

Montana State Library Commission Policy

Montana Interlibrary Sharing Protocol

(Adopted by Montana Library Commission on December 12, 1990, revised August 14, 1991 to include fax guidelines. Revisions offered by MLA Interlibrary Loan Interest Group, May 1998. Protocol with revisions adopted by Montana Library Commission on August 12, 1998.)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is as follows:

To bring order, equity, and efficiency to interlibrary sharing practices among all libraries in the state of Montana, thereby providing Montana citizens maximum accessibility to the information that they require.

This protocol includes guidelines for using fax as part of interlibrary loan and as a means of transmitting requests and providing materials.

INTRODUCTION

Interlibrary sharing service is essential to the vitality of libraries of all types and sizes as a means of greatly expanding the range of materials available to library patrons. Sharing between libraries is in the public interest and should be encouraged. This protocol is intended to make interlibrary sharing policies among those libraries adopting it as liberal, equitable and as easy to apply as possible. Interlibrary sharing should serve as an adjunct to, not a substitute for, collection development. Libraries are responsible for developing a collection that meets the individual and unique needs of their own communities. When resources within the region have been exhausted, loan requests to more distant libraries should then conform to the provisions of the National Interlibrary Loan Code, 1993.

This document focuses most directly on the aspect of resource sharing currently known as "interlibrary loan". The sharing of materials between and among libraries has been referred to by many different terms. For the purposes of this protocol, we have used the terms "interlibrary loan" or "interlibrary sharing" interchangeably because they illustrate that there is borrowing activity as well as lending activity. Interlibrary sharing refers to the process of providing citizens with access to information and materials from another library source. This protocol recognizes that the world's information resources are so vast that one library cannot possibly satisfy the information needs of all its citizens. Interlibrary sharing is an alternative method of providing information not available in a specific library.

DEFINITION

An interlibrary loan is a transaction in which library material, or a copy of the material, is made available by one library to another library upon request. An interlibrary loan form represents a contract between two libraries.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN SEARCH SEQUENCE

(Listed in order of priority)

1. Search your own library collection.
2. Consider purchasing the requested item bearing in mind the following important points:
 - a. The availability of an item on interlibrary loan does not relieve any library of the responsibility for developing its own collection based on the needs of its community and

clientele. The borrowing library should evaluate requests to determine if they are best served through interlibrary loan or by alternate methods such as direct purchase, substitution, or referral to another location.

- b. Titles in high demand, such as those appearing on current best seller lists, talk shows, and/or published or produced within the previous twelve-month period, generally should NOT be requested on interlibrary loan even though they appear on LaserCat or other bibliographic database or catalog. Such titles are usually in use by the patrons of the holding library. Be aware of the holding library's lending policies.
 - c. The normal types of costs associated with doing an interlibrary loan include such things as cost of forms; cost of labor; postage costs; fees sometimes levied by lending libraries for loans, postage, insurance, photocopies, overdues, etc.; mailing supplies costs; communication costs; and any indirect costs. The average national cost of an interlibrary loan is from \$30 to \$35 (Bowker Annual, 1993). Consider the cost of the interlibrary loan transaction in relation to the purchase price of the item.
 - d. Multiple copies of the same title to be used in the classroom, for the reserve shelf, book clubs, etc., generally should NOT be requested on interlibrary loan. Consideration should be given to the purchase of such texts.
3. Check patron accessible libraries before going out of the area. Refer patron to these libraries.
 4. Check LaserCat, other online bibliographic databases (WLN, OCLC, and Serhold) and/or other appropriate, available current locator tools.
 5. If you are unable to locate an item following the steps listed above, check appropriate alternative interlibrary loan channels, such as:
 - a. Interlibrary loan backup contract providers for public libraries
 - b. Montana State Library (Mt)
 - c. Specialized collections such as the Montana Last Copy Fiction Depository, federal or state publications at depository libraries, etc.
 - d. Other

INTERLIBRARY LOAN REQUEST FORM

All elements of an interlibrary loan form must be correctly and completely filled out. Incomplete request forms may result in requests being returned unfilled. Only one request is allowable per request form. This section primarily addresses the use of paper ILL forms, but can guide the use of electronic ILL systems as well.

