

Policy Statement

Library cards are issued in order to identify eligible users and to determine the level of access to services and resources.

Regulations

1. Library Card Types

The Library offers and accepts a variety of cards based on the library's legal service area and reciprocity agreements with other southwest Michigan libraries.

A. Resident/property owner card

- i. Available to any individual who lives in the library's legal service area annually seven months or more per year.
- ii. Available to any individual, or person residing with an individual, who owns property in the library's legal service area.

B. Reciprocal home library card

- i. Available to any individual who possesses a resident/property owner library card from a Michigan library that has entered into a reciprocity agreement with VBDL and resides within a municipality with a dedicated property tax supporting its home library.
- ii. This card does not allow access to premium special collections, or access to premium downloadable or streamed media purchased by VBDL. Other restrictions may apply as determined by library administration.

C. Courtesy card

- i. Available to any individual who works in the library's legal service area but is not eligible for a resident/property owner card. Courtesy card privileges do not extend beyond the individual employed in the VBDL service area.
- ii. Available to any active-duty member of the United States military or family member living at the same address not eligible for a resident/property owner card.

D. Existing non-resident purchased library card

- i. Available to any individual not eligible for a Resident/property owner card, who was a Non-resident purchased library card holder as of November 20, 2025, the date this Policy was amended ("Existing non-resident purchased card holder"). On November 20, 2025, the Library discontinued and no longer offers Non-resident purchased library cards to anyone other than

Existing non-resident purchased card holders in good standing. In order to remain eligible, Existing non-resident purchased card holders must not allow the card to expire. If the card expires, the patron will no longer be an Existing non-resident purchased card holder and their Existing non-resident purchased card will not be eligible for renewal.

- ii. May be used by any member of a family. The family members, regardless of how many there are, living at the same address as the person who originally applied for the Existing non-resident purchased card may each register for their own Existing non-resident purchased card as long as the original, paid Existing non-resident purchased card remains current and in good standing.
- iii. Allows full privileges at any VBDL location.
- iv. Requires payment of a semi-annual or annual fee as determined by library administration. The fee will be based upon the annual cost associated with providing library cards to an average household within VBDL's legal service area. The expiration date will be set to that of the original card. The annual fee is subject to change.
- v. At its sole discretion, the Library Board may choose to discontinue the issuance of Existing non-resident purchased cards at any time. If the Library Board discontinues Existing non-resident purchased cards, the Existing non-resident purchased cards which are active at that time will remain valid until their expiration and will not be renewed after the expiration date.

E. Temporary card

- i. Available to residents, property owners, reciprocal users, and individuals employed in the VBDL service area who upon initial application do not possess the appropriate documentation to receive another card type.
- ii. Available to individuals living in Van Buren District Library's service area on a transitory basis.
- iii. Valid for 90 days.
- iv. May be converted to another card type upon presentation of the appropriate documentation for that card type.
- v. May be used to borrow up to three (3) physical items at any one time, to use library computers, and for remote access to the library's Transparent Language and Princeton Online Tutoring platforms. A Temporary cardholder's record may not exceed three (3) physical items on loan at any time. This card does not allow access to interlibrary loan, remote access to all library databases,

borrowing of items from premium special collections, the borrowing of mobile Internet hotspots, or access to downloadable or streamed media purchased by VBDL. Other restrictions may apply as determined by library administration.

F. Staff card

- i. Available to current VBDL employees.
- ii. Privileges are the same as a resident/property owner card.
- iii. Is exempt from overdue fines.

2. An individual may only have one card of any type.

3. Application Process

An application process must be completed for each card.

A. Resident/property owner card

- i. Resident/property owner card applicants must present valid identification to demonstrate eligibility.
- ii. Current photo ID or other legal proof of identity, and proof of street address is required, such as a passport, Michigan driver's license, state ID card, current lease, rent receipt, tax bill, tax receipt, utility bill, green card, visa, guest worker permit, foreign exchange student documentation, documentation from a group care facility, documentation demonstrating employer provided housing, or parole papers. Post office box addresses will not be accepted.
- iii. VBDL's service area consists of:
 - Almena Township
(excludes residents living within the Paw Paw School District)
 - Antwerp Township
(excludes residents living within the Paw Paw School District)
 - Village of Mattawan
 - Arlington Township
 - Bangor Township
 - City of Bangor
 - Bloomington Township
 - Columbia Township
 - Covert Township
 - Decatur Township
 - Village of Decatur
 - Geneva Township (by contract)
 - City of Gobles
 - Hamilton Township
 - Lawrence Township
 - Village of Lawrence

Paw Paw Township
(excludes residents living within the Paw Paw School District)
Pine Grove Township
Porter Township
Waverly Township
(excludes residents living within the Paw Paw School District)

- iv. Applicants who own property but do not otherwise reside in the library's service area must present a recent tax bill or receipt.

