises.
- The library staff does not take the place of the parent, act as caregiver, nor assume responsibility for the unattended children or dependent adults.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to talk to the children's librarian if they have questions or want additional information regarding these policies.

### **Standards of Patron Behavior**

Wells County Public Library requires that all visitors comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws as well as the following rules and regulations. Behavior that interferes with library services and activities (including the ability of library staff to perform their work and the ability of other patrons to effectively use and enjoy the library facilities) is prohibited in all areas of the library building. Library patrons are expected to do the following:

- Behave in a non-disruptive manner. Disruptive or unsafe behavior includes, but is not limited to, loud talking, loud equipment, inappropriate language, running, throwing things, hitting, pushing, or shoving.
- Refrain from touching or any interaction that is threatening, unwelcome, or inappropriate towards others in a family-friendly setting.
- Avoid unlawful possession of firearms, fireworks, or other weapons on library property.

- The use of all tobacco and vaping products, including electronic cigarettes, is strictly prohibited on library property.
- Supervise behavior and safety of minors or dependent adults for which they are responsible.
- Attend to personal belongings.
- Use the library, furniture, equipment, and materials for their intended function.
- Keep passageways and access to the library or any parts of the library open.
- Wear appropriate clothing.
- Use covered containers when bringing beverages into the library and comply with posted “No Food or Drink” zones. Food must be confined to individually consumed snacks and must not be distracting to other patrons or damaging to library materials. Patrons must properly dispose of their food and drink trash.
- Use restrooms only for their intended purpose.
- Refrain from solicitation of any kind for any purpose without prior approval of the library director.
- With the permission of the librarian in charge, patrons may use library telephones briefly and appropriately.
- Avoid bringing animals, except for service or support animals, into the library without prior permission of the library director.
- Use library parking areas and sidewalks safely.
- Leave the library by the designated closing time.
- Staff guidelines and the library’s disciplinary procedures are detailed in the Standards of Patron Behavior Manual.

## **Incident Reports**

Incident reports are used for both patron or staff accidents and disruptive behavior.

- When an accident occurs, incident reports should be completed, signed and given to the director or branch manager.
- When disruptive behavior occurs, incident reports should be completed, signed, and given to the adult services manager or director.

## **Video Surveillance**

The Wells County Public Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its staff and patrons. In pursuit of this objective, selected public areas of the library premises are under continuous camera surveillance and recording. This policy is in effect to deter public endangerment, vandalism, theft, and mischief in unsupervised areas and to identify those individuals involved in such activity for law enforcement purposes. Use of recordings will adhere to the applicable federal, state, and local law concerning the confidentiality of library records and the protection of individual privacy. Clearly worded camera surveillance signage is prominently displayed at library entrances.

Reasonable efforts shall be made to safeguard the privacy of patrons and employees. Cameras are not installed in areas where staff and patrons have a reasonable

expectation of privacy. Confidentiality/privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage.

Recordings may be used by authorized individuals or law enforcement to identify the person or persons responsible for library policy violations, criminal activity on library property, actions considered disruptive to normal library operations or violation of the library's Standards of Patron Behavior.

Recordings are retained until the image capacity of the system is reached. The oldest stored images are automatically deleted. Recordings of incidents are retained and reviewed as long as considered necessary by the library director. Staff may comply with law enforcement requests to view footage of incidents. All requests for copied footage by law enforcement will be referred to the library director or IT manager.

## **Patron Privacy**

Efforts are made to maintain a patron's sense of privacy and safety. If individuals call or enter the building looking for a patron, staff will not provide information to those individuals. Patrons are welcome to walk through the building. Staff will not use the phone system to page an individual at the request of another individual. Staff may take a name and phone number to pass along if they see the individual. WCPL staff are not privy to personal relationships or protective orders between individuals and want to protect the safety of the patrons in our building.