Most interlibrary loan requests, regardless of the method of transmission used--mailed paper forms, fax, e-mail or computer-based systems--must have the following components:

1. Date – Date on which the borrowing library processes the request, usually today's date.
2. Deadline Date – Leave blank unless the patron has specified a deadline. A firm deadline date may result in the automatic cancellation of the request if it is not filled by the time that date is realized during the routing sequence.
3. Sent to – Provide a complete borrowing library address. Incorporate your NUC or library symbol into your address. Be sure to ATTACH a return mailing label to your completed request form. If you are making requests via an online system, supply frequent lenders with your library's mailing labels.

4. "For" Statement – Include only the patron ID number or patron code on the request form, which will be routed to lending libraries. The requesting patron's right to privacy requires that his/her name not be used on the interlibrary loan form that will be routed (Montana Code Annotated 22-1-1101 to 22-1-1111). The patron's name, brief address and phone number should only appear on in-house records so that requested materials can be routed to the patron immediately upon receipt.
5. Author or Periodical Title – Author of requested material or periodical title, volume, pages and date for periodical requests.
6. Title or Periodical Article Title – Title of the item, edition needed, publication year, series notes when requesting a book; or if requesting an article from a periodical include author and title of article. Include Library of Congress catalog number or other identifying numbers such as WLN rid number ISSN's or ISBN's whenever possible. Also, include the publisher if available.
7. Remarks Statements – These can be inserted as necessary and should be used only as they specifically relate to the citation. Examples include "specific edition needed" or "only part of publication is requested". Other remarks of a more general nature such as substitution notes, or "please send first class", should be written in the Notes area.
8. Verification Statement – Identify sources used to verify item e.g. WLN, OCLC, BIP, and RG. Journal verification requires that both the location and the citation be verified. Other materials require location verification only. If the verification attempt was unsuccessful, include the sources used and route the request to your library's alternative interlibrary loan backup provider. (see page 2)
9. Cost Statement – Indicate what your library or patron is willing to pay for the desired item. Set your limits in writing before you mail the request. If you leave this line blank and there are charges, the lending library will:
 - a. Have to send the request back with the cost note and you will have to resubmit the request thereby causing delays for the patron, or
 - b. Fill the request and invoice you, the borrowing library.

Be realistic in setting your cost limits. If you do not want to pay for an item fill in the cost blank with a 0.00 or "will accept zero charges". If there will be any interlibrary loan fees, notify the patron before submitting the request. Some libraries now require advance payment of loan, photocopy and/or postage fees.
10. Routing Sequence and Call Numbers – For computer-based systems enter the library symbols to which the request will be routed. You may choose to route to any number of libraries up to the maximum that the system will allow. A standard ALA paper form will allow routing to only one location. A MonCat paper form will allow routing up to four locations. On paper forms be sure to list each library's complete call number, including all prefixes and suffixes. (Note: See routing sequence suggestions in Routing and Load Leveling section, p. 6)
11. Copyright Statement – It is the borrowing librarian's responsibility to decide if the request more properly "conforms to copyright guidelines" (CCG) or "conforms to copyright law" (CCL). The Copyright Revision Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-553) requires that the copyright statement be included on all interlibrary loan requests when photocopies are furnished. For more information regarding copyright see: Virginia Boucher, Interlibrary Loan Practices Handbook, 2nd ed., 1997)
12. Authorizing Librarian – The full name and contact information of the librarian submitting the request should be provided here in case a follow-up call is necessary.
13. Lending Library Address – This space should be left blank by the borrowing library so that the lending library can put its address stamp here. Exceptions would be when using ALA forms or windowed envelopes.

14. Date Sent – Borrowing library should leave this blank so that lending library can date it when the item is sent.
15. Date Due – Lending library will identify when materials are due back.
16. Charges – Lending library will use this space to identify any charges such as postage or photocopy fees for which they expect reimbursement.
17. Date Received – Borrowing library should note when it receives an item. This facilitates the calculation of turnaround time information, length of loan period information, follow up with lending library, etc.
18. Date Returned – Borrowing library should supply the date when materials are sent back to lending library.
19. Notes – This space is provided for either borrowing or lending library to use for any necessary remarks, such as “please mail first class”, “pages 35-60 missing from volume when sent.”

