RSA Expectations & Responsibilities -- DRAFT

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Introduction

This document develops the themes contained in RSA's Core Principles and is designed to provide an overview of expectations derived from those core principles. It provides a rationale for why policies and standards are in place and how they should be implemented to aid resource sharing.

By providing the shared Integrated Library System (ILS) (SirsiDynix's Symphony), public access catalog (RSAcat), reporting module (BLUEcloud Analytics), electronic materials (CloudSource OA, eRead Illinois and administrative support for ADML), a help desk (help@rsanfp.org and 866-940-4083), centralized bibliographic services, and support for all system related products, services, and issues, RSA delivers the infrastructure that allows materials belonging to the member libraries to be discoverable by patrons and shareable among the libraries. By facilitating group purchases of these systems RSA membership provides significant financial savings to member libraries.

RSA'S Core Principles

1. Reciprocity
2. Discoverability
3. Convenience
4. Privacy
5. Communication
6. Engagement
7. Responsiveness
8. Effectiveness

Promote Reciprocity

Reciprocity is at the core of everything RSA does for its members. RSA expects its members to share the largest proportion of their collection possible with as many other members as possible. To further the goal of reciprocity, RSA's Board adopted the Reciprocity policy. To encourage the fullest reciprocity among RSA's members RSA's Board has adopted several other policies. These can be seen as "ground rules for sharing."

- In-transit Items – when discharged, items may generate a notice to say that they should be transited to another library. These items are then assumed to be In-Transit and should be sent to the destination library indicated unless they are unavailable to fill the hold, in which case they should be marked as missing or checked out to a No Transit User. A library should regularly check their Hold Pickup Lists to ensure patron hold requests are processed promptly.
- Clean Holds Shelf List – to avoid items sitting uncollected on a library's holds shelf indefinitely when holds expire, a report called the Clean Holds Shelf List is sent to the library's IONOS email address (system_code@members.librariesofrsa.org).

This should be checked daily and items appearing on it should be discharged and reshelved locally or sent to their next destination library.

- [Item Renewal](#) –the circulating library's circulation map rules are the ones that determines the length of check out and the number of renewals available. However, please remember that items with holds shall not be renewed, libraries should not renew another library's item more than 4 times without permission from the owning library, and holds should not be available for pickup for more than 14 days without permission from the owning library.
- [New Materials Item Types](#) – libraries may restrict the sharing of their new materials to only their own patrons by assigning them to the non-holdable New Materials Item Types. Items may only be cataloged in these Item Types for a maximum of 12 months (or the length of the current academic year for schools). After 13 months, RSA staff will bulk convert items assigned to these Item Types, so they are available to fill holds for all RSA Member users. Libraries are not required to use the New Materials Item Types and are free to convert items assigned to these Item Types at any time prior to the 12-month limit.
- [Fine Block Limits](#) – member libraries agree to a standard cumulative fine block limit of no more than $20.00 to ensure that fines are not a punitive measure but instead "facilitate the free flow of information".
- [Damaged Materials](#) – It is an unfortunate consequence of sharing materials that occasionally they are damaged. The policy provides a procedure for dealing with another library's material when it is damaged either in delivery or by the patron. Libraries must not repair another library's material. The item-owning library will absorb the cost of an item damaged and not paid for by a patron of another library, as they would with their own items.

Comply with RSA's Rules

RSA expects that Member Libraries will comply with the Bylaws, Intergovernmental Agreement, or any policy, standard, rule or regulation of RSA. Policies for enforcement are described in RSA's [Bylaws](#) and in the [Ensuring Compliance by Member Libraries Policy](#). Reciprocity is encouraged and supported if all member libraries comply with RSA's agreed upon rules. Failure to comply with these rules may lead to the principle of reciprocity being harmed as libraries become less likely to lend if they think another library is not following RSA's rules.

Enhance Discoverability

Maintaining database integrity with high quality data entry and maintenance is essential to allow items to be discovered in WorkFlows and RSAcat and for circulation and holds tasks to be completed efficiently ensuring that library users have the best interactions with their library.

