Prohibited Items Procedure

Last updated: September 8, 2025

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Background

On September 4, 2025, the RSA Board of Directors approved the Prohibited Items Policy that forbids the cataloging, circulation, and interlibrary loan of several types of items in the RSA database, including:

- Pirated items
- Advanced Reader Copies (ARCs)
- Display only items
- Items with restrictions on their sale
- Promotional items
- Items not available for loan

The Prohibited Items Policy protects both the owning library and the RSA consortium from potential legal consequences. For the full policy, refer to this page: https://support.librariesofrsa.org/project/prohibited-items/.

This procedure applies to any prohibited items that are encountered in the RSA database, either owned by your library or another RSA library.

What to do if you encounter a possible prohibited item that belongs to your library

1. Promptly remove the item from the shelf.

2. Examine the item to determine if it falls under the RSA Prohibited Items Policy. If the item may be pirated, refer to the Identifying Pirated Items Guide. If additional assistance is necessary to verify the item is prohibited, contact the RSA Help Desk at help@rsanfp.org.

If your library confirms your item is prohibited

1. If the item is pirated, contact the vendor that sold it. Ask the vendor for a refund on the grounds that the item is pirated.

2. Check to see if there are any holds on the prohibited item.
    a. Remove your patrons' holds and then contact those patrons to let them know why their holds were removed.

b. If patrons at other libraries have placed holds on the prohibited item, contact the RSA Help Desk. RSA will email the affected libraries with the patron names and user IDs. After the libraries have been emailed, RSA will remove the patron holds. The libraries are then responsible for notifying their patrons to explain why their hold was removed.

3. Remove the prohibited item from WorkFlows using one of these methods:
   - [Discard user](#) (preferred method)
   - [Delete Titles, Call Numbers, or Items wizard](#)

4. Dispose of the physical item.

If your library confirms your item is not prohibited

Enter a staff note according to the format below. This note will be helpful in case the item is questioned again as prohibited, either by your library or another library.

Item verified as not prohibited, EL/RSA 01/14/2020.

- "EL/RSA" should be replaced by your first and last name initials, followed by a slash, then your library's abbreviation.

- "01/14/2020" should be replaced by the date the note was entered, using the MM/DD/YYYY format.

What to do if you encounter a possible prohibited item that belongs to another library

1. The library that encounters the item in question will send an email to the RSA Help Desk at help@rsanfp.org with the subject line "Possible Prohibited Item." In the email, share the title, the name of the owning library, and the item ID.

2. Do not check out the item to the patron. Place another hold if the item was supposed to fill a hold. Explain to the patron there may be a problem with the item that filled their hold, and a different copy will be requested for them.

3. The RSA cataloger who takes ownership of the Help Desk email reporting the possible prohibited item will mark the item as missing so it no longer appears as

available for the patron's hold. The missing status will also prevent the item from filling additional holds and the item appearing in the RSAcat.

4. After they have marked the item as missing, the RSA cataloger will ask the library that encountered the prohibited item to send it to RSA in RAILS delivery, directed to 200-EP on the delivery label.

5. The RSA cataloger will email the library that owns the item to let them know they are investigating the item as a potentially prohibited item.

6. Once the item arrives in delivery, the RSA cataloger will check the item out to their D1500 account.

7. The RSA cataloger will examine the item and determine if it is prohibited.

If RSA confirms the other library's item is prohibited

1. The RSA cataloger will shadow the prohibited item to prevent it from appearing in the RSAcat and patrons placing holds on it.

2. The RSA cataloger will enter a staff note according to this format:

    Item verified as prohibited, JC/RSA 01/14/2020.

    - "JC/RSA" may be replaced by the RSA cataloger's first and last name initials, followed by a slash, then RSA.

    - "01/14/2020" should be replaced by the date the note was entered, using the MM/DD/YYYY format.

3. RSA will email the owning library to explain their item is prohibited. RSA will encourage the library to contact the vendor that sold the item to ask for a refund.

4. If patrons at other libraries have placed holds on the prohibited item, RSA will email those libraries with the patron names and user IDs. After the libraries have been emailed, RSA will remove the patron holds. The libraries are then responsible for contacting their patrons to explain why their hold was removed.

5. The RSA cataloger will discharge the prohibited item from their D1500 account, check it out to the owning library's D1500 account, and send the item back to that library through delivery.

6. The owning library will discharge the item upon arrival in delivery.

7. If patrons at the owning library have placed holds on the prohibited item, the owning library will remove those holds and then notify the patrons to let them know.

8. The owning library will remove their item from WorkFlows using one of these methods:

   - [Discard user](#) (preferred method)
   - [Delete Titles, Call Numbers, or Items wizard](#)

9. The library will dispose of the physical item.

If RSA determines the other library's item is not prohibited

1. The RSA cataloger will enter a staff note according to the format below.

   Item verified as not prohibited, JC/RSA 01/14/2020.

   - "JC/RSA" may be replaced by the RSA cataloger's first and last name initials, followed by a slash, then RSA.

   - "01/14/2020" should be replaced by the date the note was entered, using the MM/DD/YYYY format.

2. RSA will email the library to explain their item is not prohibited. The staff note should be left as-is in case the item is questioned again as prohibited, either by the owning library or another library.

3. The RSA cataloger will discharge the item from their D1500 account, check the item out to the owning library's D1500 account, and send the item back to that library through delivery.

4. The owning library will discharge the item upon arrival. Then the item is ready to resume circulating.