

RAILS Resource Sharing Committee Report

Welcome Jessica Silva, RAILS Member Engagement Specialist

Jessica Silva started in her new role as the RAILS Member Engagement Specialist on April 3. This role was vacated by Dan Bostrom when he was promoted to RAILS Director of Marketing and Communications in October 2023. Jessica has terrific experience in K-12 school and academic libraries, most recently as a faculty librarian at Austin Community College in Austin, Texas. Jessica served as co-chair of the Texas Library Association's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee, was a member of TLA's Public Relations and Marketing committee, and she served on multiple book award committees in Texas. We are very excited for the RAILS membership to get to know Jessica in her new role here in Illinois.

RAILS Receives Additional Replacement Delivery Vehicles

During April RAILS received two new box trucks for our high-volume Bolingbrook delivery routes. This is in addition to the new transit vans received earlier in the year and represent two of the five replacement box trucks we hope to receive before the end of the fiscal year. These new box trucks replace aging vehicles in our fleet and will allow us to reduce truck rental expenses.

Delivery Count May 6-10

The next RAILS delivery count begins on Monday, May 6. Member libraries should physically count every item in each of your delivery containers and [complete the online count form for each scheduled delivery day of the count period](#) from **Monday, May 6, through Friday, May 10**. To have access to your library's delivery count form, you must be logged in with your L2 credentials and affiliated with a library that receives system van delivery. Only enter data for the day(s) you receive delivery.

Save the Date: RAILS Member Update on May 8

We are looking forward to another virtual RAILS Member Update on May 8 beginning at 3:00 p.m. Topics will include a spotlight on website accessibility, 2023 My Library Is... grant recipients, and more. A full agenda is coming but [registration](#) is available now.

Illinois Legislative Updates

ILA has published a list of the bills they are [monitoring](#) if you have an interest in following these changes.

- [HB4224](#): Seeks parity between libraries and other governmental units to require library treasurers to hold a bond of 10% of total revenue collection (as opposed to the current level of 50%). Passed the House on April 15th (90-17), moved to the Senate on April 16th, and currently has eighteen co-sponsors.
- [HB4258](#): Amends the License to Read Act to include provisions regulating contracts between libraries and publishers, including the provision that no contract will restrict libraries from

operational functions, restrict disclosure of the terms of its license to other libraries, or enable violation of the Library Records Confidentiality Act. This bill has was re-referred to the Rules Committee on April 5th and it has two co-sponsors.

- [HB4567](#): Amends the criminal code to include library employees as protected in relation to threats and disorderly conduct. This bill was sponsored by Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias as an additional support for libraries facing threats and other conduct challenges. Has had its Second Reading in the House and has nineteen co-sponsors.
- [HB4111](#): Amends the Illinois Local Library Act and the Public Library District Act of 1991. Requires competitive bidding for contracts in excess of \$30,000 (rather than \$25,000) for specified improvements and equipment purchases. This was re-referred to Rules Committee on April 5th. This bill has two co-sponsors.
- [HB2401](#): Reintroduced from last legislative session. Amends the school code and requires that books included in any course include diverse authors. Includes school board level control of reading material. Has been assigned to the elementary and Secondary Education School Curriculum and Policies committee. Three amendments have been proposed to this bill.

RSA Independence Project

RSA has now met the minimum requirement of libraries required to sign intergovernmental agreement documents in order to formally trigger the conversion to an Illinois Intergovernmental Instrumentality on July 1, 2024. There is a list of RSA members who have signed the IGA on the [Membership Page of the support site](#), near the bottom of the page.

RAILS Awards 2024 My Library Is... Grants

The Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System (RAILS) has selected 28 projects to receive My library Is... Grants. The total amount funded for these projects is \$104,204.15.

The purpose of these grants is to provide an opportunity for libraries to focus on projects that help tell the library story and increase visibility and support for libraries in general. For a full list of recipients, please see the [recent press release](#). Also, for more data about these grants, please see the data visualization created by RAILS Data Research Specialist Janette Derucki at the end of this report.

RAILCAR Updates

In recent months two RAILCAR dashboards have been shared during Consortia Committee meetings focusing on public library and LLSAP comparisons. The dashboards are the first results created from the RAILCAR dataset that combines information from many sources such as L2, IPLAR, and Certification. Next steps are to develop snapshot reports from libraries and LLSAPs, develop dashboards for school, academic, and special libraries, and add other datasets as needed.

eRead Illinois Data Analysis Project

RAILS Data Analysis Intern, Quinn McKissock, has been working hard on cleaning and analyzing data from the eRead program. Much of their time has been spent reconciling the complex reports Baker & Taylor shares, including order, holds, and circulation. Quinn is currently preparing summarized results of their analysis to share with the full RAILS Board in May, as well as establishing manageable processes for maintaining the data after their internship concludes and creating useful dashboards for our eRead decision-makers.