When using paper forms mail at least two copies of each request to the first library in the routing sequence. Attach your library’s return mailing label. The lending library will mark the date due and other notes on the form and retain a copy for its records. It will return the remaining copies with the item sent to the borrowing library. When the item is returned, the traveling copy of the request form should be included and can be marked with the return date.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF TRANSMISSION

Fax

An interlibrary loan request may be transmitted by fax to another library in accordance with state, regional or national interlibrary loan codes and the lending library’s published interlibrary loan policy.

When using fax for “RUSH” requests, call lending library to verify that action can be taken. Consider that many libraries and ILL departments may have limited hours and staff. Do not assume that a staff person is available to act on your request as it is received.

Unless a fax response is specifically requested, the lending library will determine the method to be used in delivering materials. Unless the lending library’s interlibrary loan policy states otherwise, no additional fees or handling charges should be levied by the lending library for a response sent via fax.

The following are special considerations for incorporating fax into your interlibrary loan procedures. Libraries are encouraged to consider their patrons’ needs and other constraints imposed by the fax process when requesting materials via fax.

- a. Photographs and small, detailed print or line drawings may not transmit well via fax.
- b. Large dark areas should be trimmed from materials being sent by fax in order to speed transmission.
- c. Fax equipment should be compatible with the Consultative Committee for International Telephone and Telegraph (CCITT) Group III (or most current) standards. Minimum configuration should include automatic receiving. Libraries are encouraged to dedicate a telephone line for both fax and voice machines, which encourages efficient, separate 24-hour fax and voice phone operations.

- d. Length and/or physical dimensions of document being transmitted may be an economic or logistical consideration as well.
- e. A request for fax response should contain the note: "PLEASE FAX TO:" with the contact librarian's full name, phone and fax number in a conspicuous place on the form.
- f. The interlibrary loan fax and/or special rush service policies of lenders need to be considered.

E-mail or Ariel

A Montana e-mail-based ILL system does not currently exist. Libraries wishing to use e-mail or Ariel to transmit ILL requests should do so only to libraries with which there is a mutual agreement. Requests sent by e-mail or Ariel should contain the basic elements outlined under "Interlibrary Loan Request Form" (see pp. 3-4)

ROUTING AND LOAD LEVELING TECHNIQUES

These techniques allow the borrowing library to select from known locations and thereby avoid overusing certain library collections. It is especially important to remember that using GOOD JUDGMENT is the best method of load leveling.

1. Choose smaller, less used libraries, not always bigger libraries. Example: Choose a small public library before a large academic library holding the same title. Make it a practice to know which libraries are heavily used.
2. Use in-state locations first, then go out-of-state. "Clearing the state" is an important issue for Montana libraries. Out-of-state libraries become concerned if the requested item is such that it should be available at an in-state location, which is closer to the requesting library.
3. Use like libraries first when going out-of-state, but avoid overloading certain libraries. Public libraries can go to other public libraries first if available, but be sure to spread the load.
4. Even out the load. Don't always let things like the following determine your routing choice:
 - a. Speed of service.
 - b. Method of transmission, e.g. online, e-mail or fax.
 - c. Quality of service.
 - d. Charges involved.
 - e. Number of envelopes to be typed.
5. Forwarding a request to the next location is entirely at the lending library's discretion. The lending library may choose not to route it for you because it may be easier to fold your request form, drop it in a window envelope and return it to you than it is to type the next location's address on an envelope. For this reason, you should watch your return request mail carefully. It may have gone to only one of your locations. If so, just address a new envelope for the next location and send the request out again. Most libraries in Montana and the WLN network do forward requests to the next location for you.
6. Use known locations before assumed locations. For example, patron says item is at Montana State University (MtBC), but upon checking LaserCat or other holdings list you find the only

locations to be University of Montana (MtU) and Montana Tech (MtBuM). It is best to go to either MtU or MtBuM before going elsewhere. Another example: a patron wants a mining manual. You know MtBuM is a good bet for mining materials, but if on LaserCat you find holdings listed for Mt, then go to Mt not MtBuM.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BORROWING LIBRARIES

