

Policy - Outreach Services

I. Purpose

Dane County Library Service aims to develop and deliver library services county-wide to individuals who experience barriers in accessing traditional library services. To this end, DCLS utilizes outreach efforts that bring library materials and programs in appropriate formats to individuals and groups throughout Dane County. DCLS recognizes that there are many people in Dane County who face barriers to library service and works to extend library service to the same extent as other members of the community benefit from these services.

II. Context

Outreach Services were initiated by DCLS 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, DCLS 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 responsible, involved community partners. Such partnerships are actively sought and continuously developed. An example of a successful partnership 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. Another example is 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. 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, DCLS will pay postage to the patron; the patron must pay to return the materials. Information requests are filled by the Outreach Librarian. Loan periods for materials are addressed in the *Circulation Policy*. Homebound card holders are not assessed overdue fines; 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.

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.

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. DCLS seeks to deliver content using new technologies as well as education and training on the use of these technologies. DCLS 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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