Bibliographic Records

Borrowing among RSA libraries is initiated by either staff in the ILS or patrons using the PAC to place holds. Detailed, properly constructed MARC records, along with accurate call number/item records attached to them, are vital to making member libraries' materials discoverable by staff and patrons.

- Bibliographic Standards - Prepared by the RSA Database Management Committee in 1999, these standards are still relevant, ensuring consistent and quality cataloging practices for the shared RSA database. The standards include explanations of the various cataloging levels, descriptive cataloging standards, duplication, error correction, training, and supplies.
- Core Competencies for Cataloging Staff – cataloging in the RSA ILS requires training specific to WorkFlows and RSA's established policies and procedures for data entry. RSA strongly recommends that training be completed by staff at member libraries prior to their being assigned a cataloging account. In addition, there are three levels of cataloging access which can be assigned to cataloging staff at member libraries. They are RSA Basic Level Cataloger, RSA Batch Editing Cataloger, and RSA OCLC Cataloger. An explanation of these three levels and the functionality which is available to catalogers at each level is given in the document.
- Advanced Reader Copies (ARCs) – ARCs can also be referred to by any of these other terms Advance listening copy, Advance viewing copy, Advance screening copy, Galley, Proof, or the item has any mention on it that it is "uncorrected", not for sale, or not for lending or circulation. ARCs must not be cataloged or circulated using the RSA ILS. ARCs encountered in WorkFlows must be reported to RSA staff. The cooperation of member libraries is appreciated to protect RSA from any legal consequences associated with cataloging and circulating ARCs.
- Pirated Items – materials created illegally (pirated) must not be cataloged or circulated using the RSA ILS. Pirated items encountered in WorkFlows must be reported to RSA staff. The cooperation of member libraries is appreciated to protect RSA from any legal consequences associated with cataloging and circulating pirated items.
- **Brief Record Upgrades –** member libraries are expected to send items cataloged on brief records when RSA catalogers place them on hold. RSA will upgrade the brief record to an OCLC record once the item is in hand. The OCLC record improves discoverability for staff and library users. The bibliographic description on the OCLC record also helps users understand what the item is about, allowing them to decide if they want to check it out or place a hold. If the library does not want a brief record upgraded to an OCLC record, the library staff must inform RSA to cancel the hold.

Facilitate Convenience for Library Users

User Records

It is also critical for User Records (also known as Borrower Records or Patron Records) to be entered into the ILS in a consistent manner. Consistency and accuracy allow for a user's record to be identified quickly to facilitate convenient and efficient checkout and placing of holds.

- [Patron Registration](#) – This policy explains the steps staff should take to ensure that an individual or institution is eligible for a new user card at an RSA library and the accepted standards for data entry for user cards. Following these standards encourages consistency and avoids unnecessary duplication of records as it requires "one user, one card" to be consistently applied. It also prevents users from getting a card at one RSA library when they are not in good standing at another.
- [Patron Cards](#) – It is important to assign the correct type of account depending on the status of the user. This policy outlines the various types of cards, and provides limited exceptions to the "one user, one card" policy.
- [User Registrations for Schools](#) – User records at school libraries have fewer required fields namely Legal first and last name, middle name or middle initial, and User Category 6 (the year the student is expected to graduate from HIGH SCHOOL). In addition, this policy outlines some fields schools may want to consider using to generate reports.
- [Retention Schedule for Expired Patron Cards](#) – The Retention Schedule lays out expectations for deletion of expired users. This schedule varies depending on whether users are encumbered and by how much. The number of user records is a factor in RSA's contract with the ILS vendor. It is also one of the variables used to calculate RSA member fees, so it is every member's interest to remove expired users in a timely manner. It should be noted that a library's ability to delete users may be subject to its schedule provided by the Local Records Unit. Requests for bulk user deletion can be submitted using the [Patron Purge form](#).

Database Parameters

RSA has 130+ member libraries all with their own circulation and holds procedures, making the parameters implemented in WorkFlows are complex. They fall into four main areas.

