

# **New Publisher policies limit access to eBooks and eAudios from Washington-Centerville Public Library**

Washington-Centerville Public Library patrons currently enjoy a wide selection of eBooks and eAudiobooks. Recent policy changes by major publishers threaten future access to these items resulting in fewer copies available and longer wait times for popular titles. These new policies restrict how libraries can purchase and circulate eBooks and eAudiobooks. This is an alarming trend and will hamper Washington-Centerville Public Library's ability to deliver on its mission. Specifically, these new policies:

- Limit the number of copies libraries can purchase, as well as when and how long they can remain active in the library's catalog before having to repurchase the eBook/eAudiobook.
- Deny libraries access to electronic new releases. Instead, libraries will have to wait to purchase titles until after they've had a period of time on the retail market.
- Make it impossible for libraries to provide equal access to information and meet the growing demands for eBooks and eAudiobooks.

Washington-Centerville Public Library has offered eBooks and eAudiobooks for nearly 15 years, long before it was as popular as it is today. Since that time, patrons have come to embrace this format with more than 170,000 eBooks and 95,000 eAudiobooks borrowed in 2018. In just the past three years, usage of eBooks and eAudiobooks has increased by 20% and eAudiobooks checked out four times as often as CD books.

The costs associated with eBooks and eAudiobooks are rising as well. Libraries are often required to pay several times the retail price and now may be forced to repurchase popular titles every two years. Washington-Centerville Public Library spent \$324,000 in 2018 on eBooks and eAudiobooks, an increase of 84% over the previous year. This represents 26% of the total materials budget.

Libraries have long partnered with the publishing community. WCPL joins fellow libraries, library associations and consortia across the nation to request publishers work with us to find common ground that meets their need to earn revenue and the library's need to effectively serve patrons. We will keep you updated on this important issue as it evolves.