

After thoughtful consideration and evaluation, BCFLS has made the difficult decision to **discontinue the Hoopla streaming platform, effective October 24, 2025.**

Why is Butler County Library System (BCFLS) discontinuing Hoopla?

Terminating a library service is never easy but due to the rising cost of Hoopla's **pay-per-use model**, it has become too costly for BCFLS to sustain. BCFLS set an annual budget of \$40,000 for Hoopla in 2025. This limit was met by mid-year. Even after setting monthly limits and restrictions the rising demand has simply outpaced our digital collection budget for Hoopla. To continue to spend dollars in excess of the budgeted amount is not sustainable and is fiscally irresponsible.

What data and information was used in making this decision?

- **Small Patron Base:** 6% of registered BCFLS cardholders use Hoopla
- **Limited Usage:** Hoopla circulation makes up 6% of BCFLS's overall circulation, print and electronic
- **High Cost:** On average Hoopla accounts for 16% of the monthly BCFLS spending
- **Leveraging Our Finances:** We can apply funds to increase access to other resources, such as Libby, and we can consider the addition other electronic resources.

When will Hoopla access end?

Hoopla access will end on Friday, October 24. After that date users cannot check out new titles. However, any content borrowed before that date will remain accessible until the normal lending period expires.

We encourage you to save your favorites and your borrowing history before the October 24 termination date.

What can I use instead of Hoopla?

- Libby – Borrow eBooks, eAudiobooks, magazines and more
 - Use the [New Castle District Library Center's Libby Account](#)
 - The Free Library of Philadelphia offers free library cards to all Pennsylvanians! [Apply online for a digital card to access Libby.](#)

- If you absolutely, positively need to use Hoopla you can visit an Allegheny County Library and open up a card there by showing them a card from any Butler County Library. This would grant you access to the Allegheny County Library Associations' (ACLA), including the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Hoopla collection
- Don't forget that our BCFLS libraries maintain strong physical collections to meet your reading, listening, and viewing needs. [There's something for everyone!](#)

But holds lists can be so long on Libby!

Similar to how a physical library's collection works, Libby uses a licensing model where high demand items may need to be placed on hold. Cranberry Public Library will be investing some of its electronic collection budget into the district wide Libby collection so that additional and popular titles can be purchased to help alleviate wait times.

Why can't Cranberry Library get its own Hoopla account separate from the BCFLS account?

Unfortunately, Hoopla is too expensive for us to provide on our own here at CPL. To provide local library level context, here is a summary of Hoopla data for just Cranberry Library's usage:

- Year to date spending as of August 31 by BCFLS on behalf of Cranberry patrons totaled \$23,556. The dollar amount is staggering when you consider that only 7% of registered Cranberry card holders use the Hoopla service.
- Were it to continue, the annual anticipated cost for Cranberry patrons to use Hoopla in 2025 would amount to \$35,349. This amount is equal to 54% of our library's annual budgeted amount for the library's collection.

I thought digital content like ebooks and e-audio was free? What is the cost for ebooks and audio books?

Let's be honest ... there really is no such thing as a free lunch. While Hoopla is free for patrons to use, libraries pay to provide this service to our patrons. Providing digital content like eBooks, eAudiobooks, and other online content is often much more expensive than the print or physical item is for libraries.

In the case of Hoopla, the library pays each time an item is checked out, even if the item is never read, listened to, or watched by the patron who checked it out. Cost per checkout varies, but averages about \$2.47 per checkout.

In the case of Libby, people are frequently surprised to find out that libraries very often pay a higher price for ebooks and e-audio than we do for print books. Sometimes the cost for eMaterials can be up to three times the cost of the print version. Not only that, libraries typically pay a much higher price for eMaterials than individual consumers do.

Let's use *The Wedding People* by Alison Espach as an example. The chart below illustrates the cost disparity between library and consumer prices:



Another thing people may not realize is that libraries don't own the digital books and audios that we lend, like we do our physical items. Libraries purchase licenses for a set period of time or a set number of checkouts. When a license expires, libraries have to repurchase any title that we want to continue to make available for our patrons.

Want to take a deeper dive into the true cost of libraries offering eMaterials? Check out these articles and websites below.

- [Your Library's Hoopla Digital Collections Are Breaking Their Budgets](#)
- [Untangling the Real Cost of Ebooks to Libraries](#)
- [The Real Costs of Digital Content: eBook and Digital Audiobooks](#)
- [Ebook Study Group](#)

Is there anything you can do to help?

Reach out to your [local legislators](#) and encourage them to push for and support additional funding for your PA public libraries.

Every dollar helps! Consider a donation to Cranberry Public Library! We accept cash, check, and [credit card donations online](#).

Your patience and understanding during this time means a great deal to our library staff, who remain committed to providing the best possible library experience even under these new circumstances.