

NEOS Access Committee Meeting
February 23, 2021, 1 pm
Via Video Call
Minutes

Attending: Lana Thompson (MacEwan) (Chair), Paul Pype (AGL), Melanie Belliveau (AHS), Roberto Pellegrino (Alberta Innovates), Wilmer Tenerife (Burman), Debbie Quast (Concordia), Kathleen Brennan (Keyano), Bonita Bjornson (King's), Kathy Williams (Lakeland), Kaitlin Kirk (Northern Lakes), Samantha Nugent (NorQuest), Jim Derksen (Newman), Kelsey McMann (Olds) Barbara Mahoney (RDC), Natalya Brettle (UofA), Cayla Thorlakson (Vanguard), Scott Davies (UofA ITS), Elaine Coupland (UofA ITS), Anne Carr-Wiggin (NEOS)

Regrets: Covenant Health, GPRC

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus

2. Approval of Minutes from January 26, 2021 meeting

The minutes of the January 26, 2021, meeting were approved by consensus.

3. Round Table:

Committee members should update their information in the Quick Reference sheet.

King's:

No changes. Can't predict what the summer will be. Waiting for the provincial budget

UAL:

No major changes. Recalls have come up quite a bit. Natalya has created a quick guide so if libraries would like to go and update - please go ahead.

Red Deer College:

Nothing has changed on our end. Regular hours.

Newman:

No changes since last time. No problems.

Vanguard:

Open by appointment only. Students are placing holds through the catalogue to access books. Limited study spaces. Hoping soon to open up again.

Lakeland:

We have been open for the most part all along. We've just received instruction that students are no longer allowed to stay in the library to study. Students can select a book, check it out, pick up and drop off, but they can no longer study in the library.

Concordia:

We are closed the same as before. Curbside pickup service for our patrons only at the security desk in our main building.

AGL:

No change. Staff are coming in a couple of times a week clearing the bins and sending out stuff through interdepartmental mail to our users.

AITF:

No change. Still not open to the public, not a drop off or pick up location. Print collection is accessible through the bin service. We have someone working on site 5 days a week.

Olds:

Library is open for students and staff of Olds college and Olds high school, but the physical collection is closed. Caution tape is wrapped around the collection. Library staff will grab books for students. Public users are not allowed. Students in a study pod by themselves do not need a mask. Students not in a study pod by themselves do need to wear a mask. We do have 2 book drops.

Berman:

Still physically closed. Students can pick up books by appointment. Still doing the bins. We are a drop off location.

Norquest:

No changes. Continue to offer pickup service at the library doors. Pickup services and book drop are open to primary patrons only. - 4 days a week Mon - Thur.

Keyano:

No real changes. Still receiving bins. Also doing electronic interlibrary loan (journal articles). Students and staff can pickup books from security - they need to schedule this beforehand.

AHS:

We have our procedures in place to go back but have no news as to when we will go back. One person from each location goes in every 3 months to make sure all computers are logged on, to check the book drop and to check the mail.

NLC:

Still closed. Pickup and dropoff to NLC staff and students only.

MacEwan:

Have a bit of a change. Moving to our temporary location and opening a service point on March 1. A small space - students will not be coming in. We will be providing our own library takeout service, distributing student ID cards, and other things that we've been having our partners in the tech support area do for us. We could become a pickup location again for external post-secondary students.

4. Quarantining items

We have not instituted NEOS-wide policies and practices for quarantining items; it is up to each individual library to decide what they will do. One of the GOA Covid websites suggests libraries should quarantine items for 72 hours. The chances are that when libraries get a bin delivery from another library the books have been in transit for a quarantine time.

Notices have a general statement which indicates that items may be quarantined. Keeping this general in nature covers what all libraries are doing.

Current library practices:

EPL has stopped quarantining their items.

MacEwan, RDC will no longer quarantine their items. MacEwan cleans their technology such as laptops, but not the books. **RDC** had OHS come in in January to do an audit. OHS said there was no need to quarantine books.

UAL, AGL (bins and books) will continue to quarantine items.

AHS, LLC, Olds, Newman: quarantine items for 3 days

Norquest - uses the sanitation machine for Norquest items - puts NEOS items into 3 day quarantine

Concordia - quarantines bins for 24 hrs.

Kings - nothing official, no time limits

Vanguard - no requirements, staff can do as they are comfortable

5. Holds for NEOS-PS post secondary students (background/procedure doc) -

NEOS-PS: temporary category of user created for COVID times; meant to act as an extension of service to allow access to physical materials for people who are not NEOS Primary or Secondary clients and are living close to a NEOS library but distant from their own institution due to online classes. In the past some libraries have served these students via such partnership arrangements as COPPUL cards. The NEOS-PS card is available to anyone who is a student from a post secondary institution outside of NEOS; theoretically this could include international students but most likely students at Canadian or US institutions who are living in Alberta but not studying at a NEOS institution. Select NEOS libraries (not all) are creating these types of accounts. Some libraries are able to act as pickup locations for these borrowers.

