

NORTH SUBURBAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

North Suburban Library System (NSLS) Reciprocal Borrowing Program: Goals and Policies (11/28/05)

The ***North Suburban Library System (NSLS) Reciprocal Borrowing Program*** permits public library cardholders in the NSLS service area to visit other NSLS public libraries and check out materials with their home library cards. As the cornerstone for resource sharing among libraries, reciprocal borrowing benefits library users by expanding the range and depth of the collections that are readily available to them. In recognition of this, participation in the ***Reciprocal Borrowing Program*** has long been a requirement of System membership for public libraries.

To ensure that this vital service continues to operate as smoothly and equitably as possible, the public libraries in NSLS and the NSLS Board of Directors have adopted this statement of *Goals and Policies* (which replaces the NSLS ***Basic Tenets for a Revised Reciprocal Borrowing Program*** as approved 6/24/1991 and amended 5/18/1992).

I. Program Goals

Member libraries agree that the following goals are essential components of a successful ***Reciprocal Borrowing Program***. Such a program shall:

1. Increase access to library resources for member library cardholders*, resulting in greater use of and support for libraries by the public.
2. Expand the use of library resources and enhance customer service by providing cardholders the convenience of using the collections of several member libraries as they travel within or through the NSLS service area to work or for other activities.
3. Expand the availability and use of unique collections in NSLS public libraries.
4. Recognize and reinforce the responsibility that member libraries have to build collections that adequately serve the needs of their respective local cardholders.
5. Enable each member library to retain local control over its lending policies.
6. Make it possible for each member library to protect its local cardholders' access to new and developing collections and to afford libraries that are heavy *net lenders* in terms of reciprocal borrowing a means to rectify or reduce such imbalances.

II. Policies Governing Program Participation

Member libraries agree that the following policies reflect, and establish an optimal balance between, the program goals articulated above. These policies shall define and govern program participation:

1. Participation in the ***Reciprocal Borrowing Program*** shall continue to be a requirement of System membership for public libraries.

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2. With the following exceptions, participants are expected to make their collections broadly available to reciprocal borrowers from other NSLS public libraries:
 - a. Limits may be placed on reciprocal borrowers' access to new and developing collections.
 - b. *Net lender* libraries (in terms of reciprocal borrowing with other NSLS libraries as a group) may place limits on the number of items loaned to reciprocal borrowers if the *net imbalance*, on average, exceeds 10% for any consecutive twelve-month period.
3. Any limits imposed on reciprocal borrowers shall be reviewed by the limiting library's Board of Trustees at least annually to determine whether the conditions justifying such restrictions still pertain and the limits imposed remain fair and reasonable.
4. Each participant shall promptly inform other participating libraries about any changes to policies and procedures that will affect the use of and access to its collections by reciprocal borrowers.
5. Reciprocal borrowers shall abide by the lending policies and regulations of the individual libraries where materials are borrowed. The cardholder is personally and financially responsible to the lending library for all such materials.

III. NSLS Responsibilities

The *North Suburban Library System* shall continue supporting the ***NSLS Reciprocal Borrowing Program*** by:

1. Providing delivery service for the return of materials to the respective lending libraries;
2. Compiling reciprocal borrowing statistics and posting them on the NSLS website; and
3. Providing for and coordinating periodic reviews of the Program and this document.

IV. Intersystem Reciprocal Borrowing

This document neither addresses nor applies to *Intersystem* reciprocal borrowing, the lending of materials to cardholders from libraries outside of NSLS. This service is governed by the ***Illinois Intersystem Reciprocal Borrowing Covenant***, which was approved and adopted by the NSLS Board of Directors in January, 1981.

V. Program and Document Review

The NSLS Reciprocal Borrowing Program as well as this document shall be reviewed by Program participants at least every 5 years.

* A *cardholder* is a resident of a library's service area possessing a current library card from that library. Individuals who have purchased non-resident cards from any NSLS public library shall be afforded reciprocal borrowing privileges at other NSLS libraries in accordance with applicable state law.