RAILS Participates in 2024 ICOLC Annual Meeting

Joe Filapek and Leila Heath attended the 2024 ICOLC (International Coalition of Library Consortia) Annual Meeting in Anaheim April 14-17. This event brings together representatives from library consortia across North America and features a variety of presentations and small group discussions. Topics during this year's annual meeting included Open Access, demonstrating consortial value, and DEI consortial initiatives. Learn more about [ICOLC here](#).

Improvements to L2 and New L2 Registration Video

L2 has received a set of improvements to the visual display of the calendar that were based on user feedback and have been well received. Staff are currently working on estimating costs for potential feature development in FY2025, and will work with the statewide L2 Governing Group to assign priority levels to these features. Suggestions and feedback are always welcome via the L2 help form. RAILS Applications & Web Developer Brian Smith also created a [video with instructions on setting up a new account](#).

July 8, 2024

TO: RAILS Consortia Committee
FROM: Joe Filapek, RAILS Associate Executive Director
SUBJECT: RAILS Resource Sharing Plan

The RAILS Resource Sharing Plan is a requirement for regional library systems as outlined within the administrative rules in Section 3030.315 – Standards for Core Services. At a minimum, the RAILS Resource Sharing Plan must address four issues:

- How a library shall provide reciprocal access, including any limitations
- How a library may participate in statewide reciprocal borrowing
- A mechanism for resolving disputes over resource sharing (reciprocal borrowing/ILL issues, damage/loss of materials, etc.)
- The requirement that the borrowing library is responsible for lost and damaged materials if the patron does not pay. The plan may allow for alternative means if the lending library agrees

Following discussions across both the RAILS Resource Sharing Committee and the RAILS Policy Committee, we have made several edits to this plan including:

- Updating broken links to administrative rules
- Additional language around nonresident card privileges
- Additional language regarding the Cards for Kids Act
- Statement directing the resource sharing committee to review plan every three years
- Other wording edits/additions

This revised plan was approved by the RAILS Resource Sharing Committee on May 6, was subsequently approved by the RAILS Policy Committee on May 17, and approved by the RAILS Board at the June 21 meeting. The Resource Sharing Plan has now been sent to the Illinois State Library for final review.

You can find a copy of the revised RAILS Resource Sharing Plan within the June 21st board packet at:

<https://railslibraries.org/sites/default/files/mtg/2024/06/106196/8.2%20Resource%20Sharing%20Policy.pdf>

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) Resource Sharing Plan

Approved by the RAILS Board on June 21, 2024
Approved by the Illinois State Library on

I. Introduction

The Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) serves over 1,200 libraries across 27,000 square miles in northern and western Illinois. Its primary mission is to support, facilitate and promote resource sharing among RAILS member libraries, libraries across the state of Illinois, and beyond. RAILS is a multitype regional library system that fosters collaboration and resource sharing among libraries to empower them to better serve their clientele or library users.

Resource sharing is vitally important in the current Illinois fiscal environment. Every RAILS member faces the challenge of making the most of limited resources. Since all libraries share the common goal of offering the highest quality service to library patrons possible, it is to the advantage of all that every RAILS member share resources with other RAILS members to the widest extent possible.

“Resource Sharing” means making the collections of one library available to the patrons of another library efficiently and effectively. Resource sharing encompasses the technical capabilities, staff expertise and policies necessary to achieve that objective. Resource sharing incorporates activities related to automated discovery tools (including bibliographic library databases), collection management, bibliographic description, delivery, interlibrary loan, reciprocal access and reciprocal borrowing. Resource sharing is a core system service ([ILAC 3030.110](#)). Resource sharing is not always an equal exchange, but overall should be mutually beneficial for all participants. The Illinois Library System Act([75 ILCS 10/1](#)) encourages cooperation among all types of libraries in promoting the sharing of library resources. Illinois Administrative Code([23 ILAC 3030.200](#))requires participation in several kinds of resource sharing activities as a condition of full membership in a library system. Reciprocal borrowing, reciprocal access and interlibrary loan are all components of resource sharing. It is expected that each RAILS member library will participate in resource sharing as completely as possible within any organizational or legal limitations that may be necessary.

This plan is a requirement of Illinois State Library Administrative Code Rules ([ILAC 3030.215](#)). The goal of this plan is to explain that all library patrons within the RAILS area have access to the library resources they need. This is a general plan and is not meant to cover every situation that may arise. When specific issues develop between libraries that are not covered by this plan, members are encouraged to work with each other to come up with agreeable solutions, keeping in mind the goal for each RAILS member to participate in resource sharing as completely as possible.

