



# Courier/ILL Newsletter | December 6, 2019

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## **UPCOMING MALA/Courier Holidays**

*(No courier service)*

**Christmas Eve & Day**

Dec. 24 & 25

**New Year's Eve & Day**

Dec. 31 & Jan. 1

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

Jan. 20, 2020

**President's Day**

Feb. 17, 2020

**Memorial Day**

## **MALA Update**

Hard to believe Christmas is just around the corner. Please remember that **MALA will be closed Christmas EVE Day, Tuesday, December 24, Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, New Years EVE Day, Tuesday, December 31 and New Years Day, Wednesday, January 1.** There is no courier service on those days.

## **AMIGOS and COKAMO Courier Partnerships**

Use of these Extended Delivery Services to libraries outside of Missouri has picked up substantially over the past year. These services are “add-on” benefits provided to you by MALA at no cost, as part of the Missouri statewide courier service. Hundreds of items each month are sent through Amigos and COKAMO to libraries in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, Colorado and Wyoming.

These partner networks are entirely independent of MALA, and we have no control over shipping frequency or delivery routing once they leave MALA. We send out COKAMO items three times a week; they are trucked to Goodland, Kansas, and stored briefly for pickup by the Colorado courier. Once they enter the Colorado courier system, they are delivered to the destination library within 5 business days, as long as they are correctly bundled and a legible courier slip has been attached to the materials. Materials coming into MALA from Colorado follow a similar path, where they are picked up in Goodland, trucked across the state, and end up at the Kansas City warehouse of Henry Industries for sorting and distribution.

Please understand that COKAMO deliveries may be slower than you would like. Ten to twenty days is a typical delivery window for items sent or received via COKAMO.

Amigos, which operates the Trans-Amigos Express (TAE) network through Texas and adjoining states, is generally slower than COKAMO. Amigos items are collected at our Kansas City warehouse for delivery to a distribution hub in Oklahoma City. From there, they are trucked to various other states and distribution centers. Fifteen to 30 days is a typical delivery window for items shipping via TAE, but it can be longer depending on the number of delivery connections required.

MALA has very limited tracking capability for interlibrary loan items. Barcode tracking was temporarily implemented by MALA some years ago, and it proved expensive and unreliable. That is why many courier bags still have “1<sup>st</sup> Choice” barcode labels on them.

**November  
Courier Stats  
DUE Today!**

Items still were lost, and barcode tracking did not help locate them. COKAMO has never used barcode tracking; Amigos just switched contract vendors this year, and their current vendor does not employ barcode tracking. Amigos barcodes are still found on many of our courier bags, but they are not used for tracking.

*Continued below...*

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## Next Courier Meeting via Zoom

**Wednesday, December 11 at 10 AM**

ILL staff, directors and other interested parties are always welcome and invited to these meetings. Zoom offers computer audio, phone audio, video (with a webcam, of course) as participation options.

Our next quarterly meeting is next Wednesday, and I'm encouraging attendees to use or enable their webcams—it makes the meeting so much more collegial when we can see as well as hear each other and engage in lively dialogue.

Here are some of the topics for this meeting's agenda:

- Using the Extended Delivery Services (Amigos, COKAMO). We'll discuss the pros and cons candidly, and address your questions.
- MOBIUS connector service to academic libraries in Missouri through the MALA office.
- MALA Members ILL Contacts List – keeping it up to date and useful.
- Supplies requests—please allow a week for delivery of bags. Order them before you are completely out.

If there are additional topics you want to discuss, please text, call or email and let me know.

Here is the Zoom meeting link:

Topic: MALA Courier Meeting December 2019

Time: Dec 11, 2019 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/476837034>

Meeting ID: 476 837 034

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**REGISTRATION EXTENDED until Tuesday, Dec. 10**

## MALA Professional Development Training 2.020

### What Do Your Policies Say About Your Library?

**Learn to write policies that reflect your library's mission**

*with Tiffany Hentschel, M.A., SPHR, SHRM-SCP*

**Friday, December 13, 2019**

**9 AM to Noon**

**8:30 AM check-in**

Olathe Indian Creek Library

16100 W. 135th St., Olathe, KS 66062

This fast-paced, half-day workshop will help you spot the weakness in your current policies and write new ones that are legally sound, fair and enforceable.

**[Register Here](#)**

**Hurry! Register by Tuesday, December 10!**

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## AMIGOS and COKAMO Courier Partnerships continued

We do have a mechanism for reporting Overdue or Missing materials to our courier partners, and requesting a search, but with multiple delivery connections that is not a highly effective procedure. MALA will always follow up at least once in writing with our extended delivery partners concerning overdue items, when they are correctly reported, but that is all we can do.

Library items are at risk every time they are put into the courier, in exactly the same way they are at risk each time a library patron leaves the library with a stack of checkouts. Resource sharing is part of the essential mission of the public library, and sharing carries inherent risk. There are a few things you can do to lower the risk of loss:

1. Establish a relationship with your ILL partner. Get to know the people at the libraries you work with. Don't be afraid to call, text or write people in the ILL departments. You can do things like ask for shelf checks, confirm OCLC status updates, request that owning libraries postpone or waive billings – in short, you should take any action feasible to sustain the borrowing relationship between your institutions.
2. Keep good documentation on ILL items going into COKAMO and TAE. Note exactly when items are picked up by the courier, and only count business days (M-F, no holidays or weekends) when calculating shipping time between the borrowing and lending libraries. Remember that items cannot be reported as Lost or Missing to MALA until 30 business days have passed.
3. Be willing to give up on unreliable or un-collegial ILL partners. Some libraries have a track record of unreliable loss reporting. Some libraries have so few staff, or so much staff turnover, that their procedures are a mess. Some libraries charge ridiculous processing and penalty fees for lost items. And some are just plain unpleasant to work with. Take these libraries out of your lending pool. Learn from experience, and only deal with ILL partners that are professional and collegial. With almost 900 libraries in eight states, you are almost certain to locate your desired ILL item at another library.
4. Be patient. Items almost always turn up – sometimes months late, but they do turn up. Be a good lending partner and allow borrowing libraries plenty of time before billing them for lost materials. Reduce or waive charges when you can. Understand that some loss is a cost of doing business, and follow the Golden Rule. When in doubt, decline to lend something that you deem essential to your local library service.

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Missouri Secretary of State  
**State Library**