

OUTLINE

System Free Direct Access Plan to fulfill Commissioner's Regulation §90.3(a) through (d)(4) with North Country Library System Responses

(Q – Question R – Response)

1. Q – Describe how all individuals residing within the boundaries of the system but outside a member public library's chartered service area will receive library services.

R – All libraries within the North Country Library System service area are members of our System, in one form or another, and receive county funding. County funding is supported by taxpayers throughout the entirety of each county. Therefore, all persons within the North Country Library System service area contribute to the support of all libraries in their county and have a right to Free Access to library services.

2. Q – Describe how the system will assure that those persons living within the system boundaries in an area where a member library chooses to withdraw from the system, or where a chartered and registered library was never a member of the system, will be served by the system.

R – Should a member library choose to withdraw from the System, patrons formerly served by that library will receive free service from all of the other libraries within our service area. Other member libraries typically issue their own library cards to patrons coming in from other communities.

3. Q – Describe what the system considers “serious inequities and hardships” and the criteria used by the system to make the determination.

R – The North Country Library System will annually tabulate the per capita support received by member libraries.

We shall discard from the calculation the two highest and two lowest per capita support reports, so as not to skew the average obtained.

Any of our member libraries which have per capita support that is less than 2/3 of the average support of the other libraries in the North Country

Library System service area will be deemed to be operating under a hardship. To address this hardship, the North Country Library System shall conduct planning workshops to prepare trustees from those member libraries to approach their local funding sources. They need to raise the awareness of their dire fiscal straits and build a consensus in the village/town/school district/county officials to increase the support of their libraries.

4. Q – Describe what constitutes excessive out of chartered service area borrowing in the system.

R – More than 20% of total circulation to patrons from outside a library's chartered service area would constitute excessive service. To this time, no member library has reported experiencing such a problem.

Should a library determine that 20% or more of its circulation is made to persons living outside of its service area, restrictions may be placed on those persons. A library may restrict the borrowing of new books, defined as those which were purchased within the last twelve (12) calendar months. They may further restrict the loans of non-book materials, i.e. tapes, video and audio cassettes, etc.

5a) Q – Describe the unserved and the underserved populations within the system.

R – There are no unserved or underserved populations within the System Service Area. All persons within our Service area have Free Access to any and all member libraries.

5b) Q – Describe the criteria used by the system to identify libraries as having an inadequate level of local income to support the delivery of acceptable library services (underserved). List those libraries so identified.

R – The Minimum Public Library Standards propagated by the State Library and imposed on member libraries through the later half of the 1990's are used to determine the acceptable level of library services.

5c) Q – Describe the actions the system will take to expand the availability of library services to unserved and underserved individuals residing within the boundaries of the system.

R – We know of no unserved or underserved individuals residing within the boundaries of the System who are without library services, except by their own choice.

5d) Q – Provide a timetable for such actions.

R – Moot.

5e) Q – Identify who will be responsible for carrying out these actions.

R – Moot.

6. Q – Describe the conditions under which modifications to the Free Direct Access Plan can be made:

a) Without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education.

b) With the prior approval of the Commissioner of Education.

R – We have no intention of making any modifications to the Free Direct Access Plan.

7. Q – Describe how the system will assure that member libraries are complying with the System Free Direct Access Plan approved by a majority of member libraries.

R – A member library, which does not comply with the System Free Access Plan, will be stripped of all System services which are provided free of charge to all libraries, including, but not limited to:

removal of all System library materials on loan to that library,
termination of delivery services,
termination of acquisition services,
termination of interlibrary loan services,
termination of technical services,
termination of all graphic arts and printing services,
termination of consultant visits,
termination of free mailing of local support checks to the library
termination of automation services, including contracts for any on-line
libraries.

8. Q – Describe how the system obtained member library input to the plan for free direct access.

R – All member libraries will be provided with a copy of this North Country Library System Free Direct Access Plan for consideration and acceptance by a vote of their Boards of Trustees.