Frequently Asked Questions

[expand all][collapse all]

Catalog

Your Account

Can I access my borrowing history?

Printer-friendly version

Yes. You can choose to save your reading history by logging into your account and changing your account preferences. A new reading history does not include items checked out in the past or items currently checked out. It begins with the next item checked out after your preferences have been changed. The reading history is updated during an overnight process. Please be aware that if you enable your reading history your data may be accessed by law enforcement personnel without your consent.

How can I be notified that my materials are due or that my materials are ready for pick up?

Printer-friendly version

Customers are able to select their preferred method of notification; Email, Phone, or Standard mail.

Depending on which option customers select, PGCMLS will attempt the following courtesy notifications:

Almost due (2-3 days before due date) = email

Hold pick-up = email, phone

1st Overdue (14 days past due) = email, phone, standard mail

2nd Overdue (30 days past due) = email, phone, standard mail

Collection Warning (account balance $25 or more) = standard mail

If selecting email contact, please be sure to set your email account to accept mail from librarynotices@pgcmls.info and polaris@pgcmls.info in order to receive our notifications. If you experience problems, please visit our Email Whitelist Instructions. You may also, if you wish, opt to receive additional text notifications.

NOTE: All notifications are courtesy contacts and their receipt is not guaranteed. Customers are strongly encouraged to retain their checkout and renewal receipts to confirm dates due.

I have tried but I am not able to access my account online. What am I doing wrong?

Printer-friendly version

The information you key in must exactly match the information in our computer record.

- Type in your complete library card number with no spaces (number is on the back of your card under the barcode).

- Type in your password. (Initially your password will be set to the last 4 digits of the primary telephone number listed on the account when you applied for your card.)

Once you have logged in you may, if you wish, reset your password to one of your choosing. Please note; updating your phone number in our system will not update your password.

If you have forgotten your password or do not remember your original phone number please contact your local branch library and they can reset your password to the last 4 digits of the primary phone number currently on file. They can also verify that the library has your current phone number and that you aren't using an expired or renumbered card.

Library Cards

Is there a charge for a replacement card?

Printer-friendly version

No, there is no charge to replace your PGCMLS library card.

I lost my card. What do I do?

Printer-friendly version

Report that your card is lost immediately to be sure that you are not held responsible for materials that an unauthorized person may check out using your card. To report your card lost, call or visit any branch library. You are responsible for all materials and charges up to the time you report your card lost or stolen.

How do I update my library card information?

Printer-friendly version

Minor changes such as adding an e-mail address or updating contact information can be processed for customers via "Contact Us," over the phone, or in person at the branch. You will need to provide your library account number. Major changes such as name changes or replacing a card must be done in person at the branch. Photo ID is required. A card may be reported lost or stolen via any of the above methods.

Why is it important to update my library card information?

Printer-friendly version

It is important to update your library card information when you change your address, phone number, email address or name so that the Library can properly notify you about overdue materials and materials on hold.

Can I use a library card from another county or city library system in the PGCMLS System?

Printer-friendly version

Yes. You may register to use your library card if you have a card from any county library system in Maryland, from the District of Columbia, or from Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Loudon County or Prince William Counties in Virginia. A picture ID and proof of residency will be needed and an application must be filled out to enter your card into the PGCMLS system.

Can I get a statewide MPower card from PGCMLS?

Printer-friendly version

Yes, PGCMLS offers the statewide MPower card. The MPower card originating in Prince George's County can be used throughout the State.

I have a statewide MPower card. May I use it in Prince George's County?

Printer-friendly version

The statewide MPower card is valid in Prince George's County libraries. Before your first use of the MPower card, you must present it in a Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) branch. You will be asked to present ID and fill out an application. You will need a PGCMLS library card number to access some databases offered by PGCMLS.

Why do library cards expire?

Printer-friendly version

Renewing library cards helps the Library ensure that our contact information for our customers is kept current and protects you from fraudulent usage of your card. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Does my library card expire?

Printer-friendly version

Yes. Library cards expire three years after the date of issue or after the last update. To renew your library card, you must visit a branch so that staff can verify your address and update the information in your record and renew the card for another three years.

How do I get a Library Card?

