



TRAC Operational Guidelines

For

Member Libraries

Approved by TRAC Directors
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1. Operational Guidelines for Resource Sharing

- a. All TRAC libraries are part of the Alberta Public Library Network. The network is coordinated and supported by Alberta Municipal Affairs through Public Library Services Branch (PLSB). Libraries will adhere to the *Resource Sharing Operational Policy for Public Libraries* and the *Public Library Network Policy* established by the PLSB with each library providing the same level of access to their collections to ensure effective and consistent reciprocity.
- b. Practices that withhold or hide new materials from TRAC-wide sharing, such as not checking in new materials and transferring them for holds immediately, are not in the spirit of resource sharing and contravene provincial resource sharing policies and system agreements. All items, whether new or returning, must be checked in using the Polaris “Check In” function.
- c. Reference materials, periodicals, oversized books, oversized kits, CNIB items, vinyl and electronic devices are exempt from the resource sharing guideline.
- d. Any items a library will not lend, except those in point c, must not be displayed in the PAC; these items *must* not be circulated on the ILS using a fast add procedure.
- e. Not all school libraries are required to resource share, therefore most school library holdings will not display in the PAC. If a library wishes to request a school library item, they need to contact their regional headquarters.
- f. TRAC libraries participate in the provincial ME Libraries initiative. ME patrons are allowed to place holds and select any TRAC library as a pickup location.

See Appendix B for Definitions.

See Appendix D for TRAC Resource Sharing Principles.

2. Operational Guidelines for Materials

2.1. Packaging

- a. "In-Transit" receipt slips or TRAC-standard "TRAC ILL flags" must be placed in each item with the location the item is going to clearly visible. TRAC ILL flag templates are available from your system HQ for printing.
- b. Handmade, handwritten, or locally made labels are not acceptable for van delivery.
- c. Do not use packing around individual items. Each item must have the slip easily viewable by TRAC HQ sorters.
- d. Audiovisual items must be placed at the top of the bins to avoid damage by heavier items.
- e. Use of bubble wrap should be minimal and is optional. Bubble wrap may be used on individual AV items, as long as the in-transit slip (or flag) is visible to TRAC HQ sorters without requiring unpacking. No tape or elastics should be used to hold bubble wrap in place, so library staff can quickly and easily unwrap an item. Small amounts of bubble wrap may be placed on sides or on top of bins to prevent shifting.
- f. It is acceptable to use cardboard DVD protectors or cardboard to reinforce softcover books, as long as the in-transit slip (or flag) is visible to sorters without requiring unpacking.
- g. Use as little tape or elastic bands as possible so that staff at headquarters locations can sort the items quickly. Place any tape carefully so that items are not damaged.
- h. There is no guarantee that specific shipping packaging purchased by the owning library can be returned by the transacting library, such as special boxes for audiovisual materials.
- i. Each regional library system has different delivery methods; please contact your regional library system for more details or clarification.

See Appendix C for packaging examples.

2.2.Receiving Materials

- a. Items should be checked in promptly upon receipt.
- b. Libraries receiving misdirected items should forward the items onto the library waiting for them, rather than returning them to the sending library.
- c. Check the condition of items upon receipt at the transacting library. If the condition of the item is questionable, apply a Damage Note either electronic, or paper (see Appendix A) to the item, and depending on how severe the damage, either return the item to the owning library, or place it on the holds shelf for patron pickup. The Damage Note will indicate that the item was received damaged so that neither the transacting library nor the patron is held responsible for the damage. If items are not checked for condition when received, the transacting library is held responsible for any damage and can be invoiced by the owning library.
- d. If an item is received damaged, add a concise note explaining the condition and its impact on functionality. Do not duplicate an existing damaged note.
- e. If an owning library allows the circulation of an item that is damaged, the owning library should add a note acknowledging the damage and give permission to circulate the item anyway.
- f. Do not delete Damage Notes from other libraries' item records.
- g. Refer to the Notes Procedure for proper use of notes fields. Only the Owing library is permitted to use the Public Notes field and only in appropriate circumstances, as such notes display in the PAC. Transacting libraries may only use the Free Text field to enter damage notes, as these pop up when the item is scanned.
- h. If the item is received quite damaged, e.g. if one of its discs is unplayable or if pages are falling out, do not forward the item to satisfy a hold. This is unfair to the patron and does not permit the owning library a chance to repair the damage before it becomes irreparable. Return the item to the owning library with a Damage Note (Appendix A) attached. Do not attempt to repair another library's item.
- i. When an item is not lendable, send the item back to the owning library with a Damage Noted to Item form to let them know that the item was damaged when the transacting library received it.
- j. Patrons are responsible for paying for damaged materials if they have caused the destruction or damage.
- k. Patrons are not responsible for paying for damage to materials that occurs during shipping.