- [Cataloging Parameters](#)
  - **Home location** which describes where the item "lives" on the shelf in your library.
  - **Item Type** which represents what an item is. *This is the most important element in determining how your items circulate and fulfill holds.* Only the Item Type, User Profile, and Checkout Library are used to create circulation and holds rules to match your library's preferences.
  - **Item category 1** indicates if the item's content is fiction or nonfiction.

- o **Item category 2** indicates the reading, viewing, or listening level of the item's content. Options include adult, young adult, juvenile, and equipment.
  - o **Item category 3** indicates the item's general format and depends on its Item Type. They include the following: AUDIOBOOK, BOOK, LARGEPRINT, MOVIE, MUSIC, and PERIODICAL. RSA runs an automated script to ensure consistent use of these codes. These are what determine the general format icons and search limit facets in RSAcat.
  - o **Item category 4** indicates the item's primary genre.
  - o **Item category 5** indicates the item's secondary sub-genre.
  - o **Mandatory Cataloging Codes** lists the cataloging codes that must appear in your WorkFlows drop-down menus even if the menus are customized.
- **Circulation Parameters**
  - o **Expanded Circulation Map** posted to the RSA Support Site is updated the 1st week of each month. It combines 4 things (Checkout Library, User Profile, Item Type, and Circulation Rule) to determine how a particular item checks out in your library. The Expanded Circulation Map is read from the bottom up to determine the order of rules to use.
  - o **Circ Rule Helper Checklist** is a spreadsheet to help you submit the required information to set up new circulation rules. This checklist is intended to be filled in using Microsoft Excel and emailed to RSA for implementation.
- **Holds Parameters**
  - o **Hold Map** posted to the RSA Support Site is updated in the 1st week of each month. It determines which item types are holdable only by your library users, holdable by no one, or holdable by everyone. WorkFlows assumes an item is holdable by everyone unless told otherwise. The Hold Map contains all the exceptions to that assumption. The Hold Map is read from the bottom up to determine the order of rules to use.
  - o **Hold Rule Helper Checklist** is a spreadsheet to help you submit the required information to set up new hold rules. This checklist is intended to be filled in using Microsoft Excel and emailed to RSA for implementation.
  - o **Membership and Holds Groupings** tell the system to first search within a library's own holds group. Any library with a branch, or school with 2 or more automated buildings, constitutes a Holds Group. The Holds Group ensures your patrons draw first from your main and branch libraries, then from the rest of RSA. RSAcat assumes users are placing holds from their home library's RSAcat profile. WorkFlows also followed the hold grouping rules for system-wide holds, and for local title holds.
- **User Parameters**
  - o **User Profiles** posted to the RSA Support Site is updated in the 1st week of each month and shows all the User Profiles in the system. User Profiles are used for circulation and holds rules, the total number of items a patron can plan on hold, and fine block amounts, and various other settings.
  - o **Mandatory User Profile Codes** is a list of the user profile codes that must appear in your WorkFlows drop-down menus. Mandatory cataloging

parameters are also on this list. These codes will be retained even if your library's menus are customized.

- o **User Profile Differences** is a list of the user profile codes you might see in WorkFlows and the individual parameters for each user profile.

RSAcat

RSAcat is RSA's online public access catalog (OPAC). It is available to library users both on the web and through the RSAcat Mobile application. Accurate bibliographic and user records and parameter settings allow for items to be easily discovered by users and staff. It also allows library users to initiate and manage their holds, manage their checkouts, and return materials on time.

Member libraries are expected to facilitate this by making RSAcat readily available to their users by linking to it from their websites, making it available on a computer in the library, and to actively encourage user of the RSAcat Mobile app.

Protect Library User Privacy

User Privacy is of paramount importance. It is the responsibility of all staff at member libraries to always protect User Privacy. Some protections are enshrined in Illinois State Statute such as those covering borrowing records. Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and information regarding a user's transactions with the library are also protected by RSA policy.