Printer-friendly version

You must present a state or federally issued photo ID to obtain a library card. Residents of the State of Maryland or anywhere in the greater metropolitan Washington D.C. area may obtain a resident library card free of charge. Proof of residency is required. Nonresidents with proper ID may obtain a Prince George's County library card by paying a nonrefundable annual fee of $50.00.

Borrowing Items

Why can't I renew an item even though I have no overdue materials on my library card?

Printer-friendly version

Your card may have expired, the item you are trying to renew may not be a renewable item (e.g Interlibrary loan), the item may already have been renewed the maximum number of times, or another customer may have placed a hold on the title.

One reason that you may get a - Consult Library Staff - response when you attempt to renew, is because your record has been stopped due to a notification to you that has been returned as undeliverable. Please verify contact information on your account and make sure that your email server will accept messages from PGCMLS.

Can I renew items online?

Printer-friendly version

Yes, you can renew items online via the Library's Catalog. Click on the Your Account button and log into your account. Once you are in your account, you can list the items checked out to you, and you will see the Renew option on that screen. You can either renew all items checked out to you or renew only selected ones.

Please be sure to wait for the confirmation screen to ensure your renewal was successful. Until you receive this confirmation, we can not guarantee the renewal has been processed.

I checked out an audio book and lost one disc from the set. What do I do?

Printer-friendly version

Please contact your local library about lost component charges.

When is an overdue item considered lost?

Printer-friendly version

When an item ages 45 days past due, it is considered lost and the replacement cost of the material as well as an overdue fine is billed to the account. If the customer returns this material in good condition within one year of the billing date, the replacement cost of this item will be waived in favor of the overdue fine. After one year, the replacement cost will not be waived upon return regardless of condition.

Can I buy and replace a lost item?

Printer-friendly version

In some cases, replacements may be accepted to replace a lost item.

Replacement materials must be the same or more recent edition and the same format as the material you borrowed and the title and ISBN must match.

Print material must be new or in pristine condition. Audio and video format materials must be new with seals and manufacturer's shrinkwrap intact.

Items which have been in a billed status for one year or more, may not be replaced but must be paid for as lost.

I am sure I returned an item, yet, it is still on my account. What should I do?

Printer-friendly version

You should check with the Circulation staff at the branch library where you returned the item and ask them to assist you.

Is it possible to check out books when I have fines on my Library Account?

Printer-friendly version

Yes, as long as your account is not otherwise delinquent, and your accumulated balance is below $5.00. If you owe $5.00 or more in fines or fees, have two or more overdue items, or any items 45 days or more past due on your record, your account is considered "delinquent," and you may not borrow any additional materials until the delinquency is cleared. Accounts that have been referred to collections may not borrow until the balance is brought to zero.

How long do I have to pay my fines?

Printer-friendly version

Payment of fines and fees are due upon an item’s return. We can normally allow small balances to carry over on an account but customers whose records are delinquent may be subject to submission to collection and the charge of additional fees, if materials are 45 days or more past due or there is a balance on the record of $25.00 or higher.

How much fine is charged per day for books or videos?

Printer-friendly version

Overdue fines are charged as follows:

Adult and Teen print or audio materials - $0.25 per day per item - maximum is $8.00 per item

Children's print or audio materials - $0.10 per day per item - maximum is $5.00 per item

Video format materials - $1.00 per day per item - maximum is $10.00 per item.

Fines are calculated upon the item's renewal or return. Non-returned items 45 days or more past due are considered lost and the replacement cost of the item plus and overdue fine will be billed to the account. Return of the item in good condition to any PGCMLS branch within one year, will waive the billed cost in favor of the overdue fine.

Is there a charge to borrow video materials?

Printer-friendly version

There is no charge to borrow video materials provided they are returned by the due date.

What is the loan period for videos?

Printer-friendly version

Educational/Non-fiction videos: 21-days

Entertainment videos: 7 days

Most video format items may be renewed 1 time provided there are no open holds on the title.

Can anyone borrow videos?

Printer-friendly version

Presently, any adult with a valid Prince George's County library card may borrow any circulating video materials.

Minors under the age of 18 with a valid Prince George's County library card may only borrow video format materials from the Juvenile collection.

How many items can I check out per visit?

Printer-friendly version

There is no per visit limit on borrowing as long as the total number of items checked out to the account does not exceed the 75 global limit at any given time.

