

Service Area Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline, within the Lycoming County Library System (LCLS), what a service area is and the process for changing service areas. A service area is defined as the municipality or municipalities that a library or library system claims for state aid. Service areas of each member library are defined by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries and accepted by the LCLS System Board and member libraries.

Regardless of any changes to a library's service area, state-aided libraries shall continue to serve all residents of Lycoming County equitably as members of the Library System and as defined by each library's Borrowing Policy.

Pennsylvania Library regulations, 22 PA. Code §141.24 (b)(4) states that within a system, the local library's "effective service area shall be construed to be the geographic area from which come 60% of the unit's (member library's) registered borrowers and usage."

Expansion of Service Area

A library that is a member of the System may request that a municipality be added to its legal service area under the following conditions:

1. The process shall begin with a conversation amongst the library director(s), system administrator, and district consultant on the implications of service area changes.
2. If the service area is to be expanded, the library must first confirm that it can meet the standards for an increased population, in keeping with the LCLS Participation Agreement, where each member library must meet the Standard for Excellence Aid.
 - a. If the member library cannot meet the standards, it cannot apply for a service area change until it is able to fulfill all Standards for Excellence Aid.
3. If the member library can meet the standard for Excellence Aid for the revised service area, the library board shall submit a request to the municipality to become the designated library of service for that municipality by resolution or statement of intent to provide annual support to the library.
4. If the member library can meet the standard for Excellence Aid for the revised service area and the municipality agrees to designate the library as its library of service, the library shall submit a formal, written request to the System Board of Trustees. The request shall include justification for the change, with supporting data appropriate to the situation and in keeping with the Pennsylvania Library regulations, 22 PA. Code §141.24 (b)(4). The request shall also include a description of how the library meets the standards. The System Board of Trustees shall respond to the Library's request within 90 days.

5. If the System Board of Trustees agrees to cede the service area to the library, they must vote at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board.
 - a. The James V. Brown Library Board of Trustees also must agree to cede the service area, as the System Headquarters, where all unclaimed municipalities are served.
6. If the requesting board wishes to dispute the decision of the federated system board or the System headquarters board, it may submit a concise request in writing for advisory assistance to the State Aid office of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) within 60 days.
7. OCL will respond with advice to all libraries involved.

Please note:

- If a library's service area is expanded, it must agree to serve that area for a minimum of 10 years, per the Regulations, 22 Pa. Code §141.21(6), unless an exception applies.
- Municipalities must share a common border with a current service area that the member library serves. The only exception to this rule is the System Headquarters, which is mandated to serve all unclaimed areas of the County by virtue of its role as a Library System.

Reduction of Service Area

1. The process shall begin with a conversation amongst the library director, system administrator, and district consultant on the implications of service area changes.
2. The member library must discuss with the municipality the service change and receive a resolution from the municipality designating that the library is no longer its library of service.
3. If the change is initiated by a member library, the member library shall submit a formal, written request to the System Board of Trustees. The request shall include justification for the change, with supporting data appropriate to the situation.
4. The System Board of Trustees shall respond to the library's request within 90 days.
5. If the requesting board wishes to dispute the decision of the federated system board or the System headquarters board, it may submit a concise request in writing for advisory assistance to the State Aid office of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) within 60 days.
6. OCL will respond with advice to all libraries involved.

Please note:

- Municipalities contributing dedicated tax dollars to a library must remain as part of that library's service area.