



**HERE ARE SOME COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS,
WITH THOROUGH EXPLANATIONS.**

STILL NEED HELP? CALL US!

HQ: 908-788-1434 | NCB: 908-730-6135

WHY MAIN?

Shared access is the wave of the future! By joining MAIN, HCL gained access to millions more physical items. For our patrons, that makes a huge difference in availability of items, and reduced holds queues. Behind the scenes, entering our collection into a shared catalog presents a significant cost savings for the library. This allows us to offer more digital materials, for example, and to focus on upgrades to our facilities as we continue to work to meet the needs of our patrons.

WHAT IS MAIN?

The Morris Automated Information Network (MAIN) is a consortium of 49 public libraries (and growing!) spread across the counties of Morris, Somerset, Warren and, now, Hunterdon. MAIN was originally created in 1980 to help oversee the initial automation of local library systems. Over time, it has evolved into a full-fledged public library consortium incorporated as a nonprofit organization which offers its members cost-sharing opportunities, library automation services, technical support, and an organizational structure conducive to collaboration and efficient management of tax dollars. We are more powerful when we work together!

CAN I STILL USE MY HUNTERDON COUNTY LIBRARY CARD?

Absolutely! Not only is your Hunterdon County Library card still good at all Hunterdon locations, you can now bring your card to any MAIN member library and check out items in person, in addition to placing holds on items through the shared catalog.

DOES ANYTHING CHANGE ABOUT THE WAY HCL ITEMS CIRCULATE?

Yes. Being a member of a library consortium means that we have to play by some new group rules. Patrons are now limited to 25 holds at a time, 100 checkouts. Borrowing periods have not changed.

WHY CAN'T I PLACE A HOLD ON A PARTICULAR ITEM?

Each member library sets their own rules for how their collection circulates. For example, new books owned by Hunterdon circulate only to Hunterdon County Library patrons for a period of 60 days before being opened up to the full MAIN membership. Some libraries choose to limit items types, like DVD's. If you are not able to place your hold using the shared catalog, there is probably a local library rule restricting access of that item. In these instances, please feel free to reach out to us for more information.

WHY CAN'T I SEE MY HOLDS POSITION?

In a consortial library environment, distribution of holds can be very complicated. You may be #50 out of 100 holds on an item but, depending on priority rules, you may be the first to receive the book. Alternately, you may be #1 in the queue, but be passed over for a period of time based on priority rules. Essentially, your exact holds position does not reflect when you will receive an item in this new environment. We believe overall hold times will be reduced by greatly increasing the number of available items through the shared catalog. In the meantime, we continue to work diligently to facilitate timely and equitable access to materials.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO RECEIVE MY ITEMS FROM OTHER LIBRARIES?

Every member library pulls items daily from what is called a "Pick List." These items are sorted, packed and shipped to a distribution center. From there, packages are then sorted again and shipped to the receiving libraries to fill patron holds. It sounds like a lot of steps, but it's a finely tuned process. Items should reach their destination within one week of the hold being placed, if the item was available at the time of the request.

ARE MATERIALS FROM OTHER LIBRARIES QUARANTINED BEFORE CIRCULATING?

Yes. All member libraries are following quarantine procedures for all returned materials. Add to that time it takes for the item to be packed, sorted, shipped, and then sorted and shipped again. By the time an item requested through MAIN arrives in your hands, the item has likely been quarantined for at minimum ten days.

WHAT IS CLOUDLIBRARY?

CloudLibrary is the digital lending platform used by MAIN. Hunterdon County had already been using Overdrive/Libby for years, and we wished for our patrons to experience the least possible disruption in service during this transition, while continuing to enjoy our considerable collection of downloadable items. For that reason, in addition to some other considerations, we chose not to make the move to CloudLibrary in 2021. Going forward, we are working with MAIN to research the very best digital platforms for all member libraries.

WHERE DO I READ MAGAZINES NOW?

eHCL's magazine collection was formerly through RBDigital. Independent of the MAIN transition, all RBDigital content was migrated to Overdrive/Libby. While RBDigital will remain available until March 31, we encourage everyone to start checking out their magazines through Overdrive/Libby. In addition to Overdrive/Libby titles, we now have access to PressReader! PressReader is a digital newsstand with over 7,000 titles. Access it here: <https://hclibrary.us/eresources/pressreader.htm>

IS THERE A NEW MOBILE APP?

It's in the works! Over the summer, we rolled out the CloudLibrary app for account management and mobile checkout. Then we introduced you to the general MAIN app, which provided access to the shared catalog in addition to account management. Coming in March, we will bring you the new and improved version of that app, customized to the needs and resources of the Hunterdon County Library System. Stay tuned for updates!