How long can I keep items?

Printer-friendly version

The normal loan period for print and audio format material is 21 days.

Educational videos, 21 days.

Entertainment videos, 7 days.

Most print and audio materials can be renewed up to 2 additional loan periods if the material is not overdue or on hold for another customer.

Video format materials and Marina reserves can be renewed up to one additional loan period if the material is not overdue or on hold for another customer.

Interlibrary loan materials from outside the Marina system may not be renewed.

What is the maximum number of items that can be checked out on my Library Card?

Printer-friendly version

There is a "global" borrowing limit of 75 items that can be checked out on a library card at any one time. The 75 item limit may include items of mixed formats, but no more than a total of 75 items may be checked out at any one time.

Pay Fines & Fees Online

If I have a problem with a credit card payment, who do I call in the Library?

Printer-friendly version

As the merchant of record, the Library is responsible for all transaction activity, including online payments and credits, assessment and reduction of fines and fees, direct customer service, dispute resolution, and all corresponding terms and conditions. If your problem specifically relates to credit card payment, either call the Prince George's County Memorial Library System Office of Finance & Budget at 301/699-3500 (M-F, 9am to 5pm) or submit this email form. Branch staff will not be able to resolve credit card problems.

How will my credit card statements reflect online payments for fees and fines?

Printer-friendly version

Charges and credits will be identified on credit card statements as originating with PGCMLS. Specific information about the materials involved, such as the title of a book or audio device, will not appear.

What about the privacy of my library account information?

Printer-friendly version

View our Privacy Policy

Does the Library save my credit card information?

Printer-friendly version

No. The Library does not retain credit card information. In order for us to access online payment details to answer questions or resolve disputes, it will be necessary to provide the transaction ID number.

Is my online transaction secure?

Printer-friendly version

The Library is using an SSL (Secure Socket Layer) certificate for all online transactions. This is a method of encryption which encodes data sent over the Intranet and is designed to allow only the intended recipients to receive the information in a readable format. Most web browsers will show a small padlock image at the bottom of the screen to indicate you are using a secure site

The Library's online payment system is managed by controls that conform to the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard. Credit card transactions are secured through a third-party vendor, PayFlowPro, which is the same company that hosts PayPal.

What if I need a refund?

Printer-friendly version

Refunds for the replacement cost for lost materials that are paid for and then returned will be accepted for thirty days after payment. Original receipt is required for a cash or check refund for a lost and paid item. The credit for the returned item will post automatically to the customer's credit card account.

Will library staff be able to help me pay with a credit card?

Printer-friendly version

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System is strongly committed to protecting the confidentiality of both your personal information and your Library account information. Library staff will not enter your personal credit card information on any workstation. Staff will gladly help you navigate the website and show you where and how to make a credit card payment from any internet access point, but they will not be able to conduct the transaction for you. Credit cards are accepted at the Express Check Out stations and at the branch Check Out desks.

Can I pay by credit card in the branch, or only from home?

Printer-friendly version

You can pay online through any computer with an internet connection and a browser. It can be done at home, at work or at the library. You can also pay by credit card in all the branches -- either at the Express Check Out station or the Check Out desk.

Will I get a receipt?

Printer-friendly version

After submitting a payment you have the option to print the confirmation statement.

Also, a receipt will be automatically sent to your email account if you have one listed on your PGCMLS account.

How soon after payment is my fine or fee removed?

Printer-friendly version

The transaction is instantaneous with your Library account and will post to credit cardholder accounts within two business days.

Is there a minimum transaction amount?

Printer-friendly version

No.

Is there a fee or additional cost to pay via credit card?

Printer-friendly version

No.

Can I choose to pay only part of a fine?

Printer-friendly version

If you have multiple fines and/or fees on your account, you can choose to select specific charges rather than the entire sum, however you may not pay a portion of any one fine.

How do I pay online?

Printer-friendly version

It's very easy:
1) Log into your account.
2) Click the Fines & Fees button.
3) Select the fines or fees you wish to pay.
4) Click "Pay Fines Now".

View our Online Payments Video for a demonstration

Can I pay my fines and fees online?

Printer-friendly version

Yes. We accept Visa and Mastercard payments submitted through our online catalog. Debit cards with Visa or Mastercard logos that can run the payment as a charge are accepted as well.

