

# Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)

## Resource Sharing Policy

### Revision Control

RAILS Resource Sharing Policy – APPROVED by Merger Transition Board May 18, 2011

RAILS Resource Sharing Policy – APPROVED by RAILS Board December 19, 2011

### I. INTRODUCTION

The document Standards for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems provides that system reciprocal access programs allow persons with a valid library card or library identification on-site/on-shelf 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.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that patrons of libraries of each RAILS library have access to resources of all RAILS 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.

All system policies governing all aspects of the system's Resource Sharing Plan, including any and all fees that may apply, shall be posted on the system's website.

### II. RECIPROCAL ACCESS

#### A. Definition:

Reciprocal Access is the means by which the library resources of all member libraries of a library system are made available to all constituents within the system area. These means may include some necessary and reasonable restrictions approved by the RAILS Board of Directors.

#### 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 ILLINET Resource Sharing Policy Directory.

- c) Share resources, complying with RAILS 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 RAILS policy and procedures.
- e) Collect and report required statistics.

2. RAILS will:

- a) Monitor and evaluate reciprocal access among RAILS libraries.
- b) Collect and publish regularly statistics and information about reciprocal access activities at member libraries.
- c) Keep member libraries informed of new developments concerning reciprocal access.
- d) Designate a staff member to coordinate, monitor and guide the reciprocal access program.

### 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 RAILS membership, each library must agree to lend materials according to the ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code.
- C. RAILS will designate a staff member to coordinate, monitor and guide the Interlibrary Loan program.

### 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) Apply the same rules for reciprocal borrowers and for local patrons regarding the lending of various formats of materials. The rules may exclude videotapes, audiotapes, compact discs, computer software, DVDs, and original artwork
    - b) Apply the same rules for reciprocal borrowers and for local patrons except that a RAILS 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 fiscal years based on an annual evaluation.

- (2) When imposing loan restrictions on reciprocal borrowers' cards this information will be available on the ILLINET Resource Sharing Policy Directory
    - c) Reimburse member libraries when billed for patrons' losses via reciprocal borrowing.
    - d) Extend reciprocal borrowing privileges
      - (1) To resident patrons in good standing
      - (2) By participating library to nonresident patrons who have purchased a nonresident card
    - e) Honor library cards of patrons from libraries in other Illinois Library Systems.
    - f) For non-LLSAP members: maintain reciprocal borrowing statistics and forward them to RAILS as directed.
  - 2. RAILS will collect and 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 RAILS as directed.
    - c) Follow other relevant reciprocal borrowing procedures established by RAILS.
- D. RAILS will designate a staff member to coordinate, monitor and guide the Reciprocal Borrowing program.

## V. DELIVERY

- A. Delivery of interlibrary loan library materials is one of the core services for Illinois Library Systems as defined by the Illinois State Library to encourage the sharing of resources by Illinois libraries. RAILS supports and advocates resource sharing as critical to the success of its member libraries. To this end the following policy has been developed.
- B. In compliance with the Standards for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems, RAILS van delivery service will deliver the following items:
  - 1. Library materials, defined as items that are classified, cataloged, and available for loan.
  - 2. Items sent out from RAILS, the Illinois State Library (ISL), or the Illinois Secretary of State (SOS)
- C. The following are included among items that will not be delivered by RAILS delivery service:
  - 1. Items that are individually addressed and can be mailed via the U.S. Postal Service.

2. Library newsletters which may be mailed, exchanged at networking group meetings, or obtained online.
  3. Bulk items intended for distribution to the public.
- D. All other items will be delivered at the discretion of the RAILS staff.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

- The ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code
- Standards for Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems