

Library Plans and Policies

Outreach Services

I. Purpose

The County Library Plan for Service addresses the Outreach Services Program in Goal 2, “To develop and deliver library services county-wide to individuals who experience barriers in accessing traditional library services. .” This goal and the resulting strategies support outreach efforts which bring library materials and programs in appropriate formats to individuals and groups throughout Dane County. The continuing development and enrichment of these programs is done in recognition of the fact that there are many persons in Dane County whose physical disabilities, socioeconomic status, institutionalization, limited literacy in English, and/or education deprivation may preclude their benefiting from public library services to the same extent as other members of the community benefit from these services.

II. Context

Outreach Services were initiated by the Dane County Library Service in 1974 in accordance with the Wisconsin Administrative Code (pl 6.06) and the Wisconsin Public Library System Standards, 1974, Section III/E,F.

In keeping with the goals and strategies supporting this program of service, the Dane County Library Service strives to offer services to the broadest possible number of institutions and individuals, restricting only when necessary to maintain the program’s integrity, allowing the library to serve those most in need while minimizing unrecoverable losses of materials. The success of many of the various service programs is dependent on a responsible, involved community partner. Such partnerships are actively sought and continuously developed. Examples of successful partnerships can be found within the Readmobile Program where the partner provides an appropriate facility for library visits and the ability to generate an appropriate audience for the visit, and within the aging services area where the library is dependent on an institutional partner willing to accept responsibility for the materials provided.

III. Program Description and Operational Policies

A. Homebound Services. Individuals residing in Dane County whose physical condition confines them to their residence are eligible to receive homebound delivery of library materials unless the County Library Service is specifically asked by the municipal library not to duplicate a service which they are providing. Homebound patrons may request specific materials or materials may be sent on an established schedule according to a reading interest profile. Materials will be delivered by U.S. Mail; if library material for the blind and physically handicapped (as defined by the U.S. Postal Service) is requested, there is no mailing cost. If regular print materials are requested, the County Library Service will pay postage to the patron; the patron must pay to return the materials. Reference requests will be filled by the Outreach Librarian. Loan periods for materials are addressed in the *Circulation Policy*. Homebound card holders are not assessed overdue fines or fees; however, they are responsible for the material or its replacement cost if lost.

B. Collections of materials to institutions and agencies serving the elderly and those with physical disabilities. Collections of 30 to 90 large print books (except where regular print is requested) are available to facilities serving the elderly, or persons with physical or mental disabilities, either as residences or programming sites. Examples include senior centers, community-based residential facilities, and nursing homes. These facilities may be located anywhere in Dane County outside the city of Madison. Those agencies receiving deposit

collections are also eligible to receive programming resources as part of their deposit collection. Because these materials are in high demand, they may be kept for only four weeks. Materials are delivered on a monthly schedule whenever possible; the receiving institution must prepare the returning collection for pick-up. The number and format of the materials varies according to the needs of each agency's clients or residents. Books and other material for individual use are to be returned on the next delivery date unless a particular item is in use at that time. Programming materials must be returned on the next delivery date. Institutions participating in this program receive overdue notices and bills for replacement for items not returned. The nature of this service is such that some loss of materials is unavoidable; however, the institution does assume responsibility for any loss in excess of ten books per year. Any programming resources which are lost or destroyed while on loan must be replaced.

C. Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The Library of Congress, through the Milwaukee Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, provides recorded books and magazines for qualified users. The role of the outreach staff in this program is one of seeking out and registering eligible users in Dane County, placing needed equipment and demonstrating its use to new users when requested. All guidelines and policies of the Talking Book program are adhered to by DCLS staff.

D. New Technologies. As readers and listeners of all ages embrace new methods of content delivery, the library not only seeks to deliver content using new technologies, but also sees its role as one of educator and trainer. Dane County Library Service is committed to providing electronic materials in a variety of formats to all users. Those served by the Outreach program are especially targeted in terms of programs and services designed to teach and inform them about new technologies which may make it possible to them to continue reading and/or to enjoy the experience more.

E. Readmobile Service. Readmobile resources and programming are made available to at-risk children through partnerships with appropriate community partners. DCLS partners with community organizations in bringing the collections and programming resources of the Readmobile to at-risk children within the DCLS service territory. The Readmobile is also used to promote daycare services to those daycare providers within Dane County's taxing jurisdiction.

IV. Guidelines for future service development

All current outreach services were originally designed to "reach out" to individuals and groups whose life situations may preclude their full utilization of traditional library services. In order to continue to succeed, such a program of services must remain fluid and experimental in nature. Grant as well as county funds are sought as developing needs are assessed and opportunities for expanding or altering the programs of service present themselves.

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