

Minitex/MnLINK ILL Committee Report

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Interlibrary Loan in Minnesota – An Overview

Libraries within Minnesota have a tradition of resource sharing supported by a delivery backbone provided by Minitex.

Interlibrary loan (ILL): As defined in the *National Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States, 2001*, "interlibrary loan is the process by which a library requests materials from, or supplies materials to, another library."

The interlibrary loan relationships within Minnesota are based upon a library's membership and/or participation within a consortium or organization of libraries. It also depends on each library's willingness to share materials, interlibrary loan resource sharing software used, and available delivery options. This document provides a general overview of interlibrary loan within Minnesota. Specific information about a library's interlibrary loan policies, delivery, or contact information can be found in the Interlibrary Loan Policy Database at <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Sharing/Policy/>.

Libraries within Minnesota use various ILL systems to communicate with each other; these include the MnLINK Gateway's VDX, Ex Libris' Aleph, and OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing. Many libraries in Minnesota use discovery tools that allow library users to enter interlibrary loan requests that can then be managed within one of the interlibrary loan systems. Circulation functionality is used in some instances for sharing material by locations on the same Integrated Library System (ILS).

Minitex is a program of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the University of Minnesota Libraries. Minitex facilitates resource sharing and delivery among Minnesota libraries as one of its many services. Minitex Resource Sharing manages the ILL lending requests for items owned at the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities Campus Libraries. Minitex also acts as an intermediary and will refer requests from participating libraries to other libraries in the region when appropriate.

In order to facilitate resource sharing, Minitex has also negotiated borrowing and lending agreements with state library agencies or library consortia in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Alberta, Canada. This expanded network of libraries helps to fulfill the resource sharing needs of Minnesota library patrons.

Minitex uses a variety of interlibrary loan systems:

- The MnLINK Gateway's VDX software is used to communicate with participating Gateway libraries.
- The Ex Libris Aleph software is used to communicate with MnPALS libraries, the South Dakota Library Network (SDLN), and North Dakota's Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN).
- OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing is used to manage ILL requests with libraries that send requests via this system.
- Minitex maintains a web form for Interlibrary Loan staff at libraries that do not have access to an automated online system.

To learn more about Minitex Resource Sharing, go to <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Sharing/About.aspx>.

Minitex Delivery manages a daily courier service for libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and interfaces with delivery services in Wisconsin. Additional information about delivery can be found at <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Delivery/About.aspx>.

In addition to physical delivery of items, Minitex provides electronic delivery of articles (see <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Sharing/Medd/>) and a courtesy return program.

The **MnLINK Gateway** system is comprised of ZPortal (a public searching and requesting interface) and VDX (a staff request management interface). This system is used by participating regional library systems, public libraries, and a few academic libraries within Minnesota. It is the primary interlibrary loan requesting tool for public library patrons in Minnesota. A list of the libraries that use VDX for managing requests can be found at <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Sharing/Systems/Vdx.aspx>.

Patrons of participating MnLINK Gateway libraries initiate interlibrary loan requests with ZPortal, and staff members manage the interlibrary loan requests with VDX. Patrons of MnPALS libraries use the MnLINK Gateway ZPortal interface to request materials that are then handled through the Aleph ILL system. Primarily, the MnLINK Gateway libraries transmit ILL requests between other Gateway libraries and with the Minitex Office. MnLINK Gateway libraries use the Minitex Delivery system that links with the courier service provided by the Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) for public libraries in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

MnPALS is a consortium of state university, state government, private colleges, K-12, and technical and community college libraries in the state of Minnesota. A listing of the MnPALS membership can be found at <http://www.mnpals.org/content/consortium-mnpals-libraries-members>.

The members of this consortium use Aleph Interlibrary loan to enter and update interlibrary loan requests. Primarily, the members send ILL requests between other consortium members and with Minitex. Some members exchange requests with MnLINK Gateway participating libraries and with a few libraries that use Aleph in North Dakota. Patrons use a variety of discovery tools, such as MnPALS, MnPALS Plus, MnLINK Gateway, open URL link resolvers, or WorldCat Local to enter interlibrary loan requests. Delivery for MnPALS libraries varies. Some MnPALS libraries have [Minitex courier delivery](#) and others receive materials from Minitex using United Parcel Service (UPS).

OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing software is used by many libraries within Minnesota to exchange interlibrary loan requests with libraries both within the state and outside of Minnesota. Libraries may use OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing software as their only interlibrary loan software. Other libraries use OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing software in addition to VDX or Aleph interlibrary loan softwares. Libraries may also use OCLC's ILLiad as an additional tool to help manage their OCLC WorldCat Resource Sharing requests. Delivery options vary.

Additional information:

Minitex

<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/>

Minnesota Regional Library Systems

http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Learning_Support/Library_Services/Minnesota_Libraries_and_Librarians/Regional_Public_Library_Systems/index.html

Minnesota Regional Library Systems map

<http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/Library/documents/Maps/003530.pdf>

MnLINK Gateway

<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/mnlink>

MnPALS

<http://www.mnpals.org/content/consortium-mnpals-libraries-0>

Tools and Resources for ILL Staff

<http://www.minitex.umn.edu/Committees/ILL/Tools/>