

## **Service to Uncertified Libraries**

Service to library patrons is immeasurably enhanced by cooperative efforts among libraries willing to share their resources. The goal of mutual benefit is predicated on the assumption that every participating library will make a contribution to the collective effort. When a library fails to maintain minimum standards in collection development, staffing, and/or hours of service, then its reliance on other libraries becomes disproportionately great, and its contribution to the common good becomes disproportionately small.

A Massachusetts library that is not a participant in the state aid program – certified either by compliance with requirements or by waiver – cannot demonstrate that it is able to reciprocate in resource sharing arrangements.

Recognizing this, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners requires that libraries participating in the state aid program lend materials on a reciprocal basis, but imposes no such requirement to lend to libraries that are not participants, nor to the patrons from communities whose libraries are not participants.

As a participant in the state aid program, Topsfield Town Library shares its resources with Massachusetts public libraries and the residents of Massachusetts communities whose libraries have been certified by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

In the interests of protecting the resources purchased by Topsfield taxpayers, and as an incentive to neighboring communities to fairly fund their own libraries, Topsfield Town Library regretfully declines to extend borrowing privileges and library services to Massachusetts public libraries that are not certified, and to residents from Massachusetts communities that do not have certified libraries.

Topsfield Town Library honors its obligation to make available its reading and reference rooms to all residents of the Commonwealth regardless of the certification status of their hometown libraries.

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