2.3. Loan Periods

- a. Loan periods are based on the owning library's policy and item type within TRAC.
- b. Loan periods will vary in libraries outside of TRAC.
- c. Initial check out: If the owning library feels that the transacting library has extended the due date at the time of check out for an unreasonable period of time, or has done so on an item with existing holds, the owning library may contact the transacting library and recall its item.
- d. Renewal: Library staff must not renew titles or extend the due date for any items with holds. If there are no holds, libraries can renew items once over the renewal limit. If a patron asks to renew more than once over the limit or to extend the due date beyond one additional week, then the library staff at the transacting library must contact the owning library to explain the extenuating circumstance(s).

2.4. Barcode Placement

- a. Moving forward, all item barcodes will be placed on the outside of the item away from the item's ISBN/UPC barcode.

See Appendix A for Damaged Note to Item Template.

3. Operational Guidelines for Damaged and Lost Materials Payment

3.1. Payment for Damaged and Lost Materials

- a. If damage to an item is caused by a patron, or if a patron has lost an item, the patron is responsible for paying for the item.
- b. If the transacting library is unable to collect money from the patron, the transacting library is responsible for compensating the owning library for the lost or damaged item.
- c. The library that checks an item out to a patron is the transacting library, regardless of whether the patron then renews the item at another library. If the patron subsequently damages or loses the item, the transacting library to invoice remains the original check-out library not the library that had renewed the item.
- d. When sending an invoice for a damaged item to the transacting library, please send the damaged item as well.
- e. If the owning library's item becomes lost through ILL outside of TRAC, that library must contact and invoice the ILL library directly.
- f. Patrons and the transacting library are not responsible for damage or loss that occurs during shipping.
- g. Items assigned the status of "claim returned/claim never had" can be considered "lost" after six months. Restitution will be made to the owning library; the owning library will invoice the transacting library for the replacement of the material. The transacting library can decide whether or not to recoup the cost from its patron/wandering patron and may declare it lost in the patron claims workflow.
- h. The amount charged for a damaged or lost item will be the price of the item stated in the item record. If the owning library wishes to charge a processing fee, the processing fee must have been incorporated into the item price at the time the item record was created. No charges above the price stated in the item record should be charged.
- i. If the item record does not include a price, then the locally defined default fee should be levied.
- j. The owning library must invoice within a year of an item becoming lost if they want to receive compensation. If the owning library has not sent an invoice within a year the library is not obligated to pay.
- k. After a reasonable time if the owning library has any concerns about an unpaid invoice from a library, they can contact their Regional Headquarters.

- l. The library receiving the patron's payment will go into the patron's record and mark the charge paid.
- m. A payment from the transacting library should be sent to the owning library; the item barcode, title of the item, and the patron's name, should be included with the payment.
- n. Payment from patrons should not be sent to the owning library.
- o. It is the owning library's decision to repurchase or delete the item.
- p. ME patrons shall be treated the same as registered patrons within the transacting library, both in privileges and responsibilities (i.e. regarding damaged and lost items). The transacting library may contact and invoice the ME patron directly; and the transacting library may also be invoiced by the owning library.