1. The borrowing library has the obligation to develop its own collection and evaluate its interlibrary loan requests accordingly. Students, patrons, and librarians should use their own resources first before going to another library via interlibrary loans. The availability of an item on interlibrary loan does not relieve any library of the responsibility for developing its own collection according to the needs of its community and of the clientele to which it is responsible. A borrowing library should evaluate requests to determine if they are best served through interlibrary loan or by some other method such as direct purchase, substitution, or referral of patron to another location.
2. The borrowing library has the obligation to develop an interlibrary borrowing policy for its patrons and to maintain access to other libraries' interlibrary lending policies.
3. Fill out the interlibrary loan request form as completely as possible. Be sure essential bibliographic elements and your complete mailing address are on all copies of the form. Be sure to ATTACH a return mailing label with your request form. Be sure to include two or more copies of your request.
4. Unless requested by lending library, no acknowledgement of receipt is necessary. If there is undue delay in receipt of a requested item, notify the lending library to verify the status of the request.
5. Be alert to the need for special viewing equipment (e.g., only microfiche). Try to anticipate and advise lending library if you cannot use certain formats or if you want hard copy only.
6. See appropriate interlibrary loan policies directories for possible charges. Try to anticipate any charges and indicate on the initial request what is authorized.
7. Return materials on time. Factor in adequate time for item to go through the mail. Honor lending library's return date and special use instruction. Due date is the date item is due back at lending library. Explain to your users that loan periods are set by lending libraries to meet the needs of their patrons yet still give others the chance to borrow the materials.
8. Renewals and/or overdue books cause extra work and expense for the lending library. Request renewal(s) as little as possible. Before making a renewal request check the lending library's policy. If renewal requests are accepted, ask for a renewal at least five days before the book is due back. Be sure to include on your renewal request the date due, call number and author. Do not ask for a renewal if an item has been identified as non-renewable. Do not instruct or encourage your patrons to call the lending library directly for renewals.
9. Provide return mailing labels for your library. Comply with any special instructions from the lending library, e.g. insurance; no padded mailing bag.
10. Avoid unusual or unnecessary access. Using the most routine access (e.g. multi-part form via mail or system access via WLN) causes the least amount of disruption for the lending libraries. Check interlibrary loan policy directories for the modes of transmission that are accepted by potential lenders. Phone calls, nonstandard interlibrary loan forms and other non-routine access methods put unnecessary burdens on lending libraries. In the case of rush requests, fax requests are much preferred when available, but telephone requests are permissible dependent upon lending library's policy.
11. Borrowers should watch for potentially non-circulating items such as reference materials, Montana room collections, audio-visual materials, and genealogical materials. List names or pertinent data to be searched and photocopied at the outset. Don't forget cost statements.

12. Watch ownership very carefully. Return books to the proper location. Common errors are made for MtU and MtBC materials. Look at the forms and/or ownership stamps in the books before mailing them back.
13. When opening mail, do not discard envelope or the jiffy bag until you have determined that the item is identified adequately. Also, note if a postage charge is levied and then get postage cost from the package and write it on the form.
14. Padded mailing bag (jiffy bags) should not be overfilled, as they tend to burst on impact. Also, they are unsuitable for sharp-cornered books or those in poor condition.
15. If you include any written message inside the package, indicate "First Class Letter Enclosed" on outside and include cost of a first class letter when figuring the total postage rate for the package. New requests should not be enclosed with returned items because they may be overlooked.
16. Librarians should be familiar with the various postage rates available through the USPS and other parcel delivery services. "Library Mail" rate is applicable for most library materials with the exception of photocopies and generally is the least expensive method. However, rates change and in some cases first class or parcel post may be less expensive. Parcels sent to Canada and other foreign countries may require a customs declaration; check with the local post office. If your patron has a valid rush need, you should consider first class mail or some special delivery mail options. When requesting special mail handling, your library should be willing to assume the cost of the special service, providing the special service falls within the capabilities of the lending library.
17. When verifying citations use the most current bibliographic tools and make note when you have used something other than the most current.
18. The borrowing library is responsible for the completeness, accuracy and general adherence to this protocol of all patron-generated interlibrary loan forms.
19. To avoid confusion when rerouting unfilled requests to the same set of locations, a new request form should be generated.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LENDING LIBRARIES

