



Prohibited Items Policy

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Introduction

This policy outlines specific types of items that shall not be cataloged, circulated, or interlibrary loaned in the RSA database due to the legal liability for both the library and RSA.

This policy replaces two policies that were both approved by the RSA NFP Database Committee on 05/09/2019 and the RSA NFP Users Group on 11/07/2019: the RSA Policy for Advanced Reader Copies (ARCs) and the RSA Policy for Pirated Items.

In addition to replacing the ARC and pirated items policies, this policy extends to include additional types of items that shall not be cataloged, circulated, or interlibrary loaned in the RSA database.

Pirated Items

Books, videos, sound recordings, and items of any other format that have been illegally created, copied, distributed, or sold are considered “pirated” and violate copyright law.

AI-Generated Items

AI-generated items whose content violates copyright law are considered pirated and must never be cataloged in the RSA database. The library – not RSA – is responsible for ensuring the content complies with copyright law.

Advanced Reader Copies (ARCs)

Books, videos, sound recordings, and items of any other format must never be cataloged in the RSA database if they indicate on the item one of the following terms or a similar equivalent:

- Advance reader copy (also referred to as “ARC”)
- Advance listening copy
- Advance viewing copy
- Advance screening copy
- Galley
- Proof
- Any mention on the item that it is “uncorrected”
- Any mention on the item that lending or circulation is not permitted
- Any mention on the item that it is not for sale

For the purposes of this policy, ARC is used to refer to an item that is marked with any of the terms listed above.

ARCs are intended for review purposes only. Cataloging and circulating them violates the publishers’ intent of the ARC Program.

Cataloging and circulating ARCs is considered a form of theft from the author and the publisher, particularly if the library uses the ARC instead of purchasing the final publication.

Promotional or Display Only Items

The item says on it “for display use only”, “for promotional use only”, or a similar phrase. These phrases imply the item is not meant for use by the public but is a promotional item, likely for publicity purposes.

Items with Restrictions on Their Sale

The item says on it that it is for sale only outside the United States or only in a specific country or countries. The item may not be cataloged in the RSA database if the library purchased it because that purchase violated copyright restrictions.

Items Not Available for Loan

The item explicitly says on it “not available for loan” or a similar phrase. “Not available for loan” implies the item is not meant to be entered into a library collection.

Policy History

The Prohibited Items Policy was approved and adopted by the RSA Board of Directors on September 4, 2025.

Revised and approved by the RSA Board of Directors on January 8, 2026