3.2. Identifying Overdue and Lost Items

- a. Libraries need to post to the database (overdues and billing) weekly in order to change the status of long overdue items to lost.
- b. Overdue items will be assigned the status of lost within 45 days of the item becoming overdue.
- c. Libraries run reports each month to determine items that have a lost status.
- d. It is the owning library's responsibility to identify items that are lost and to invoice the transacting library. Run the custom Lost Items report to get this information.

4. Operational Guidelines for Missing Items, Items in Mending, In-Transit Items and Unclaimed Holds

- a. Libraries run reports each month to determine items that have a status of missing or in-transit.
- b. It is the owning library's responsibility to identify items that are missing or in-transit and try to locate them.
- c. Items that have been in-transit or transferred for over two months can be manually converted to missing.
- d. Missing items will automatically be deleted after one year.
- e. Items in mending status will be automatically deleted after one year.
- f. Libraries run reports each week to identify holds that have become unclaimed. When an item reaches the unclaimed period a library must send the item on to the next library.
- g. If an unclaimed hold is lost, the transacting library has one month beyond the unclaimed hold date to find the item, after which the owning library may consider it lost and invoice the transacting library for it. The owning library must invoice within one year of the item becoming an unclaimed hold.

5. Operational Guidelines for Contacting Patrons

- a. When conducting interlibrary resource sharing, the owning library should never contact patrons from the transacting library.
- b. Patrons adhere to local lending policies and may be subject to collection agencies for delinquent accounts through in-person transactions at libraries in TRAC.
- c. Library staff have access to all TRAC patron records. In keeping with points a. and b., libraries shall not place any sort of note—blocking or non-blocking, library assigned, free-text, or charges—into the record of a patron not their own, EXCEPT when the patron is a wandering patron to their library.
- d. Wandering patrons adhere to local lending policies at each library where materials are borrowed and may be contacted directly by the transacting library.
- e. The transacting library may identify its wandering patrons who have overdue or lost items by running the Polaris custom Wandering Patron Notices report.
- f. It is the responsibility of staff at the transacting library to ensure that the patron is in good standing. If a wandering patron has checked out an item from a library that is not their registered library, it is the transacting library's responsibility to track the item down should it become overdue or lost. This is true whether the item belongs to said library or it is an intra library loan item that was checked out to the patron by the transacting library.
- g. With lost items, it is the owning library's responsibility to invoice the transacting library. The owning library can run the Polaris custom Lost Items report to find out who the transacting library was in order to send an invoice. Once the invoice is paid, the lost item should be deleted promptly so that it does not continue to appear on the lost items report.
- h. Due to Polaris functionality, all libraries in TRAC have the ability to place messages into the My Account of any patron on TRACpac. Therefore, libraries must not place messages into the My Accounts of patrons not their own. When placing a message in the My Account of your own library patron (or your Wandering Patron), appropriate etiquette and professionalism is to be observed. Libraries are responsible to train their staff and volunteers to use the functionality responsibly.

6. Operational Guidelines for Patron Registration and Renewals

- a. When creating a new patron record the library must see some form of government issued identification and must enter the name and address exactly as written on the identification (including middle name) into the patron's record. Library staff will verify and complete the "Where They Live" field as it is often different from a mailing address (e.g. PO box).
- b. To avoid creating duplicate records in Polaris, check for a pre-existing patron record before creating a new patron record. If there is a pre-existing patron record from within the same system, the library may change the registered branch and update the patron record once the identities of the new patron and the pre-existing record have been confirmed to be the same. Check the pre-existing record to see if the patron was in good standing before updating the record. If the patron is not in good standing, the library may still update the record and serve the patron but should ensure that any charges for replacement costs remain on the record. If the pre-existing patron record is from a different system within TRAC, the library may serve the patron using the pre-existing record, and then advise its system administrator to update the patron record.
- c. Libraries must make sure to designate a notification option in the patron registration record in order for items to convert to lost and for the reports to function properly.
- d. Libraries will not do blanket renewals of expired patron cards but will confirm that each individual patron card is appropriate to renew (e.g. the patron has not moved to another municipality; the patron wishes to be renewed at your library; the patron is not deceased; etc.).
- e. Extended memberships (more than one year) and/or lifetime memberships may not be transferrable to other libraries, should the patron become registered at a library in another community.