Printed Documents including PII

In its [Printed Documents Including PII policy](#), RSA requires libraries who want to receive reports that contain Personally Identifiable Information to submit a signed PII Library Agreement and a corresponding Staff agreement for each staff member who will have access to the reports. These agreements can be downloaded [here](#). Outside of reports, PII should not be included on any publicly accessible printed documents including but not limited to: Checkout/Renewal Receipts (Date due slips), Transit slips, Hold slips, Hold wrappers. Printed Notices such as Overdue Notices, Bill Notices may contain PII and are intended only for the user in the notice. Staff may general printed Picklists or Onshelf Items pull lists, but should safeguard those containing patron PII and destroy them after use.

Patron Notes

Patron Notes shall be as brief and objective as possible. The [Patron Notes Policy](#) requires that they are to be used as internal "alerts" only, to apprise staff of the need to collect information from the patron, or to inform the patron of an issue regarding their account. It is a useful principle to assume the patron may see the note and enter it accordingly.

Communicate with other RSA Libraries

Resolving issues – sharing among member libraries often relies on staff at libraries speaking to each other to resolve issues arising. Staff at a check out library may want to ask staff at the owning library if they can extend the number of renewals for an item, for example if it's being used by a book club, or to resolve a billing issue, for example. Staff at member libraries are strongly encouraged to be in touch with each other to resolve issues.

Patron Deletion – The Patron Registration policy establishes that each user of member libraries should only have one card with only occasional exceptions. When a user moves from one member library to another the user's new library should follow the Reciprocal Patron Deletion procedure which explains how to request that the user's old account be deleted by their old library using the Reciprocal Patron Deletion form.

Networking groups – while RSA is not officially involved with the local networking groups, it does strongly encourage staff at member libraries to be involved with them. They can be highly effective for sharing tips and tricks as well as opportunities to raise concerns that can be directed to RSA staff, the DAC, or the board. Information about these groups can be found here.

Communicate with Library Users

It's essential that a library's users are kept informed about the status of their accounts and the materials they have checked out. Good communication with users promotes swift return of checked out materials so that they become available for the next user promptly.

User Notifications
The Damaged and Lost Materials Policies require that all notifications to users for transited items come from the checkout library to avoid confusing the user. The checkout library will be responsible for notifying the user concerning overdue, damaged, and lost items. WorkFlows generated notices come therefore from the checkout library. Patrons should only be billed by the checkout library.

Courtesy and Bill Notices
The WorkFlows Notices Standard recommends that courtesy notices be sent 3 days before the due date, except in the case of materials with very brief loan periods, in which case a courtesy notice should be sent the day before the due date. Bill notices are generated the day after a bill is created on a patron's account.

Engage with RSA

RSA is a membership driven organization. Your participation lies at the heart of everything RSA does. The Board and Staff of RSA value participation from staff at member libraries.

Participation provides RSA with valuable insights into operations and methods for improving our services. There are several ways to get involved in RSA.

Serve on the Board – RSA has a 12-member board representing member libraries of diverse types, sizes, and RSA's five geographic regions. More information can be found here: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/about/board-of-directors-as-of-1-jul-2024/.

Attend Directors Advisory Committee (DAC) meetings – the purpose of the DAC is to gather feedback, present plans and policy updates, share and gather strategic plan ideas, and comment on the operations of RSA. It is also the primary feedback mechanism for Library Directors to share directly with the Board. There is a page for the DAC at the RSA support site: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/about/directors-advisory-committee/. The DAC is the spiritual successor to what used to be known as Users Group.

Host a meeting – If your library has suitable ADA and OMA compliant space, you can volunteer to host a meeting. If you'd like to host us, email the Help Desk at help@rsanfp.org.

Request a site visit – You can request a visit from either the Operations team or the Cataloging team by filling out this form: https://form.jotform.com/RSAnfp/RSAsite-visit-request.

Join and interact in our forums – The main ways that these forums interact is through our email lists and occasionally by zoom meetings. Fill out our form to subscribe to our email forums here: https://form.jotform.com/RSAnfp/rsa-email-groups.

Use our Support Site – There are approximately three hundred support documents on the RSA Support Site at https://support.librariesofrsa.org/. You can search the Documentation Index to find documents to guide you through many situations that might arise.

