Connecticard Payments
Statewide Reciprocal Borrowing

Since 1974 a cooperative program among public libraries in Connecticut that allows a resident of any town in the state to use their hometown library card to borrow materials from any of the states’ 192 public libraries. C.G.S 11-31 (b).

Who We Serve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of residents with library cards</th>
<th>Number of Towns Served</th>
<th>Approximate number of residents using Connecticard</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,691,502</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>Over 300,000</td>
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<th>Number of Participating Libraries</th>
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<td>192</td>
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Quality of Life Result

A model of resource sharing, Connecticard supports the education, enrichment and quality of life for every resident of Connecticut. Connecticut residents have direct access to the collections in every public library in the state.

Measurements

Use

4,990,468 items were borrowed through the program in FY 2010.

Over 300,000 residents use this program.
Municipal Resource Sharing

The 4.9 million items loaned to residents of other towns represents a value of over $73 million.

Municipalities bare the majority of costs for this program. Local libraries receive 89% of their funding from local taxpayers. A study conducted in 2004 demonstrated that it costs local libraries an average of $1.05 per transaction to lend to non-residents – not including the cost of the item. They are currently reimbursed an average of 25 cents per transaction. This grant is at the minimum level necessary to keep participation from those libraries that bear most of the burden of this program.

Equity of Access

Any resident of the state has access to the 16 million items in Connecticut libraries, 88% of which are books.

Stories behind the service

- A businessman who lives in one town and works in another is able to use the library where he works.
- A woman interested in reading a book that is not available in her local library is able to drive to a neighboring library and get it immediately.
- An entire class is given the same assignment, quickly depleting the resources at their local library. Students are able to visit neighboring libraries to find the materials needed to complete their homework.
- A family's first language is Polish. Their local library doesn't have the resources to buy Polish books but they are able to use a neighboring library with a strong Polish collection.

Impact of reductions

Connecticard is at its heart a resource sharing program. If the hometown libraries had to purchase books borrowed through Connecticard it would cost them over $78 million dollars. A study was initiated in 2004 when several libraries were being pressured by their municipalities to pull out of the program. The legislature generously increased the reimbursement amount to more closely match the true cost of the service and we were able to keep 100% participation. This level of participation may not be possible with reduced funding. Some libraries would continue to participate, others would not, causing some confusion as some libraries would allow out of town borrowers and other would not. If a library withdrew from the program, that town’s residents would not be able to borrow from other libraries.

Cost of program

This program is a reimbursement of service provided to non-residents. All funding goes directly to the local library. There is virtually no administrative overhead to this program. We have an online data collection for and a small portion of one position is responsible for administering the program.