NOTE 1: **The *TRAC Operational Guidelines for Member Libraries* will be reviewed annually at the spring TRAC Advisory Council meeting.**

NOTE 2: ***See Appendix D for TRAC Resource Sharing Principles.***

Appendix A: Damaged Noted to Item Template

Damage Noted to Item

(Tuck the notice into the item or use REMOVEABLE tape.)
This item needs repair, please return it to the home library.

When received at _____

Date _____ Initials _____

- Barcode / Spine label
- Broken Spine
- Case damaged
- Case missing
- Contents damaged
- Contents missing
- Cover
- Loose pages
- Mismatched materials
- Needs cleaning
- Pages cut / missing
- Pages stained
- Torn
- Wet / water damage
- Writing / scribble
- Other _____

Owning Library _____

Damage Noted to Item

(Tuck the notice into the item or use REMOVEABLE tape.)
This item needs repair, please return it to the home library.

When received at _____

Date _____ Initials _____

- Barcode / Spine label
- Broken Spine
- Case damaged
- Case missing
- Contents damaged
- Contents missing
- Cover
- Loose pages
- Mismatched materials
- Needs cleaning
- Pages cut / missing
- Pages stained
- Torn
- Wet / water damage
- Writing / scribble
- Other _____

Owning Library _____

Damage Noted to Item

(Tuck the notice into the item or use REMOVEABLE tape.)
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- Needs cleaning
- Pages cut / missing
- Pages stained
- Torn
- Wet / water damage
- Writing / scribble
- Other _____

Owning Library _____

Damage Noted to Item

(Tuck the notice into the item or use REMOVEABLE tape.)
This item needs repair, please return it to the home library.

When received at _____

Date _____ Initials _____

- Barcode / Spine label
- Broken Spine
- Case damaged
- Case missing
- Contents damaged
- Contents missing
- Cover
- Loose pages
- Mismatched materials
- Needs cleaning
- Pages cut / missing
- Pages stained
- Torn
- Wet / water damage
- Writing / scribble
- Other _____

Owning Library _____

Appendix B: Definitions

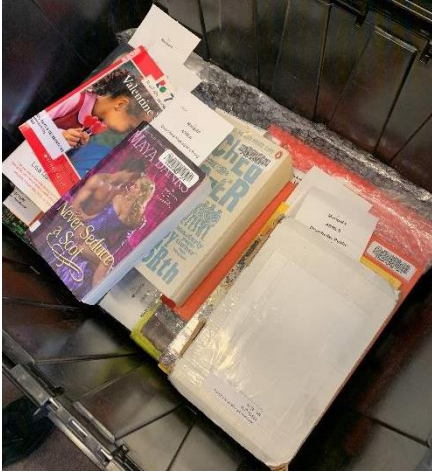
Definitions

Owning Library: The library that owns the item.

Transacting Library: The library that circulates (checks out in person) an item to a patron, whether it is a patron registered at your library or a patron from another library who has come to your library.

Wandering Patron: A patron that is registered at one library may go to a different library to check out and drop off materials, or select a different library as a pickup location for intra library loans. Wandering patrons adhere to local lending policies and may be contacted directly by the transacting library.

Appendix C: Bin Packing Procedures

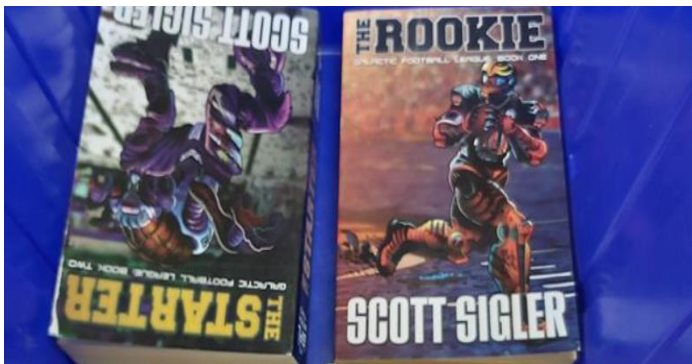


Materials mixed in bin with individual labels.

