

Ending Reciprocal Holds

Updated 8/15/2024

For the purposes of this document, SCPL refers to all branches of the Schenectady County Public Library.

What is a reciprocal hold?

A reciprocal hold is one where a request is placed for pickup at one library, and the request is filled by an item owned by another library.

Why are we ending reciprocal holds between SCPL and all other MVLS/SALS member libraries?

Ending reciprocal holds prior to SCPL's exit from Polaris will allow for an easier transition of material back to their assigned locations. An ad hoc committee was formed by the Joint Automation Council and charged to explore what the approach shall be to ending reciprocal holds between SCPL and other MVLS/SALS libraries.

This committee was tasked with recommending a date (or date relative to SCPL's exit date) to end reciprocal holds between SCPL and all other MVLS/SALS member libraries to accomplish the following:

- Allow as many items as possible to return to their assigned locations before SCPL's exit
- Ensure that patrons who checked out MVLS/SALS library items at SCPL branches receive overdue/billing notices
- Limit the number of MVLS/SALS library items being returned to SCPL after SCPL's exit, possibly causing patrons to exceed limits, be charged fines, or limit service
- Limit the number of SCPL items being returned at other MVLS/SALS libraries after SCPL's exit to minimize the implications in SCPL's new ILS
- Minimize the number of items that will not be able to be tracked electronically while in transit after SCPL's exit
- Minimize disruption of service to patrons of all MVLS and SALS libraries, including SCPL, as much as possible during the transition

When will reciprocal holds between SCPL and all other MVLS/SALS libraries end?

The ad hoc committee recommended a date of 4 months prior to SCPL's exit from JA to end reciprocal holds between SCPL and all other MVLS/SALS member libraries. Based on SCPL's recent extension of their withdrawal date from JA to December 31, 2024, reciprocal holds will end on August 31, 2024.

What will happen when reciprocal holds between SCPL and all other MVLS/SALS member libraries ends?

After August 31, 2024, all holds for pickup at any SCPL branch will only be filled by items owned by SCPL. All holds for pickup at any other MVLS/SALS member library will be filled by any eligible items from all libraries except SCPL.

What happens to holds that were placed prior to August 31, 2024?

Holds placed prior to August 31, 2024 will be subject to the same rules as above. This may mean that some holds will never be filled, as there may no longer be any eligible items.

What will patrons/staff see when searching the PAC/catalog?

Patrons and staff will continue to have the same search experience. However, if an attempt is made to place a hold, depending on the eligible items and the choice of pickup location, the hold may not be able to be placed successfully. If staff are placing the hold on behalf of the patron via the Polaris client or LEAP, staff should make it clear that, if they choose to override the warning that there are no eligible items and place the hold anyway, the hold may never be filled. If the only available items on a bib are at SCPL locations, staff could suggest the patron pick up those items at SCPL and vice versa.

What about delivery?

There will be no immediate changes to the delivery service.

Can patrons from my library place a hold on an SCPL item and pick it up at SCPL?

Yes (based on individual library policies and limits)

Can SCPL patrons place a hold for my item and pick it up at another MVLS/SALS member library?

Yes (based on individual library policies and limits)