Best Practices for Pandemics

Recommendations from the MnPALS Resource Sharing Steering Committee (April 2020)

The best practices listed below are derived from the "Policy and Procedure Statement on Interlibrary Loan by MnPALS Libraries" (MnPALS ILL Policy). These are suggestions to guide library resource sharing during pandemics.

COVID-19 Statement on Renewals

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent disruption of library services, libraries are encouraged to review the MnPALS ILL Policy on renewals.

9. MnPALS libraries are encouraged to grant renewal request unless a local user has requested the material or renewal will conflict with local policy.

10. Lending libraries should respond to renewal request in a timely manner. Until a response is provided, the borrowing library may retain the materials.

Lending libraries are encouraged to provide longer renewal periods. A lending library is encouraged to Renew a request without a renewal request from the borrowing library or patron.

As stated in the MnPALS ILL Policy, Lending libraries are encouraged to respond promptly to renewal requests and until the lending library responds to the renewal requesta patron may keep the item. A borrowing library may use "Change Due Date" in Alma Fulfillment to update the loan due date for the patron.

Communication is encouraged using "Messages" between the Lending and Borrowing library.

COVID-19 Statement on reimbursement

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent disruption of library services, libraries are encouraged to review the MnPALS ILL Policy on reimbursement.

6. MnPALS libraries will not expect reimbursement from one another or from other Minitex participating libraries for routine ILL costs, but may charge one another for lost and damaged items.

Because of COVID-19 closures, libraries are encouraged to postpone billing for ILL materials. When the Borrowing library re-opens and patrons have had adequate time to return items, the Borrowing library will initiate the Message to the Lending library that an item will not be returned. The Lending library may waive the return, ask for a replacement or set a bill amount at that time.

Libraries are encouraged to "Message" with updates on ILL requests.

Libraries are encouraged to track items that are lost during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

COVID-19 Statement on physical return of items

Many MnPALS libraries have courier delivery. Libraries with courier delivery should suspend the return of items until Minitex courier delivery is operational.

MnPALS libraries that do not have courier delivery, and MnPALS libraries with patrons currently sheltering in other areas of the region, may encourage their patrons to drop off items at courier delivery libraries. Courier delivery libraries will accept the items and return under the Minitex Courtesy return policy when courier delivery resumes.

A list of libraries on Minitex courier can be found at this link
https://www.minitex.umn.edu/Delivery/Libraries/

COVID-19 Statement on Messages

Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent disruption of library services, libraries are encouraged to review the MnPALS ILL Policy on communication between libraries.

12. Procedural problems with implementation of this statement should be resolved by the libraries concerned.

Libraries are encouraged to communicate by "Messages" on requests.

Libraries should respond promptly to "Messages."

COVID-19 Statement on delay in Receive and Return because of quarantine after delivery resumes

The Borrowing library may wait to Receive the item until after a quarantine period.

When an item is returned to a Borrowing library, they may quarantine the item before doing a "Return Item " or "Return" even if this delays the timely return of the item to the Lending library.

When the item is returned to the lending library, they may quarantine the item before doing a "Check-in"or "Scan-in" even if this delays the completion of the request.

If there is a concern about the status of an item by either the Borrowing or Lending Library, they may Message the other library.

One suggestion for handling library materials
http://www.ala.org/alcts/preservationweek/resources/pandemic

COVID-19 Due dates

When delivery resumes, quarantine periods should be factored into loan periods.