Verdict: **YES**. Individual labels mean easy identification, easy to remove from bin, bin may be filled efficiently, no extra packing time.

Materials mixed in bin with some loose library grouping with individual labels.

Verdict: **YES**. Individual labels mean easy identification, easy to remove from bin, bin may be filled efficiently, minimal extra packing time.



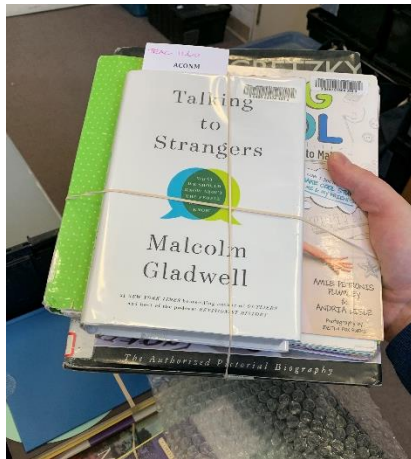
Place books spine to spine.

Verdict: **YES**. This helps books from sliding inside of each other and getting wrecked.



Cardboard “shelves” in between different library groupings; dividers between library groupings.

Verdict: **NO**. Adds extra time to packing, reduces usable space in bin, more recycling/garbage.



Elastics around a library grouping with a single label on top.

Verdict: **NO**. Sometimes requires elastic removal to reorganize more efficiently, single label makes identification less accurate.

Elastics around a library grouping with labels in each item.

Verdict: **NO**. Not necessary, and not always helpful. Sometimes requires elastic removal to reorganize more efficiently, individual labels mean easy identification.



Appendix D: TRAC Resource Sharing Principles

Resource Sharing Principles

Access to information by all libraries is strengthened through sharing information and resources within this organized system in which the roles and responsibilities of all participants and the fundamentals upon which sharing takes place are common and understood. The following principles adhere to the *Resource Sharing Operational Policy for Public Libraries* and the *Public Library Network Policy* (approved Dec 2012) as well as to the CLA/ASTED Interlibrary Loan Code (revised in 1995).

- 1. Interdependence** – with the global information explosion and limited resources of local libraries, no library can meet all customer needs. Libraries must, of necessity, share their resources through some kind of organized system to assist every public library in Alberta to meet the needs of its clientele.
- 2. Local responsibility for self-sufficiency** – the local public library is primarily responsible for providing library services to its customers and should develop its collection to meet as many of the community's needs as possible. The intra-library loan service is a supplementary service and is not meant to be a substitute for local services.
- 3. Reciprocity** – the key to current resource sharing is the exchange of resources and services for the mutual benefit of all participants in the resource sharing network. It implies a negotiated agreement whereby resource sharing partners are obligated to lend those kinds of resources they or their clients wish to borrow. Libraries that resource share practice reciprocity by being responsible at all stages of the process including: maintaining correct client (patron) information, packaging & shipping items, tracking missing or lost items and ensuring that payment for items lost or damage is provided to the owning library by the borrowing library. Reciprocity also implies that all public libraries that participate in the resource sharing process abide by the guidelines as developed from time to time.

Resource Sharing Loan Periods

1. Loan periods are established by the lending library and will vary throughout TRAC.
2. If a library lends material to another library outside of TRAC the lending library should extend the loan period for at least two weeks to allow for shipping.
3. If an item is borrowed from a library outside of TRAC, renewals must be authorized by the lending library prior to changing the date within the ILS.
4. The lending library has the right to recall their item at any time provided the allowable loan period has been afforded (original sign out plus two renewals with the exception of materials that do not allow renewals, i.e. high demand items).

AV Materials

1. Due to the fragile nature of audiovisual materials, special care is required during the resource sharing process.

Approved at the TRAC Advisory Council meeting on November 20, 2009