



## TOWN OF GRAY

Henry Pennell Municipal Complex  
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www.graymaine.org

OFFICE OF THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

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June 4, 2024

To: Gray Public Library Users

From: Joshua Tiffany

To quote an old saying from my Rhode Island days – there it was, gone.

Effective Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5PM, interlibrary lending is suspended. The situation appears due to a transition to a new van delivery service. Van delivery service will cease on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and we expect a minimum of a six-week disruption of service (although estimated restoration has ranged from four to six months – with some scenarios involving up to a year of no van delivery service). Ahead of this unfortunate situation, Maine InfoNet, in conjunction with the Minerva Executive Board, have halted all interlibrary requesting effective immediately.

In essence, if you request any items from our online catalog that we do not own, you will see an error message.

The official announcement from Maine InfoNet is included at the bottom of this message.

While the gap in van delivery was announced last month, the immediate suspension of requesting was not announced until Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:57PM, with an implementation date of Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. We deeply apologize for the lack of communication or notice surrounding this issue.

Please know we love and value van delivery and the interlibrary system as much as you do. We are working on plans to help bridge the gap while we live without our daily deliveries, so please stay tuned. But for now, please know:

- You may use the online catalog to request items that are owned or will soon be owned by the Gray Public Library
- Items that are currently in transit to fulfill existing requests will still be honored. After today, existing requests that are not locally owned nor already in transit will not be available until van delivery resumes.

- You may use our patron request form to request consideration of purchase of new items not currently in our collection (link on our homepage)
- If you cannot find anything available that you want, please use our dedicated staff for book (and other material) recommendations

Please stay tuned for more information on the steps we will be taking to address this gap in service. Until then, we hope you can find some amazing items in our collection, please know we are desperate for this service to resume, and we will do our best to continue to communicate with you as things become known.

For direct information and updates regarding this situation, please visit:

<https://maine-msl.libguides.com/home>

Thank you,

Josh Tiffany  
Director – Gray Public Library

**From:** MINERVA Online Library System News <MINERVA-L@LISTS.MAINE.EDU> **On Behalf Of** James Jackson Sanborn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 4, 2024 9:15 AM  
**To:** MINERVA-L@LISTS.MAINE.EDU  
**Subject:** [MINERVA-L] Messaging for patrons re: turning off requesting

A message for your patrons explaining the current situation, please feel free to share:

Sharing between libraries is one of the best and most valuable services that libraries provide to their members.

The ability to smoothly deliver materials between libraries is what makes this work. The contract for the book delivery service is held by the Maine State Library and is subject to State Procurement Laws and procedures. This contract was required to go through a competitive bidding process (Request for Proposal, or RFP) this year since all contracts that use public funds have to ensure competitive bidding at the state level.

Contracting as a result of this RFP for book delivery is currently working its way through a legal appeals process. Because of this transition to a new vendor who won the competitive bid, and an appeal to overturn that decision by an unsuccessful bidder, there will be an interruption to book delivery between libraries at the end of the current contract which expires on June 30th.

We do not currently have firm dates for the length of this interruption, but we expect that there will be no delivery for at least six weeks this summer, starting on July 1.

In anticipation of this interruption, the Maine InfoNet Board and the Minerva Executive Board have made the difficult decision to turn off all requesting between libraries within the MaineCat environment, including Minerva, MILS and URSUS, as of June 4th.

Patrons will still be able to request and place holds on locally owned items, but will not be able to request materials from other libraries.

Turning off requesting between libraries will allow materials currently in transit to be delivered and will reduce the flow of new material entering delivery. This will help get as many items back to their owning libraries as possible and will help ensure materials are not stranded in the delivery system.

We know that this is a challenging situation that we are all facing. We recognize and feel the same frustration with this situation that you all are feeling. Your local library provides many other valuable services to your community, and we encourage everyone to explore those many services.

If you would like more details regarding this, please visit the FAQ that further explains this situation: [Van Delivery FAQ \(https://maine-msl.libguides.com/c.php?q=1393867&p=10309221\)](https://maine-msl.libguides.com/c.php?q=1393867&p=10309221)

James Jackson Sanborn  
Executive Director  
Maine InfoNet