Renewing Items

Can I renew items if there are fines on my record?

Printer-friendly version

You will not be able to renew items if you have fines of $5.00 or more

How will I know when my renewed items are due?

Printer-friendly version

If your renewal is successful through the Phone In Renewal System, the new due date(s) will be indicated by the renewal operator.

When you renew materials online, a confirmation screen will appear and the new date(s) will show on the items out screen.

Please be sure to mark down your new due date(s).

How many times can I renew borrowed items?

Printer-friendly version

Most print and audio format materials can be renewed twice.

Video format materials and Marina items may be renewed one time.

Interlibrary loan materials from outside the Marina system may not be renewed.

Note: Material that may otherwise be eligible for renewal may not be renewed if another customer has placed a reserve for the title.

Can I renew videos and DVDs?

Printer-friendly version

Video format materials may be renewed one time if there are no open holds on the title.

Can I renew items that are late?

Printer-friendly version

You may now renew items that are up to three days overdue. Any late fines will be charged to your account.

Placing Holds

How long does it take to get my holds?

Printer-friendly version

The length of time depends on the number of copies available in the Library System and the length of the waiting list, i.e. the number of customers who have also placed a hold on the title. Titles which have copies available on the shelf at the time the hold is placed and no waiting list may be trapped as soon as the next day. Items with a limited number of copies and/or a long waiting list may take up to several months.

Are there any other materials on which I can't place holds?

Printer-friendly version

Reference books are not available for loan, except in special circumstances, they may not be placed on hold.

Can holds be placed on audio tapes and compact disks?

Printer-friendly version

Yes.

Can I place holds on videos or DVDs?

Printer-friendly version

Yes.

If I place a hold on an item that shows "on shelf," will it go immediately to my pick up point so that I can pick it up the next day?

Printer-friendly version

No. When you place a hold, you must wait to be notified that the material is available. If an item shows "on shelf," you can telephone the owning branch to have staff check on the availability of the material. If available, the material can be sent to the library branch most convenient to you.

How can I get an item that is not owned by PGCMLS?

Printer-friendly version

If the item is recently released, call a branch to check on the order status of the item. For other items not owned by PGCMLS, try the Marina network. For items you cannot find in Marina, inquire at a branch library about interlibrary loan.

I am going on vacation. Can I inactivate my holds?

Printer-friendly version

You can suspend your holds using My Account through the catalog, or with help from Library staff.

How can I cancel a hold placed on an item?

Printer-friendly version

Log into your patron record and go to the Holds list. You will see the option to cancel holds on that screen

Can I change the location of my hold pickup online?

Printer-friendly version

No. Call your local library to see if you can change the pickup location of your hold.

What is the charge to hold an item?

Printer-friendly version

There is no charge to place a hold on an item that is in the PGCMLS collection or that is available from the Marina cooperative network.

For materials that are reserved from libraries outside the network through the interlibrary loan process, we will try first to borrow from free sources. If there is a charge, we will contact you to confirm you are willing to pay the amount before requesting the item.

How will I be informed when my hold comes in?

Printer-friendly version

You will be informed when to pick up your holds by telephone or email. You have 7 days to pick up your items. If you want email notification and do not currently get it, notify your local branch of your current email address and request that they turn off Phone Notification.

Can I place holds online?

Printer-friendly version

Yes. When you find the item that you want, click the title to go to the Full Record screen. A Hold Title button will appear on the left side of your screen. Click on this button and follow the steps.

Searching the Catalog

How do I suggest that PGCMLS buy something which is not currently owned?

Printer-friendly version

Please check all materials in the Library's catalog before you suggest that we purchase them. It is not necessary to suggest bestselling titles or authors.

If you would like to reserve a title which we do not own, the Information staff at your local branch will suggest it for purchase and a reserve will be placed for you at the time it is ordered for the collection (or you may contact Ask-a-Librarian. If we do not purchase the item for the Library System, your request will be forwarded to the Marina interlibrary loan system.

If you are suggesting a title for purchase, but not placing a hold on the title, your branch Information staff or Ask-a-Librarian will send publishing information to the appropriate selector for consideration.

If PGCMLS does not have an item I need, what do I do next?