B. Reciprocal home library card

- i. Reciprocal home library card applicants must present a valid photo ID or other legal proof of identity that bears the applicant's current residential address located within a municipality with a dedicated property tax supporting its home library, and valid library card in good standing from a Michigan library organization which has entered into a reciprocity agreement with VBDL.
- ii. VBDL has entered into reciprocity agreements with the following Michigan library organizations:
 - Allegan District Library
(includes Allegan, City of Allegan, Cheshire, Valley, Heath, and Monterey residents living within the Allegan School District)
 - Cass District Library
(includes all of Cass County except Dowagiac, Flowerfield, Keeler, Marcellus, Silver Creek, and Wayne Townships)
 - Dowagiac District Library
(includes City of Dowagiac, the part of Keeler Township within Dowagiac District Library's service area, Silver Creek Township, and Wayne Township)
 - Hartford Public Library
(excludes the part of Keeler Township within Hartford Public Library's service area)
 - Kalamazoo Public Library District
(includes City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Township, Oshtemo, and Texas Township residents living within in the Kalamazoo School District, excludes Texas Township residents living outside of the Kalamazoo School District)
 - Village of Lawton
 - Marcellus Township Wood Memorial Library
(excludes Flowerfield Township)
 - Otsego District Library
(includes Alamo Township, Otsego, Otsego City, excludes Trowbridge and Watson Townships)
 - Paw Paw District Library
(includes all of the Paw Paw School District)

South Haven Memorial Library
Watervliet District Library

C. Courtesy card

- i. Courtesy card applicants must present a current photo ID or legal proof of identity, and proof of employment within VBDL's service area such as a current pay stub showing the company address or current valid workplace identification.
- ii. Members of the United States military applying for a Courtesy card must show a photo ID and proof of active duty. Family members living at the same address applying for a card under this section must show a copy of the proof of active duty.

D. Temporary card

- i. A current photo ID or other proof of identity.
- ii. A street address in VBDL's legal service area or the legal service area of a library organization with which VBDL has a reciprocal agreement.

E. Minors need a parent or guardian's co-signature. Co-signers must present proper ID. A minor's birth certificate may be requested to confirm the relationship to the parent or if the minor is not present to receive the card. Guardians must present current guardianship or foster care custody paperwork listing the applicant's name along with appropriate ID. Emancipated minor applicants do not need a parent or guardian's co-signature but must present legal proof of emancipation listing the applicant's name.

4. Renewing Library Cards

Library cards must be renewed every year. Courtesy cards and Existing Non-Resident Purchased cards must be renewed annually. Cardholders must provide the same type of documentation used to apply for a new card. Minors must renew their cards upon turning 18 years of age to assume legal responsibility for items checked out. Non-Resident Purchased Card renewal applicants must present a current photo ID or other legal proof of identity along with the requisite annual card fee. The annual card fee is due at the time of renewal.

5. Card Holder Responsibilities

The cardholder is responsible for all materials borrowed on the card and agrees to abide by all library policies and regulations.

A. Lost or stolen cards should be reported immediately.

B. The cardholder may add other authorized users on an account to allow others to pick up holds, pay bills, and view items checked out on the account.

- C. A minor's parent or legal guardian is responsible for regulating all access to and use of library materials including the Internet and video media or content. A minor's parent or legal guardian will have the option of prohibiting the minor's Internet access and video media borrowing privileges.
- 6. Clients should have their library card barcode available in order to use the library's services.
- 7. This policy supersedes all previously adopted library card policies of the Van Buren District Library.

Approved: June 25, 2013. Amended: October 22, 2019. Amended August 27, 2024. Amended November 20, 2025.
Van Buren District Library Board of Trustees

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