To promote resource sharing, member libraries may belong to a Local Library System Automation Program(LLSAP) or other shared catalog platform to facilitate interlibrary

loan. Libraries that belong to a shared catalog group may also have separate agreements as long as they are aligned with the RAILS Resource Sharing Plan.

The goal of RAILS is to help our members to expand resource sharing in Illinois and beyond. The RAILS website displays a map of the state of resource sharing in RAILS which can be found here: <https://railslibraries.org/unserved> This map indicates unserved areas within RAILS. Whenever possible, RAILS supports expanding service to these areas for more access to information for Illinois residents.

Any changes to this plan are subject to approval by the RAILS Board of Directors and the Illinois State Library (Office of the Secretary of State).

II. General Resource Sharing Guidelines

1. Responsibilities of All RAILS Member Libraries
 1. Each member library has the responsibility of locally meeting as many of its patrons' needs as possible. Resource sharing is intended as a way to help supplement the local library's collection and should not be used as a substitution for financial support and collection management on the local level.
 2. Each RAILS member library shall participate in resource sharing as completely as possible and shall only impose restrictions as required by organizational policies or legal mandates.
 3. To facilitate resource sharing among RAILS libraries, all RAILS member libraries shall include their resource sharing policies as a part of their library's record on the [Library Learning \(L2\) website](#) and other applicable electronic platforms such as OCLC and shall keep those policies up-to-date.
2. Responsibilities of RAILS
 1. The RAILS Associate Executive Director shall coordinate, monitor and guide all system resource sharing activities and answer member questions regarding resource sharing.
 2. RAILS shall promote the value of resource sharing to all member libraries and shall encourage members to be as generous as possible in their resource sharing policies and procedures.
 3. RAILS shall encourage and support resource sharing through activities such as delivery and training for system members in areas directly related to resource sharing.
 4. RAILS shall distribute current state and system resource sharing policies to members via the RAILS website and other means as appropriate.
 5. RAILS shall maintain the L2 website and shall provide assistance and instruction to members in posting their resource sharing policies to the L2 website.

III. Reciprocal Access

Reciprocal Access: The resources of all full member libraries of a library system are made available to all library patrons in the system area. Reciprocal access benefits

should be imposed equally among all reciprocal access patrons and can include interlibrary loans, photocopy service, reference service, use of library materials on site, and other services. The library governing authority may approve reasonable restrictions, applied equally among all reciprocal access patrons, for services such as computer access, library programs and meeting room use in accordance with the library system's resource sharing plan.

1. Responsibilities of All RAILS Libraries

Each RAILS member library shall: Provide reciprocal access by making its library materials and select resources available to patrons of other member libraries in the least restrictive way possible, except:

1. Contractual arrangements for licensed or proprietary databases/e-resources may limit the use of such databases/e-resources to registered cardholders.
2. Non-public libraries may place reasonable restrictions on physical access to their facilities and materials by patrons of other libraries.

2. Responsibilities of RAILS

The RAILS Associate Executive Director shall monitor and answer member questions regarding reciprocal access.

IV. Statewide Reciprocal Borrowing

Reciprocal Borrowing: The right of a person who holds a valid, in-good-standing library registration card from a full member public library to borrow materials on site from other library system full member public libraries under the same conditions that the library provides those materials to its patrons, subject to reasonable restrictions approved by the library's governing board in accordance with requirements of the library system's resource sharing plan and this Part.

1. RAILS will educate and promote statewide reciprocal borrowing to all members. RAILS, in partnership with Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) and the Chicago Public Library System, encourages and promotes statewide reciprocal borrowing among all Illinois public libraries that are system members.
2. No library may charge a fee to any statewide reciprocal borrower that is not charged to the library's patrons or system-wide reciprocal borrower unless the fee was in effect on July 1, 2014.

V. System-wide Reciprocal Borrowing

1. Responsibilities of All RAILS Public Libraries

1. All RAILS public libraries shall provide reciprocal borrowing to any person in good standing who has a valid library account with a RAILS public library in Illinois. All reciprocal borrowing patrons will be treated the same as outlined in administrative rule.(ILAC 3030.200)
2. Each RAILS public library member is encouraged to share as widely as possible. Given that there may be situations where libraries need to impose reasonable restrictions in order to meet the demands of local taxpayers and residents, the lending library may restrict reciprocal

borrowing but not set to zero. Restrictions shall only be imposed as absolutely necessary and all restrictions must apply equally to all reciprocal borrowers.