Printer-friendly version

The Marina system is free of charge and allows you to find and borrow materials from cooperating libraries throughout Maryland.

Materials from out-of-state libraries may be available for a fee. Please see your branch staff about arranging to borrow these materials.

How do I request materials available at branches other than my local branch?

Printer-friendly version

You can either place a hold on an item that is available at another branch and have it delivered to the branch that is most convenient to you, or you can ask one of the information professionals at your library to reserve the item for you or have them ask the owning branch to hold the material for you so you can go to that branch and check out the material there. Likewise, you can call the branch to check on availability.

What do the prefixes in the call numbers mean?

Printer-friendly version

Call Number Prefixes	Materials
BIOGRAPHY	
BIO	Adult Biography
J BIO	Juvenile Biography
Y BIO	Young Adult Biography
RECORDED BOOK	
RB	Adult Book on Cassette
J RB	Juvenile Book on Cassette
Y RB	Young Adult Book on Cassette
BOOK WITH CASSETTE	
J BC	Juvenile Book with Cassette
E BC	Easy Book with Cassette
BOOK WITH CD	
RB/CD	Compact Disc, Book
JRB/CD	Juvenile Compact Disc, Book
COMPACT DISC	
CD	Adult Compact Disc
JCD+dewey number	Juvenile Compact Disc
CS	Computer Disc
DVD	
DVD	Digital Video Disk
DVD+dewey number	Educational DVD
JDVD	Juvenile Digital Video Disk
CHILDRENS	
E	Easy
EFB	Easy First Book
J FIC	Juvenile Fiction
J	Juvenile
ADULT	
FIC	Adult Fiction
MYS	Mystery
SF	Science Fiction
WES	Western
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	
Korean, etc	Foreign Language Collection

How do I get help to search the catalog?

Printer-friendly version

For help on any page, click the Help button on the left of your screen. Review the Lists of Other Help Topics for additional help.

Downloadable Resources

Overdrive Downloads

Can you help me to access the Overdrive downloadable materials?

Printer-friendly version

Overdrive provides an excellent Quick Start Guide and detailed information on the different downloadable formats.

How can I find out if my portable device is supported by Overdrive?

Printer-friendly version

Overdrive provides us with detailed information on Supported Devices at their Device Resources Center pages

How can I download an Overdrive Audiobook

Printer-friendly version

We provide downloadable ebooks and audio books purchased from the third party vendors. You can download WMA Audiobooks and MP3 Audiobooks from Overdrive. To find out more information please visit the Overdrive Help pages.

How can I download an eBook from Overdrive?

Printer-friendly version

We provide downloadable ebooks and audio books purchased from the third party vendors. You can download EPUB eBooks and PDF eBooks from Overdrive. To find out more information please visit the Overdrive Help pages.

OneClickDigital Downloads

How can I get some help downloading Audiobooks and Ebooks from OneClickDigital?

Printer-friendly version

OneClickDigital provides detailed help on their website. You can access their help screens at here.

OneClickDigital is requiring me to login but it will not accept my library card and password. What do I do?

Printer-friendly version

Yes OneClickDigital requires you to create a free account on their website. With a **Free** Account, you will be able to access your library's eContent collection from home 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Freegal Music Downloads

Which devices can I play the music on that I download from Freegal Music Downloads?

Printer-friendly version

The downloads on this site are all in the MP3 format with no DRM. This service will work with any MP3 player, including iPod, and can be loaded into iTunes. It works on both PCs and Macs.

How many songs can I download from Freegal Music Downloads?

Printer-friendly version

- Library users have a weekly download limit of 3 songs. You will be able to keep track of your downloads in the upper right corner of the site. Every song has a sample clip you can listen to before you download.

How can I access Freegal music downloads?

Printer-friendly version

You can log into Freegal Music Downloads using you library card number and your password. Freegal requires you to have a Prince George's County Memorial Library System card. We allow customers to register their barcodes from other County systems if they prefer to have just one card, but those cards (barcodes) cannot access this new service. Anyone registered with a library barcode from a different county has the option of getting a PGCMLS card and using that card for PGCMLS services. The terms of our contract for Freegal and the authentication process require the use of a PGCMLS barcode.

Source URL: http://www.pgcmls.info/faq