

Interlibrary Loan –Frequently Asked Questions

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is a service among participating libraries to share resources. This service is available to patrons who have a current library card from any of the 18 libraries in the Chester County Library System and whose records are updated (not expired) and fine-free. If you have any questions in addition to the ones listed below, please contact the Chester County Library's Interlibrary Loan office at 610-344-4710.

What items may be requested through interlibrary loan?

- Books not owned by the Chester County Library System.
- Audio/Visual materials such as DVDs, VHS, Music CDs, Audiocassettes, and Audio Book CDs not owned by the Chester County Library System. These materials are requested only from Pennsylvania libraries that are willing to lend Audio/Visual materials through interlibrary loan.
- Photocopies of articles from periodicals not owned by the Chester County Library System. Photocopies must be in compliance with the US copyright regulations (Title 17 of the USC).
- Newspapers on microfilm.
- Theses and dissertations.
- Books with an older publication date (50 years or more) can be requested, but maybe restricted to in-library use.
 - We make every attempt to locate a reprint if possible. Any limitations placed by the lending institution are **non-negotiable**.

What items may not be requested through interlibrary loan?

- Material already owned by the Chester County Library System, including items designated for "in library use" only. This restriction does not apply to items that have been missing or overdue for more than 3 months.
- Printed items in publication less than 6 months. These items can be requested using the Suggestion for Purchase form, however, budgetary and other considerations may not permit the purchase of every title suggested. Publication dates may be checked on Amazon.
- Audio/Visual materials that are less than one year old. These items can be requested using the Suggestion for Purchase form, however, budgetary and other considerations may not permit the purchase of every title suggested. Release dates may be checked on Amazon.
- Electronic games or computer software.
- Reference materials.

- Current editions of textbooks and test guides.
- Complete issues of periodicals.
- Genealogy items and family histories.
 - Many libraries are willing to make photocopies from these materials if a surname is provided.
- Materials needed in less than three weeks.

How long will it take?

- It can take three to eight weeks to receive an ILL item. However, it may take longer depending on the demand for and/or the rarity of the item.

How much will it cost?

- We make every effort to borrow materials at no cost to the patron. If you have indicated on your form that you are willing to pay, we will attempt to fill your request for a fee only when all attempts to obtain the material for free have been exhausted.

How will I be notified when the item is ready to be picked up?

- When your item arrives, you will be notified by email or mail, depending on the preferences set up in your patron record.
- Please make sure that the contact information in your record is current. If you are unsure, call the Chester County Reference Desk at 610-344-5957.
- If we are unable to fill your request you will be notified based on the preferences set up in your patron record.

Where do I go to pick up the item?

- ILL materials are to be picked up promptly at the library designated by you on the ILL Request Form. Returns must be at the same location where the material was picked up. Any deviation of this policy could result in the delay of the material being returned to the lending library and subsequent fines being levied.
- Some items are designated for “in library use only” and are not permitted to be taken out of the library during the loan period. This restriction usually applies to microfilm, rare books, and books borrowed from the Library of Congress. The condition and age of the book may also prohibit photocopying. These restrictions are placed by the lending library and are non-negotiable.

- Microfilm is only to be requested through those libraries that have the equipment to view and print the film. Those libraries are the Chester County Library in Exton and the Oxford Public Library in Oxford.

What is the loan period?

- The lending institution determines the length of the loan. Generally, loan periods are two to four weeks from the time the library receives the item.
- Overdue ILL items incur a fine of \$.25 per day.

Can items be renewed?

- Renewals may only be requested for books. No renewals may be requested for audio/visual material.
- All renewals are at the discretion of the lending library.
- Requests for renewal are to be made 3-4 days prior to the due date by contacting the ILL staff at the library where you picked up your material.
- Renewals may not be made after the item is already overdue.
- Only one renewal may be requested.
- Please consider limiting the number of items you request at any one time so that you will have enough time to read or listen to them before they are due. Because we are unable to guarantee the order in which requests are filled, or whether they are filled at all, please do not request a title in a series until you have read, or received through ILL, the previous installment. This also applies to television seasons/series.
- Prompt pick-up of your item is suggested as some libraries do not grant renewals. The patron making the request is responsible for the material received and for the replacement cost if the material is lost or damaged. Most libraries also include a processing fee.