1. A lending library may decide in each case whether a particular request will be filled with the original, or if not, whether a photocopy will be made available. It is the lending library's responsibility to let borrowing libraries know what its individual interlibrary loan policy is. If, for example, the lending library does not respond to phone requests, the borrowing libraries should be informed. The lending library should be consistent in administering the established interlibrary loan policy.
2. If the item requested is not available for loan within five (5) working days, the request should be routed on to the next holding library, or returned to the borrowing library. The only exception would be if your library is the only or last location and the item requested will not be available within five working days. The item may be reserved, if possible, and the borrowing library should be notified. A negative response to a rush request should be transmitted by fax or telephone within one working day, only if transmitted in that mode in the first place and if the librarian's name, fax and phone number are included on the original request.
3. Do not send a non-requested format without prior notice unless you know that the borrowing library is aware of the format.
4. Make your interlibrary loan policy and fee schedule available to libraries. Inform borrowing library and get authorization before processing request(s), which will generate costs. Review requests to determine authorized costs and do not exceed established limits set by the borrowing library.

5. Indicate loan period. Consider stating it as “x” weeks from date of receipt to accommodate vagaries of postal service. Set loan period to include a minimum of one week’s transit time.
6. Absorb nominal costs of postage and insurance wherever possible.
7. Make sure your materials are clearly marked with your ownership markings so borrowing library can return them to the correct library even if paperwork is missing. Include a return mailing label with each item lent.
8. Padded mailing bags (jiffy bags) should not be overfilled, as they tend to burst on impact. Also, they are unsuitable for sharp-cornered books or those in poor condition.
9. If you include any written message inside the package indicate “First Class Letter Enclosed” on outside and include cost of a first class letter when figuring the total postage rate for the package. This includes requests being sent to a library or routed to another library. New requests should not be enclosed with a lent item because they may be overlooked.
10. Librarians should be familiar with the various postage rates available through the USPS and other parcel delivery services. “Library Mail” rate is applicable for most library materials with the exception of photocopies and generally is the least expensive method. However, rates change and in some cases first class or parcel post may be less expensive. Parcels sent to Canada and other foreign countries may require a customs declaration; check with the local post office. If your patron has a valid rush need, you should consider first class mail or some special delivery mail options. Special handling and delivery requests may be made in the instance of rush requests. The lending library should try to accommodate those requests if they fall within the scope of its interlibrary loan policy.

INTERLIBRARY SHARING PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Interlibrary sharing performance targets are intended to provide both the borrowing and lending libraries with goals, which will ultimately enhance information service to Montana citizens. Each institution is responsible for measuring its own performance on a regular basis.

Performance targets for borrowing libraries:

All patrons requesting materials not owned by their local library will be offered interlibrary loan service if appropriate.

95% of all requests, which need to be filled through interlibrary loan, will be accurately verified and requested.

90% of all specific item requests which need to be filled through interlibrary loan will be processed and “out the door” in an average of 48 hours or within two working days of the request’s submission date.

90% of all patrons using the interlibrary loan service will rate the service as excellent, based on their own successful acquisition of materials.

Performance targets for lending libraries:

80% of all requests for the loan of materials will have action taken upon them within 24 hours of receipt or by the end of the next business day. The remaining 20% of requests will be acted upon within 72 hours or three working days. The action that will take place will be either shipment of materials, referral of requests to another library or notification of rejection of request.

90% of all materials requested will be delivered by the fastest method available to the library and will conform to the time limits set by the patron.

This Interlibrary Sharing Protocol is not comprehensive. Attention should also be given to other relevant guidelines, such as: copyright law (U.S. Title 17), National Commission on Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works (CONTU), the national guidelines and procedures for fax transmission of interlibrary loan requests and the National Interlibrary Loan Code, 1993.