



Berks County Public Library System Cataloging Policy

Introduction

The Berks County Public Libraries System is committed to developing and maintaining the highest levels of quality in our database of MARC records for use by patrons, member libraries, partners and other users. The purpose of this policy is to provide communication with member library management, boards, the public, and other stakeholders regarding how and why materials are cataloged for the Berks County Public Library System. Consistency and uniformity are provided through the sharing of this policy so that each cataloger or clerk understands and follows the same guidelines and procedures allowing for uncomplicated public access to materials and resources.

Scope

This policy applies to the Berks County Public Libraries' Bibliographic Services Department staff. The System Staff consist of the following roles:

- Bibliographic Services Manager- MLS and certification as a Professional Public Librarian in Pennsylvania. Three years of experience in cataloging services in an automated environment.
- Acquisitions and Cataloging Librarian- Bachelor's degree, MLS preferred, with Provisional Certification as a public librarian in Pennsylvania. Two years of documented work experience as a cataloger in a public library setting.
- Assistant Cataloging Librarian- Bachelor's degree, MLS preferred, with Provisional Certification as a public librarian in Pennsylvania. Work experience as a cataloger in a public library setting.
- Library Assistant-Associate degree of minimum two years college coursework including nine library science credits with eligibility for Library Assistant certification in Pennsylvania. Working knowledge of cataloging functions in a public library setting.
- Bibliographic Services Clerk (2)- High school diploma or GED with public library experience.

Policy Statement

The Berks County Public Libraries' Bibliographic Services Department is responsible for acquisitions, processing, cataloging, and database maintenance of the System's online catalog, and for ensuring optimal access to the member libraries' collections and resources. In collaboration with the Berks County Public Library System, Reading Area Community College Yocum Library shares the online catalog, maintaining their own records while supporting voluntary and cooperative efforts to maintain database quality, accurate bibliographic information and elimination of duplicate records. For the integrity of the database, System catalogers must comply with standards for full bibliographic records and perform functions only according to one's authorized permission and certification level. Berks County Public Library System will make reasonable efforts to facilitate training opportunities and resources for all members. The Bibliographic Services Manager is responsible for monitoring quality assurance, coordinating regular training, and recommending measures for policy enforcement to the Polaris Users Group (PUG). Core guidance documents for Library System catalogers include this Cataloging Policy, the Local Cataloging Guide and the Processing Manual.



Cataloging Standards

Permanent Record Standards

Berks County Public Libraries System is committed to maintaining a database of high quality bibliographic records for collective use by member libraries. All bibliographic records added to the System catalog must contain specific mandatory elements and meet a minimum level of completeness.

Bibliographic records must:

- Use MARC21 Format for Bibliographic Data
- Contain core level fields as defined by OCLC's Bibliographic Formats and Standards
- Comply with AACR2 and RDA rules
- Not be imported unless 1) there is no existing matching record as defined in the Local Cataloging Guide or 2) the existing matched record is being overlaid, e.g., vendor or outdated records.
- Contain only bibliographic-level data, not holding specific information
- Contain at least one Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) if item is non-fiction
- Be compared directly with the item in hand

Functional abilities of Bibliographic Services staff

- Understanding of Polaris and cataloging practices.
- Fundamental understanding of MARC bibliographic records and familiarity with AACR2 cataloging rules
- Ability to search Berks County Public Libraries catalog efficiently and accurately
- Import records via Z39.50
- Compliance with established matching criteria for any item types to be attached
- Overlay existing vendor bibliographic records
- Overlay existing bibliographic records
- Add new fields to bibliographic records
- Merge bibliographic records
- Update bibliographic records

Maintenance Standards

Member libraries are expected to:

- Keep holdings current
- Report problems to the Bibliographic Services Manager
- Respond to surveys conducted by the Bibliographic Services Manager or Polaris Users Group to assist in maintaining the quality of the shared catalog
- Maintain awareness of current BCPL cataloging policy and procedures

Reporting and resolving problems

Inquiries or problems should be reported directly to the Bibliographic Services Manager. For an issue that may have broader criteria for a union catalog, the inquiry may be directed to the Polaris Administrator of the Polaris Users Group who will review it and follow up as appropriate.



Definitions

1. Acquisitions—the process of selecting and acquiring selected materials for member libraries in physical formats and maintaining the necessary records related to acquisitions. First, the selections of materials are done according to the collection development policy of the individual member library. Then, the selected materials are acquired by ordering them for purchase through the Cataloging Librarian. This is followed by receiving the materials, checking their quality, processing invoices, and making payment to vendors.

Acquisitions is the first function of Bibliographic Services (other two functions being cataloging and processing). Member libraries are encouraged to order materials through cooperative purchasing/direct acquisitions to receive the most efficient handling of newly purchased materials.

2. Processing— Items purchased by member libraries need to be physically prepared before they can be shelved or circulated. Library materials go through processing so that they can be located, used, and returned to the library from which they originated. Each item processed in Bibliographic Services receives some form of physical processing before they are sent to the owning library, e.g., packaging removal, insertion of processing workslips, and barcode application. Most processing is done in-house, but some is purchased through vendors.
3. Cataloging—All items added to the System's integrated library system (the database of books, serials, audio-visual materials, e-resources etc.) are cataloged in MARC format by way of copy cataloging or original cataloging. The main function of the shared catalog is to enable library staff and patrons to find materials based on author, title, subject, or format.
 - Copy cataloging— downloading pre-existing cataloging records available through SkyRiver (bibliographic utility), then adding access points and subjects, as needed, through descriptive (AACR2, RDA) and subject (Dewey Decimal) cataloging standards.
 - Original cataloging (performed only by the Bibliographic Services Manager)—if no matching bibliographic record exists in SkyRiver, a new record is created using descriptive and subject cataloging standards.
4. Database maintenance—The shared database is used to maintain bibliographic information in a well-organized, accessible format. Keeping the database clean and well organized is an ongoing effort so that it will not lose functionality. The goal is to keep the database operating smoothly for users by adding information utilizing international, national, and local standards and consistently removing obsolete item and patron data.