



Metropolitan Library System

Reciprocal Access Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

The document, Standard for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems, provides that system reciprocal access programs allow persons with a valid library card or library identification onsite/onshelf access to materials in collections of ILLINET libraries. Reciprocal borrowing, a special form of reciprocal access, allows persons to borrow materials directly from ILLINET libraries.

Reciprocal borrowing has been a high priority among public libraries in the Metropolitan Library System. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that patrons of public libraries of each Metropolitan Library System library have access to resources of all MLS libraries and to establish guidelines for such access, including but not exclusive to reciprocal borrowing among public libraries.

It is expected that each library will participate in reciprocal access as completely as possible within any organizational or legal limitations that may be necessary. It is understood that each type of library may have special conditions that require variations of reciprocal access. For example, while a public library is expected to participate fully via reciprocal borrowing, there may be some local limitations on the service, such as the number of books per patron. A special library may provide reference service only by telephone, due to parent organization restrictions. A school library may have limited hours. An academic library may have collections on reserve for classes.

II. RECIPROCAL ACCESS

- A. Definition: The opportunity for a person with valid privileges at a Metropolitan Library System member library to access resources of all member libraries within the system. Reciprocal access must include interlibrary loan at the patron's home library and may include but is not limited to telephone reference; INFOPASS privileges; telefacsimile or other electronic means; on-site use (walk-in or by special appointment); reciprocal borrowing (required for all member public libraries – See Section IV below). For purposes of this document, "resources" means non-proprietary information available in print, non-print, or electronic format.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Each member library will:

- a) Establish its own criteria for valid library privileges in keeping with state and local laws and/or requirements of the parent organization.
- b) Establish, post, and report local policies regarding reciprocal access to the MLS Reciprocal Access Directory.
- c) Share resources, complying with MLS policy and procedures (such as those for Reciprocal Borrowing, Interlibrary Loan, etc.)
- d) Cover the cost of materials lost by its patrons via reciprocal borrowing, according to MLS policy and procedures.
- e) Collect and report required statistics.

2. Metropolitan Library System will:

- a) Monitor and evaluate reciprocal access among MLS libraries.
- b) Collect and publish information about reciprocal access provisions at each member library.
- c) Collect and publish regularly statistics and information about reciprocal access activities at member libraries.
- d) Keep member libraries informed of new developments concerning reciprocal access.

III. INTERLIBRARY LOAN

- A. Definition: Interlibrary loans are the transfer of print and non-print library materials or a copy of those materials from one ILLINET library to another in response to a specific patron request.
- B. Responsibilities: as a requirement of MLS membership, each library must agree to lend materials according to the attached ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code and Metropolitan Library System ILL Code.

IV. RECIPROCAL BORROWING

- A. Definition: The right of a person holding a current library card valid for system-wide borrowing from a full member public library to borrow on site from all the other public libraries which are full members of the library system without using interlibrary loan mechanisms.

B. Responsibilities-member public libraries:

1. Each public library member will:
 - a) Follow the format for the card which includes the required elements which have been voted on by the members.
 - b) Apply the same rules for reciprocal borrowers and for local patrons regarding the lending of various formats of materials. The rules may exclude videotapes, audio tapes, compact discs, computer software, DVD's and original artwork.
 - c) Apply the same rules for reciprocal borrowers and for local patrons except that an MLS library.
 - (1) May impose a loan limitation no more restrictive than three items per reciprocal borrower's card per visit, provided that reciprocal borrowing by residents from other libraries accounted for at least 10% of the library's total annual circulation in the two immediately preceding MLS fiscal years based on an annual evaluation.
 - (2) Having imposed restrictions listed above, may increase the reciprocal borrowing percentage by 5%. This adjustment is intended to provide an opportunity which will mitigate shifts in reciprocal borrowing and avoid on-again, off-again policy changes.
 - (3) Will notify MLS when imposing loan restrictions on reciprocal borrowers' cards and this information will be available on the MLS website.
 - d) Provide patron registration information to MLS for purposes of retrieving overdue materials.
 - e) Notify MLS promptly when materials loaned to a reciprocal borrower become overdue.
 - f) Reimburse MLS when billed for patrons' losses via reciprocal borrowing.
 - g) Issue reciprocal borrowing cards
 - (1) To resident patrons in good standing
 - (2) By participating library to non-resident patrons who have purchased a non-resident card valid for system-wide borrowing.
 - h) Honor library cards of patrons from libraries in other Illinois Library Systems.
 - i) For Non-SWAN members: maintain reciprocal borrowing statistics and forward them to MLS as directed.
2. The Metropolitan Library System will:
 - a) Supply patron information brochures without charge to the libraries.
 - b) Upon request of the member library, notify patrons that materials are overdue and assess a recovery fee for this service.

- c) Upon request of the member library, use services of a collection agency for a fee to assist in retrieval of materials.
- d) Facilitate the reimbursement to lending libraries and bill the patrons' library for any materials lost, damaged, or never returned by reciprocal borrowers, reimbursement will be the current retail price of the material, or the price shown on the SWAN database. MLS libraries will post their replacement cost policy on the MLS Reciprocal Access Directory.
- e) Collect, publish reciprocal borrowing statistics supplied by member public libraries

C. Responsibilities-member academic, school, and special libraries:

- 1. Each member academic, school, and special library may choose to lend materials to a patron with a card that is valid for reciprocal borrowing. In such cases the library will:
 - a) Check the status of the patron card with the home library or online database before circulating materials.
 - b) Maintain statistics on use of such cards and supply them to MLS as directed.
 - c) Notify MLS when materials loaned to a reciprocal borrower become overdue.
 - d) Follow other relevant reciprocal borrowing procedures established by MLS.
- 2. Metropolitan Library System will:
 - a) Facilitate the reimbursement to lending libraries and bill patron's library for any materials lost, damaged, or never returned by the reciprocal borrowers. Reimbursement will be the current retail price of the material. A copy of the invoice will be sent to the lending library.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

The ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code 

Standards for Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems

Metropolitan Library System ILL Code 

Approved by the MLS Board March 19, 2007