
RUSA GUIDELINES

Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States

Prepared by RUSA's Interlibrary Loan Committee, 1994, revised 2001. Revised 2008, by the Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS). Approved by the RUSA Board of Directors, 2009.

For more detailed information about the provisions of this code, please see the accompanying explanatory supplement posted on the RUSA website (<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/interlibraryloancode.cfm>).

The Reference and User Services Association, acting for the American Library Association in its adoption of this code, recognizes that the sharing of material between libraries is an integral element in the provision of library service and believes it to be in the public interest to encourage such an exchange.

In the interest of providing quality service, libraries have an obligation to obtain material to meet the informational needs of users when local resources do not meet those needs. Interlibrary loan (ILL), a mechanism for obtaining material, is essential to the vitality of all libraries.

The effectiveness of the national interlibrary loan system depends upon participation of libraries of all types and sizes.

This code establishes principles that facilitate the requesting of material by a library and the provision of loans or copies in response to those requests. In this code, "material" includes books, audiovisual materials, and other returnable items as well as copies of journal articles, book chapters, excerpts, and other non-returnable items.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN CODE FOR THE UNITED STATES

1.0 Definition

1.1 Interlibrary loan is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of interlibrary loan as defined by this code is to obtain, upon request of a library user, material not available in the user's local library.

3.0 Scope

3.1 This code regulates the exchange of material between libraries in the United States.

3.2 Interlibrary loan transactions with libraries outside of the United States are governed by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' International Lending: Principles and Guidelines for Procedure.

4.0 Responsibilities of the Requesting Library

4.1 Establish, promptly update, and make available an interlibrary borrowing policy.

- 4.2 Ensure the confidentiality of the user.
- 4.3 Describe completely and accurately the requested material following accepted bibliographic practice.
- 4.4 Identify libraries that own the requested material and check and adhere to the policies of potential supplying libraries.
- 4.5 When no libraries can be identified as owning the needed material, requests may be sent to libraries believed likely to own the material, accompanied by an indication that ownership is not confirmed.
- 4.6 Transmit interlibrary loan requests electronically whenever possible.
- 4.7 For copy requests, comply with the U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) and its accompanying guidelines.
- 4.8 Assume responsibility for borrowed material from the time it leaves the supplying library until it has been returned to and received by the supplying library. This includes all material shipped directly to and/or returned by the user. If damage or loss occurs, provide compensation or replacement, in accordance with the preference of the supplying library.
- 4.9 Assume full responsibility for user-initiated transactions.
- 4.10 Honor the due date and enforce any use restrictions specified by the supplying library. The due date is defined as the date the material is due to be checked-in at the supplying library.
- 4.11 Request a renewal before the item is due. If the supplying library does not respond, the requesting library may assume that a renewal has been granted extending the due date by the same length of time as the original loan.
- 4.12 All borrowed material is subject to recall. Respond immediately if the supplying library recalls an item.
- 4.13 Package material to prevent damage in shipping and comply with any special instructions stated by the supplying library.
- 4.14 Failure to comply with the provisions of this code may be reason for suspension of service by a supplying library.

5.0 Responsibilities of the Supplying Library

- 5.1 Establish, promptly update, and make available an interlibrary lending policy.

- 5.2 Consider filling all requests for material regardless of format.

- 5.3 Ensure the confidentiality of the user.

- 5.4 Process requests in a timely manner that recognizes the needs of the requesting library and/or the requirements of the electronic network or transmission system being used. If unable to fill a request, respond promptly and state the reason the request cannot be filled.

- 5.5 When filling requests, send sufficient information with each item to identify the request.

- 5.6 Indicate the due date and any restrictions on the use of the material and any special return packaging or shipping requirements. The due date is defined as the date the material is due to be checked-in at the supplying library.

- 5.7 Ship material in a timely and efficient manner to the location specified by the requesting library. Package loaned material to prevent loss or damage in shipping. Deliver copies electronically whenever possible.

- 5.8 Respond promptly to requests for renewals. If no response is sent, the requesting library may assume that a renewal has been granted extending the due date by the same length of time as the original loan.

- 5.9 Loaned material is subject to recall at any time.

- 5.10 Failure to comply with the provisions of this code may lead to suspension of service to the requesting library.

Supplemental Documentation

For more detailed information, please see the accompanying explanatory supplement posted on the RUSA website (www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/interlibraryloancode.cfm).

Related Files

Generic Interlibrary Loan form (PDF File available at www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/illformprint.pdf).

Editable Generic Interlibrary Loan form (available at www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/interlibrary.cfm).

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- New Look at Lifelong Access,” *American Libraries* 36 (Sept. 2005): 42–44; Diane Nevill, “Directions and Connections for Boomers and Seniors,” *Public Libraries* 43 (Sept./Oct. 2004): 256–59; American Library Association, Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, “Services to Older Adults,” www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/olderadults/servicesolder.cfm (accessed Jan. 12, 2008); RUSA, “Guidelines for Library Services to Older Adults,” www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/libraryservices.cfm (accessed Jan. 7, 2008).
13. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers (originally named the Rutgers University Academy for Lifelong Learning) offers a range of noncredit continuing education courses to New Jersey residents over fifty years of age. These courses are taught by active or retired instructors from high schools and colleges, including Rutgers.
 14. For the list of Association of Research Libraries member libraries, see www.arl.org/arl/membership/members.shtml.
 15. The University of Michigan Library homepage lists “Retired Faculty and Staff” under the heading “Information for.” The webpage is found at www.lib.umich.edu/services/retired (accessed Sept. 8, 2007).
 16. Rutgers University Libraries’ emeriti page can be found at www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_servs/faculty_emeriti.shtml (accessed Aug. 15, 2008).
 17. Jantz and Wilson, “Institutional Repositories: Faculty Deposits, Marketing, and the Reform of Scholarly Communication,” 193.

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