

Why does it take so long.....

Library Materials

Selection is done by librarians using review publications, lists, and patron request sheets. We place orders every month. It is the library's goal to spend at least 10% of our budget on the acquisition of new materials for patrons to enjoy.

Timeline from request to book-in-hand.

Request to receipt at the library: Day 1- patron writes the request on the sheet or submits it via Apollo. Requests are compiled and sent to librarians every week for ordering. Day 7ish- item is evaluated by the librarian and added to a cart. Day 30ish- cart is ordered. We are now 4 weeks from the request date.

It is 2-6 weeks generally for ordered materials to be processed and shipped from the distributor. Sometimes it takes up to 4 months when items are backordered or a link in the supply chain is suffering from shortages. This is completely unpredictable, but reported to be similar for all distributors. We are now 6 to 10 weeks minimum from request date when the item arrives at the library.

Invoices are checked against shipping lists and purchase orders when boxes are unpacked. This is generally done within a day or two of the box arriving. At this point, library staff must download MARC records, import those records into Apollo, and match the subject headings and authority control. Depending on how many items are waiting to be done and how many staff are available to do it, this can take 1 to 2 weeks. Some items need additional processing like spine reinforcement. All items need ownership stamps and barcodes. This can take another 1-2 weeks depending on staff availability. From the time the box arrives at the library until it hits the shelves is 2 weeks at best, 6 weeks on the outside if we are horribly backed up.

So it's 6-10 weeks from request to receipt and 2-6 weeks from receipt to deployment, making the process 8-16 weeks. Sometimes it's faster. Sometimes it's slower if there are long shipping delays or we are especially short staffed. This is why we order in advance.

Library Programs

Selection is done by librarians. Almost all library programs are library hosted, delivered and managed. There are a few exceptions for sponsored programs. To have a program in August, all paperwork must be submitted and approved by July 1. Every program has a proposal which includes listing the personnel responsible for marketing & delivery, tracking expected attendance & costs, blurbs and slides for social media, and explanation of target attendees, requirements, registration, and how the program connects to library goals. After the program, there is an evaluation as well which settles the cost per attendee and notes anything that went especially well or sideways.