

METERED PARKING AND LOADING ZONES FAQ

1. Why did Princeton make all of these changes to metered parking and loading zones?

Princeton is seeking to optimize the downtown parking system to better serve visitors, residents and businesses. Since the hodgepodge of time limits, fees and hours have evolved over many years without a thorough examination of the system as a whole, Princeton completed a parking study in 2017 and has hired a parking consultant to assist in implementing the recommended changes.

- Parking time limits – When varying rates are factored in, Princeton previously had 15 different parking time limits. We have reduced the time limits to 5 to simplify the system, and each time limit only has one rate.
- Higher rates – Princeton has not adjusted parking rates in more than 10 years. In setting new rates, Princeton Council recognized that a key factor should be how close each parking area is to the central business district. As a result, parking in the most desirable area (the center of the core business area) costs the most and parking in areas farthest from the core are the lowest.
- Loading zones – The loading zones in the former borough and township had different hours of operation. Princeton has now established that all loading zones hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. At all other times, drivers can use the loading zones for drop off and pick up of passengers in response to community requests.

2. Why are parking meter hours longer?

A study conducted by a nationwide parking consultant revealed that community perceptions regarding parking — that parking is scarce or unavailable in Princeton — were not supported by data. The study also showed that an increase of restaurant and food-related businesses in Princeton has resulted in changes in parking patterns, with more evening demand. To reflect those changes, meter hours were shortened in the morning in most zones and increased in the evening.

3. What do the colors on the meter decals mean? In an effort to make parking time limits more recognizable, we have color coded the time limits.

Orange = 3 hour limit

Blue = All Day

Purple = 1 – 7 day stay

Yellow domed meters have either a 15 minute time limit (Wawa parking lot only) or 30 minute time limit.

4. Where can I use my Smart Card and can I get a refund?

Smart cards are still accepted at the Spring Street Garage indefinitely or until the equipment fails. Cardholders can also have their old Smart Card balances transferred to the Park Princeton mobile app.

Those wanting their balances transferred should take the following steps:

1. Download the Park Princeton Mobile App and set up a user account, if you do not have one already.
2. Complete the online application authorizing the balance transfer (applications will be available mid-July)
3. Bring your Smart Card(s) and mobile phone to one of the following balance transfer window hours:

Thursday, August 1, Monument Hall, 9a-4p

Monday, August 5, Clerk's Office, 5p-9p

Wednesday, August 7, Clerk's Office, 5p-9p

Tuesday, August 13, Clerk's Office, 5p-9p

Thursday, August 15, Monument Hall, 9a-4p

Monday, August 19, Clerk's Office, 5p-9p

Wednesday, August 21, Clerk's Office, 5p-9p

5. How can I pay for metered parking?

The meters and paystations accept coins (from 5 cents up to \$1 coins), credit cards (American Express, MasterCard, Visa, and Discover), debit cards with credit card symbol, and (in all but the 15- and 30-minute spaces) mobile payment via the ParkPrinceton app.

6. If I work downtown, where can I park all day?

Spring Street Garage, the Park Place West parking lot and on-street parking spaces in blue zones. Princeton will be developing a program under which employees of downtown business may purchase low-cost permits for parking in designated areas.

7. Will grace periods continue under ParkPrinceton?

To ensure adequate turnover and a common understanding among all who use our parking system, grace periods have been discontinued. However, if you pay using the ParkPrinceton mobile app, you can opt to receive alerts that your parking session is expiring.

8. If I would like to drop off someone in downtown, where can I legally stop?

After 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, and all day Sunday, you can stop at any loading zone for passenger loading/unloading. The driver must stay with the vehicle at all times.

9. I paid for my parking with the Park Princeton mobile app. Why is the meter not showing that I paid / still flashing red?

In order to maintain the meter battery life, the app does not sync with the meters. However, parking enforcement sees your mobile payment in the meter software on their handheld device.

10. Can I use the Park Princeton mobile app in the 15 minute and 30 minute parking spaces?

No.

11. Do I have to pay an additional \$0.35 convenience fee when I extend my parking session on the Park Princeton mobile app?

If you add time to an existing session on the mobile app, there is no convenience fee but if the session expires you will need to begin a new session and will be charged the fee. Anytime you begin a new session you have to pay the fee.

12. Is there a minimum parking stay that is required if I use the Park Princeton mobile app?

Yes. The credit card minimum has been reduced but there is still a minimum payment required. The following table provides the length of parking provided in each zone based on the minimum charge:

Meter Zone	3 Hour Meters (6091)	All Day Meters/Pay Stations (6092 and 6093)
Rate	\$1.75 per hour	\$1.00 per hour
Minimum Credit Card Payment	\$0.35	\$0.25
Minimum Parking Time if Paid by Credit Card	12 minutes	15 minutes
Each Additional Time Increment	12 minutes	15 minutes
Maximum Credit Card Payment	\$5.25	\$1.00 per hour
Maximum Parking Time if Paid by Credit Card	3 hours	All day

13. Is there a minimum parking stay that is required if I pay using a credit card at the meters or pay stations?

Yes. The credit card minimum at the meters and pay stations have been reduced from \$1.00 to \$0.50, except at the Princeton Rail Pay Stations where it remains at \$4.00 (which covers the minimum time limit for that lot). The following table provides the length of parking provided in each zone based on a \$0.50 minimum charge at the parking meters and pay stations:

Meter Zone	15 Minute Meters	30 Minute Meters	3 Hour Meters (6091)	All Day Meters/Pay Stations (6092 and 6093)
Rate	\$0.55 for 15 minutes	\$1.00 for 30 minutes	\$1.75 per hour	\$1.00 per hour
Minimum Credit Card Payment	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.50
Minimum Parking Time if Paid by Credit Card	13 minutes, 38 seconds	15 Minutes	17 minutes, 9 seconds	30 minutes
Each Additional \$0.25 Increment if Paid by Credit Card	6 minutes, 49 seconds	7 minutes, 30 seconds	8 minutes, 34 seconds	15 minutes
Maximum Credit Card Payment	\$0.55	\$1.00	\$5.25	\$1.00 per hour
Maximum Parking Time if Paid by Credit Card	15 minutes	30 minutes	3 hours	All day

14. Do the new meters provide refunds on your parking stay if you leave before your paid time is finished?

Not when paying with cash or credit card.

If you use the ParkPrinceton app, you can end your session after reaching the minimum parking time. Please note, even when you have ended a parking session, you will be charged for the full time increment as denoted in the table under FAQ 12.