We didn't open up holds to post secondary students when we opened again in January because of continuing campus access restrictions.

It was decided to open up access to NEOS-PS clients.

Pickup location roster from last term: MacEwan, RDC, Keyano, Lakeland (2), Burman, Kings, Newman, Vanguard.

Many locations may not currently know what their summer schedule will look like. Scott can remove locations from drop down menus if institutions need to discontinue providing these services during the summer. **Natalya will add a tab to the Quick Reference spreadsheet. Please add your information regarding availability to provide these services under the appropriate tab/column on the spreadsheet.**

Scott will send out a notification once he has heard from everyone and has put this process in place in the system.

UAL has not had a lot of requests from this group possibly because: their home library has been able to provide electronically what they need; people are not wanting to come into a physical space during COVID; students may have given up trying to get physical items and are doing what is easiest, which could be utilizing electronic resources and not bothering with print; many policy and procedural changes over the past year have possibly made it confusing for PS borrowers; ILL service can provide scanned copies of print - in many cases the student doesn't need the entire work -

scanned copies give the student the portion that they need and saves them having to come in to pick up the print copy. Not likely that the demand for this service will be high.

MacEwan: can become a pick up location again on March 1 - can also create cards for PS students

King's: yes to pickup for NEOS - PS...but the user has to contact the library to have the items signed out and brought to campus reception desk

6. Bills Notices

Background:

- Sample bill notice
- Lists all unpaid bills from current year plus previous six years; does not include fees currently accruing for overdues (if applicable)
- Normally sent on third Sunday of each month at 9:10 am
- Note this is the only recurring notice we send for items that have become assumed lost (>31 days overdue)
- Currently suspended - last regular run: March 15, 2020
- Patrons typically get the following notices: 2 day overdue, 7 day overdue, Assumed lost message @ 32 days and then patrons don't hear from us again unless we send out the Bills notices. This is a bit of a gap where we aren't speaking to those users about those lost items on a regular basis
- Before the pandemic, the committee was about to discuss limiting the number of notices sent to expired users and/or for older bills (emails from that discussion)

Scott's questions to the group:

- 1) Should we resume bills?
 - a) I think the consensus is Yes: Vanguard, Lakeland, AGL, MacEwan, Kings, Olds, Norquest, AHS - Assumed Lost Reminder Notice
 - b) Olds, Norquest & AHS have been reaching out to patrons manually
- 2) Could we send our notices for only those items that have not yet been returned and not for all bills? For assumed lost only? Scott will investigate - target bills that are \$150.00 and greater
- 3) If so, should we adjust the wording of the notice?
 - a) Wording that will tell patrons how they can pay - how can they pay if they are not current students - how can they pay when many locations are closed
 - b) "Contact your library for payment options" possible wording - kind wording
 - c) Provide link to 'Contact Us' on NEOS homepage
- 4) Should we phase them in (e.g. fewer notices at first; call them something else; adjust messaging over time)? Answered in #2-3 as well as in the discussion noted below.
- 5) Should we pick-up on the discussion from last year (now or in a future meeting)? Discuss again at our next meeting

The group discussed resuming bills notices.

The consensus was that it's more important to send bill notices for items that are still out - ASSUMED LOST rather than bills for past fines. Scott will investigate this possibility.

Given that it is currently difficult for many clients to pay fees, we will adjust the wording of the notices.

Example: Please contact your library for payment options. Anne, Scott, Elaine and Lana will draft wording.

We will discuss limiting the number of notices at a future meeting.

7. Bounced emails and replies to DONOTREPLY address

Bounced emails (emails to addresses that are no longer valid) were monitored at one time but have not been for a while. Scott, Elaine and Natalya will investigate and report back - this is a valuable process

Libnot notice emails - replies to the Sirsi address used to send notices.

Staff from UAL have been mediating these but it is very labour intensive.

We will create an automated message referring people to their NEOS library and stop the mediation.

Natalya will draft a message and Anne will work out what is the best list of libraries/contact information to link to on the NEOS page.

Committee members should make sure the Contact area in the centre of their library's NEOS page has good, clear contact information. Email Libhelp if you need to update your information on the NEOS page

Member libraries - <https://www.neoslibraries.ca/member-libraries/>

Restarting Recalls

- Currently suspended - last run: Dec. 9, 2020
- Holds age out at 80 days
- If considering date to resume, reminder that the first recall due date is seven days after the date recalls resume (or first open day thereafter)
- Reminder that items belonging to libraries under long-term closure (AHS, Covenant Health, GPRC - Fairview, NLC - Grouard) remain unholdable/unrecallable

The consensus is to not resume recalls at this time as it forces people to come to campus to return items and most students do not have enough time to wait for recalled items to be returned. We could think about resuming this after May 31

8. Eliminating Secondary borrower overdue fees

The NEOS Executive would like to announce the elimination of Secondary client overdue fees in early fall. The Access Services Committee will craft a few key messages that libraries can use to make an announcement to their students to facilitate clear information about what is covered by the elimination of fees.

9. NEXT MEETING - Wed March 31st at 10:00 am