

\*theme music comes in\*

**Kaila:** Welcome to Valley 101, a podcast from The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com where we answer the questions you ask about metro Phoenix. I'm your host, Kaila White.

**Kaila:** Today's question goes out to all of the book lovers. It comes from Rob in Tempe. He said he lives in Tempe and has a Tempe library card. But he also has library cards for Scottsdale, Phoenix and Maricopa County. And he was wondering what makes that possible. How come someone who lives in one city can get a card in another?

**Kaila:** Answering Rob's question today is podcast editor Katie O'Connell. Katie, take it away.

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**Katie:** Hey, Katie here. So, before I can answer Rob's question about *why* you can get library cards for other cities, I had a question of my own. Are you able to get a *physical* library card for other cities? Or just checkout books from other cities through *your* library? Or both? Here's the short answer.

**Lee:** [00:03:08] Well, both. You know, both. The big answer is yes. [00:03:13][5.1]

**Katie:** That's Lee Franklin, she's the community relations manager at Phoenix Public Library. Lee said the specifics she can speak to are related to the Phoenix Public Library, although she said they're probably similar at libraries across the county. Here's how it works.

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**Lee:** [00:03:34] Maricopa County collects the property, a county property tax. And part of that is to support library, as they say, like library services. [00:03:43][9.4]

**Katie:** Part of that tax revenue funds the Maricopa County Library District. That's a library system that operates 18 libraries across Maricopa County, mainly in smaller communities without a municipal library.

**Lee:** [00:03:54] But because because a resident of Phoenix is also a resident of the county and pays that into that property tax, then the Phoenix Public Library, we you know, we've received some revenue shares from that because that person is paying for library services in the county. [00:04:13][18.3]

**Lee:** [00:04:19] That's why we say kind of like as a reciprocal part of that library, the library system. Anybody who resides in, as in Maricopa County, is eligible to get a Phoenix Public Library card for free. [00:04:33][13.5]

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**Katie:** So the answer boils down to our taxes. Since our library services are taxed on a county level, taxpayers can get library cards at different municipal libraries.

**Lee:** [00:07:09] But, yes, as a resident of Maricopa County, you don't have to reside in Phoenix to get a Phoenix Public Library card. You just need to be there. We need to be able to verify your address in Maricopa County. And you can make use of all that we have to offer for free. [00:07:24][14.6]

**Katie:** Now, let's say you're like our question asker and you live in Tempe. How would you go about getting a Phoenix Public Library card?

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**Katie:** Lee said there are two ways of doing this. First, you can go to the Phoenix Public Library's site at Phoenix Public Library dot org and fill out an application for an *e-card*. That e-card will get you access to eBooks and eAudiobooks, as well as eLearning tools and other online research portals available through the library.

**Lee:** [00:05:47] It's pretty, it's pretty quick and not completely as fast as like instantaneous, but it's pretty pretty darn quick. Verifies your your your address and that you know, that you live at that address and then says congratulations. You have, you know, Phoenix Public Library Card. [00:06:05][17.8]

**Katie:** The second option would be to head to the library with your ID and something like a piece of mail that verifies your address. A librarian would be able to help you get a physical card as well as an ecard. At least, that's how you would do it in *normal times*. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed that a bit since the Phoenix library locations are closed for in-person visits.

**Lee:** [00:06:35] But in the meantime, like right now, what we're doing because we're close to per in-person services is if you start with our Web site, get an E card and then call us on it at our call center [00:06:47][12.4]

**Katie:** From there, a librarian at the call center should be able to help you get a physical card.

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**Katie:** So why should you get library cards from multiple libraries? There's one answer that's true regardless of the pandemic: having more cards allows you to access more products and information.

**Lee:** [00:05:06] It's, you know, to make the most of access to, you know, a valuable resource. And, you know, public library systems across our society are a great place to go to for so much.

So I'm always going to, you know, endorse. Get your Phoenix Public Library Card and many other library systems as you can. [00:05:27][21.0]

**Katie:** But there's also a more specific reason why getting it during the pandemic is beneficial. Let's say you live in Tempe and you have a library card from Tempe. Before COVID-19, if you wanted to check out a physical book from Phoenix, you could ask a librarian to put in a request through an interlibrary loan system.

**Lee:** [00:16:07] We might have an arrangement or we may be able to say, you know, library to library. Would you let us. Would you let us bar, you know, borrow this on behalf of our customer? [00:16:16][9.5]

**Katie:** However, both the Phoenix and Tempe libraries have suspended that program during the pandemic. So your best bet for getting a *physical* book from another system is to have a card for that system. Again, it's all about expanding your access to library materials.