1. When imposing loan restrictions on reciprocal borrowing, libraries shall post this information as a part of their resource sharing policies on the [L2 website](#).
 2. As required by Illinois Administrative Code ([23 ILAC 3030.215](#)), the library of a patron who borrows materials from another library through reciprocal borrowing is responsible for lost and damaged materials if the patron does not pay. However, alternate means of resolving the loss or damage may be used if both the lending and borrowing libraries agree.
 3. Libraries are required to assist with retrieval of delinquent materials borrowed by verifying patron information for one of its registered borrowers upon request.
 4. Libraries are required to assist with collecting payment for bills incurred by one of its registered borrowers for lost/damaged items as legal limitations and internal library regulations allow.
 5. Libraries are required to honor any request by a lending library to mark a patron's account as delinquent or to place a stop/block on a patron's account at the patron's home library for unpaid bills related to lost or damaged items obtained via reciprocal borrowing. If the patron's home library refuses to honor the request, then that home library shall be responsible for paying the bills incurred by the patron for lost or damaged items provided that the lending library sends the bills to the home library within one year of the infraction. The library requesting the block shall provide notification when the block is no longer needed and may be removed.
 6. Contact the home library when in doubt about a patron's delinquency status.
3. All RAILS public libraries shall include their library's reciprocal borrowing policies as a part of their library's record on the L2 website and shall keep those policies up-to-date.
 4. Responsibilities of RAILS Academic, School, and Special libraries
When institutional regulations allow, all RAILS academic, school and special libraries are encouraged to permit reciprocal borrowing of items from their collections to a patron in good standing with a valid Illinois public library card. As necessary, the library will check the status of the patron account with the home library before circulating materials.
 1. All RAILS academic, school and special libraries that choose to participate in reciprocal borrowing shall follow relevant reciprocal borrowing policies established by RAILS.
 2. All RAILS academic, school and special libraries shall include their library's reciprocal borrowing policies as a part of their library's record on the L2 website and shall keep those policies up-to-date.
 5. Responsibilities of RAILS

1. The RAILS Associate Executive Director shall coordinate, monitor and guide the Reciprocal Borrowing Program (RBP) and answer member questions about the program.
 2. RAILS shall maintain the [L2 website](#) and shall provide assistance and instruction to members in posting their reciprocal borrowing policies to the L2 website.
6. Library Cards
- The library card must sufficiently identify the cardholder and the home library. It also must include information that facilitates communication with other RAILS member public libraries for reciprocal borrowing purposes required by the Illinois State Library Administrative Code.

VI. Interlibrary Loan

According to the [ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code, Illinois State Library \(2015\)](#), interlibrary loan is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library. The purpose of interlibrary loan is to obtain, upon request of a library user, material not available in the user's local library.

1. Responsibilities of All RAILS Libraries
 1. All full members of RAILS shall comply with the most current ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code.
 2. All RAILS member libraries shall post their interlibrary loan plan as a part of their library's record on the Library Learning (L2) website. These policies shall include contact information, reimbursement costs for lost materials, formats of materials the library will and will not lend, as well as photocopy policies.
2. Responsibilities of RAILS
 1. The RAILS Associate Executive Director shall coordinate, monitor and guide the interlibrary loan program and answer member questions about the program.
 2. RAILS shall support interlibrary loan through the timely, efficient delivery of materials through the system's delivery service and by providing training for members in areas directly related to interlibrary loan.
 3. RAILS shall maintain the L2 website and shall provide assistance and instruction to members in posting their resource sharing policies to the L2 website.
 4. All RAILS members are required to complete the Illinois State Library ILLINET Reciprocal Borrowing and Interlibrary Loan Traffic Survey as a requirement of the Illinois State Library Annual Certification Process.

VII. Nonresident Cards and Nonresident Borrowing

1. Responsibilities of RAILS Public Libraries
 1. As required by State administrative code([23 ILAC 3050.20](#)), each public library board of trustees shall annually review its nonresident

fee policy and take action to decide whether to issue nonresident library cards during the next 12 month period.

2. At that time, the board shall also determine and adopt the fee formula and fee.
3. Within 30 days of board action, the public library shall notify RAILS of the action taken, effective dates, and fee formula.
4. To report nonresident fee program information to RAILS, each library shall visit the L2 website and edit the library's nonresident card status.
5. Libraries participating in the nonresident fee card program shall adhere to the guidelines of the Cards for Kids Act(23 ILAC 3050.75).
6. Nonresident cards shall allow for borrowing privileges at all participating public libraries in RAILS. (75 ILCS 5/4-7)

2. Responsibilities of RAILS

1. RAILS shall provide an electronic method of collecting nonresident fee program information from its member libraries.
2. RAILS shall maintain an up-to-date list on its website indicating which libraries participate in the nonresident borrowing program. This list shall also be available in print upon request and available for public inspection at the regional library system headquarters.