Contact the Help Desk – If you need assistance or have more questions about RSA, the easiest way to be involved is to contact the help desk by sending an email to help@rsanfp.org or calling 866-940-4083.

Attend Membership Chats – Chats are used to inform or get input from members about various topics. These can be either one-way information sharing, or collaborative group-based sessions. More information can be found here: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/meetings/membership-chats/.

Participate in surveys or provide feedback – RSA staff occasionally request feedback from member libraries, often in the form of surveys. It is essential that members respond to these requests for input. The data is used to help RSA apply for the annual consortium grant, to improve or add services for member libraries, or to identify issues which need to be addressed.

Participate in Training – RSA provides monthly training opportunities covering aspects of circulation, cataloging, and reporting. More information can be found here: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/meetings/training/. Register using L2: https://librarylearning.org/events/calendar?keyword=&location=&sponsor=77&type=All&audience=All&topic=All&program=All. You must be logged in to L2 to register for RSA's training. Training is supplemented by documentation provided at RSA's support site at https://support.librariesofrsa.org/ and at RSA's YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCDrnvYBvbfXN3pgXHN9McQ.

Update RSA – member libraries must keep RSA informed when you update your library's operations. This might include your opening hours, your library's name or contact details, when your director changes, if you need changes to item or user parameters, and circulation or holds maps, or if you have staff turnover when those staff have individual logins to services provided by RSA. Inform RSA of these changes by emailing the Help Desk at help@rsanfp.org and ensure that the ILS settings are optimized to serve your library's users.

Report Errors – if you notice an error email the Help Desk at help@rsanfp.org. Errors might include cataloging such as items on the wrong record, problems with circulation or holds, or incorrect information on the support site or RSAcat.

Become a Mentor – being a mentor for staff at another RSA member library can promote engagement and develop skills across RSA members. If someone is interested in becoming a mentor, or receiving help from a mentor, they should contact the Help Desk, and RSA staff will help make arrangements.

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What to Expect from RSA

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RSA Board of Directors
Representation – the Board comprised twelve members who represent the various types, sizes, and the regional distribution of the member libraries. member libraries can expect the board to represent them. Each board member represents member libraries either by region, size, or type.

Governance – the board can be expected to provide high quality governance on behalf of member libraries. This includes approving policy, developing strategy and direction, adoption and oversight of the budget, and the hiring and supervision of the Executive Director.

Responsiveness – If a member has an issue to raise with Board members they can be contacted using the details here. As a subcommittee of the Board, the DAC is also a point of contact for Directors of member libraries to be in touch with the Board.

RSA Staff
Responsiveness – Member libraries can expect that RSA staff will be responsive to their requests for help and suggestions for improvement. Staff at member libraries must allow RSA staff to resolve issues arising between libraries.

Site visits – Member libraries can expect RSA staff to make routine, in-person site visits which will be used to provide information, training, guidance, and to ensure the system is optimally configured to the library's needs.

ILS
Member libraries can expect that RSA will provide an ILS, OPAC, and reporting functions that will have a high level of dependability and reliability.

Other useful resources

Here are some other resources designed to help staff at member libraries in their daily work serving their users.

- The Operations Manual is designed to support staff at member libraries who work on the front lines with patrons. At larger libraries this might include only those working at circulation or reference desks, while at some of our smaller libraries it is aimed at the solo librarian working there.
- The Documentation Index presents a hierarchically organized list of all the documentation written by RSA staff to help staff at member libraries work with WorkFlows, BLUEcloud Analytics, and RSAcat. It is updated monthly.
- The RSA Support Site can be found at: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/. Use the magnifying glass to search the site for the content you are looking for.

Conclusion – An Effective RSA

If the Board of Directors, DAC, RSA Staff and member libraries abide by and work together to promote RSA's core principles of Reciprocity, Discoverability, Convenience, Privacy, Communication, Engagement, and Responsiveness then the last core principle of Effectiveness can be achieved. An effective RSA is built when all of RSA's stakeholders work together to serve our library users.