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**Katie:** As part of their pandemic response, Phoenix Public Libraries locations shut down for in-person visits. But the Phoenix Public Library is offering expanded e-materials to supplement your entertainment. And Lee said they've seen a huge uptick in engagement from that.

**Lee:** [00:19:44] You know, like across the board on our Web site, we saw about a 30 percent increase in use of all that. We offered Kemble books. One of our products that is a children's an online children's picture book product. [00:19:56][12.9]

**Lee:** [00:19:58] We saw about a like one hundred and fifty percent increase in use in that. [00:20:04][6.3]

**Katie:** The Phoenix Public Library is also offering curbside service at all of its locations with the exception of South Mountain Community Library.

**Lee:** [00:20:31] And we want to make sure that we are taking care of two high priorities that are of equal importance. And that is, one, making like library resources available to our customers and to our communities, but also providing the safest and most healthiest environment possible for our staff, our visitors, our neighborhoods and our customers. [00:20:56][25.7]

**Katie:** Here's how members can take advantage of curbside pickup. Go to Phoenix Public Library dot org and place holds on the physical items you'd like to check out.

**Lee:** [00:21:31] When you know, when you get your notice from us that your items ready to pick up, go to your your designated library location and check the hours on Phoenix Public Library dot org. We have curbside hours there in the morning. We have them on Saturday and we have them in the evenings. But just, you know, double check what are out. The hours are for your

designated location and come on down and follow the instructions and pick up your stuff.  
[00:21:56][24.8]

**Katie:** And the annual summer reading program is still happening this year. Kids can sign up online and track how many minutes a day they read. It's a program that's got a huge fan in one local reader.

**Sarah** 00:19 - My name is Sarah Jamarillo. And I'm actually from here from Phoenix was born and raised here.

**Katie:** Sarah has been participating in the Phoenix Public Library reading program since she was a kid. She has fond memories of visiting the Maryvale Library with her siblings and checking out as many books as possible.

**Sarah** 1:45 - And I just remember growing up and I believe it was like a paper that we would have to fill in and we got to show. And I just it was just something exciting. The library wasn't very big, but now we've got a Central Library, Burton Barr. But I just remembered the excitement of going into the library every couple weeks. That was like a big treat for a big family.

**Katie:** Today, Sarah works as a teacher and she has three kids of her own.

**Sarah** 2:11 - My son my oldest son is named Michael. He's eleven. My daughter's name is Sophia and she's nine. And my youngest is Matthew and he's six.

**Katie:** Sarah and her kids are all part of the summer reading program. In fact, they were at the library in March when she got an email saying that schools were transferring to online instruction.

**Sarah** 3:52 - After I got that email, we checked out as many books as we could. And once the library started doing the curbside, like this is what we do on a weekly basis. We go together and we go get our books that we put on hold and we stop and get a donut on the way home to the library.

**Katie:** Sarah said her kids have earned free food coupons or access to a national park from the program. And overall, it's been a big help in getting through the summer.

**Sarah** 4:21 - So we're inside, we're very much a stay at home, mask up family. So having the opportunity that this summer programs at the library is still holding it has been pretty amazing and mentally lifesaving for us this summer.

**Katie:** And the good news is the program is being extended.

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**Katie:** Well Kaila, I know that's a lot of information, but what it basically boils down to is this ... no matter where you live in Maricopa County, you can get library cards from different library systems. And it's because of how our taxes work. That means more access to different programs and materials for the more than 4 million people who live in the Valley.

**Kaila:** Katie, did you ever participate in a program like the summer reading program?

**Katie:** Yes! As a kid I spent most of my summers in Toledo, Ohio. That's where my mom lived. And we'd sometimes have to go to the library daily. My brother and I would compete against each other, as kids do, so we'd fly through books. Nothing like a smidge of sibling rivalry to enhance your reading.

**Kaila:** (If you did one of these programs, feel free to put something like that here! Or add in another reaction)

**Kaila:** Well listeners, that's all for today. If you enjoyed today's episode, please be sure to rate and review our show wherever you listen to podcasts. And if you have a question you'd like us to answer, feel free to send it to us at valley 101 podcast dot azcentral dot com. You can also find us on Twitter. We're at Valley 101 pod.

**Kaila:** I'm Kaila White, signing off for day.