VIII. RAILS Resource Sharing Plan Implementation

1. Responsibilities of All RAILS Libraries

1. All RAILS libraries shall post their resource sharing policies as a part of their library's record on L2.
2. Individual RAILS libraries are responsible for informing other member libraries of any failure to observe their library's resource sharing policies.
3. RAILS libraries are expected to work out disputes between themselves as a first course of action.
4. A library may restrict or suspend service to any library that disregards its policies. Such action requires written notification to the suspended library, specifying the terms and duration of the suspension. A copy of all documentation regarding suspensions should be sent to RAILS.
5. Should violations continue to occur, a library may request assistance from RAILS. The request must be submitted to RAILS in writing and a copy should go to the library allegedly committing the violations.

2. Responsibilities of RAILS

1. The RAILS Associate Executive Director shall oversee resource sharing operations and assist with plan enforcement as necessary.

2. RAILS will assist libraries that are unable to solve disputes regarding enforcement of local library resource sharing policies by helping to clarify and interpret the RAILS plan.

Violations of this plan may result in loss of full RAILS member status and related system services until a library is able to once again comply with the legal requirements established for full members of a library system. RAILS will inform the library in question about the violation(s) and steps that must be taken to comply with full member requirements.

IX. Definitions

Cards for Kids: A component of the non-resident fee card program that waives non-resident fees for pre-school through 12th grade students whose household income makes them eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches as determined by Income Eligibility Guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Full Member: A library that meets the criteria for full library system membership as specified in Section 3030.200.

Good Standing: A valid library account that has not been blocked. Each library is responsible for determining the requirements for good standing and blocking patrons that do not meet those requirements.

Home Library: The library that is located within the taxing district of the patron's residence. This library issues an account for the patron that includes the patron's name and address. The patron has also supplied the proper documentation as required by the library.

ILLINET Library: A library that is a member of an Illinois regional library system.

Interlibrary Loan: Interlibrary loan is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library. Whether initiated by library staff or patron, the purpose of interlibrary loan is to obtain, upon request of a library patron, material not available in the patron's local library. The terms "requesting library" and "supplying library" are used in preference to "borrowing library" and "lending library" to cover the exchange of copies as well as loans. Circulation of materials between a central library and its branches or within a school district is not considered interlibrary loan. [2015 ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code, Illinois State Library.](#)

For example, interlibrary loan is conducted between two different libraries not funded by the same governing agency. Interlibrary loan is not conducted between two libraries within the same school district or library district.

L2: The Library Directory & Learning Calendar Learning website (L2) serves as the official membership directory for RAILS and other library systems in the state of Illinois. Each member library should enter and update its own L2 information,

including contact information, staff information and up-to-date resource sharing policies. <http://librarylearning.org>

Nonresident: An individual residing in Illinois who does not have their principal residence within a public library service area.

Nonresident Library Card: A library card/account acquired from a public library participating in the nonresident program by an individual residing in an area not taxed for public library service.

Reciprocal Borrowing Program (RBP): The formal name for the program in which a patron physically travels to a public library outside of their taxing district in order to borrow materials owned by a library that is not the patron's home library.

Reciprocal Access: The resources of all full member libraries of a library system are made available to all library patrons in the system area. Reciprocal access benefits should be imposed equally among all reciprocal access patrons and can include interlibrary loans, photocopy service, reference service, use of library materials on site, and other services. The library governing authority may approve reasonable restrictions, applied equally among all reciprocal access patrons, for services such as computer access, library programs and meeting room use in accordance with the library system's resource sharing plan.

Reciprocal Borrowing: The right of a person who holds a valid, in-good-standing library registration card from a full member public library to borrow materials on site from other library system full member public libraries under the same conditions that the library provides those materials to its patrons, subject to reasonable restrictions approved by the library's governing board in accordance with requirements of the library system's resource sharing plan and this Part. The term "reciprocal borrowing" encompasses "Statewide Reciprocal Borrowing" and "System-wide Reciprocal Borrowing," which are also defined in this Section.

Registered Borrower: A library patron who possesses an account with the library.

Valid Library Account: A patron account that has not been stopped, blocked, or expired. The information included in a patron account is determined through policy set by library board.

X. Resource Sharing Plan Review

The RAILS Resource Sharing Plan shall be reviewed by the RAILS Resource Sharing Committee at minimum once every three years.