

Action Item 4: AV Packaging for Courier Transport

Overview:

Although patrons cannot place holds on AV materials to be delivered through the courier from one system to another (with the exception of certain select items for registered GLASS patrons), patrons can return the AV materials at any other PINES location, so AV materials are shipped along with books on a daily basis.

Proposal:

Policy Change Proposal by Cynthia Kilby, Pine Mountain Regional Library System:

Like most libraries, our patrons take advantage of being able to check out materials at one location and return them to another. We usually have no trouble when our books are returned by another library. We do have trouble when our AV items are returned. In the last few months, we've had to replace the cases on at least 8 DVD's because they were placed in a green bag with no padding. With a book, it doesn't matter too much if it is shipped without padding because a book is fairly sturdy.

Compact disc, Books on CD, MP3 and DVD cases are being made thinner, lighter and cheaper and don't stand up to being shipped in the green bags.

I would like the Executive Committee to consider changing the guidelines to require some kind of bubble wrap or protective packaging when returning AV materials.

Survey Results:

The following summary is based on survey results from 38 PINES Subcommittee Members and Directors representing 29 library systems. Two questions were asked:

Should padding packaging be required when sending AV materials through the courier?

Responses from Subcommittee Members:

Should padding packaging be required when sending AV materials through the courier?	Responses	Percentage
Yes	10	53%
No	7	37%
Undecided	2	11%

Responses from Directors who are not Subcommittee Members:

Should padding packaging be required when sending AV materials through the courier?	Responses	Percentage
Yes	15	79%
No	4	21%
Undecided	0	0%

Do you have suggestions for padded packaging that would hold up to repeated uses?

- Absolutely it should be required - it is crazy good common sense to do so. Recommend a layer of bubble wrap or similar material. And then use a smaller PINES bag inside a larger PINES bag.
- bubble wrap
- Bubble wrap
- Bubble wrap is great for protecting AV. I think all of our libraries are packing AV in protective ways but some of the smaller libraries may not have the resources to make it a requirement. I think it should be a strong suggestion.
- Bubble wrap seems to hold up pretty well if treated gently. Butcher paper/packing paper also works.
- Bubble wrap, newspaper, other packing materials but maybe not Styrofoam peanuts due to the mess.
- I believe this is a good idea in theory. I know that we attempt to wrap all the audio visual in some type of protection and also to use a box for those items, not just green bags. [comments from the GCHRL Circulation Manager]
- I think bubble wrap would protect the best, but whatever is decided should be clearly communicated to all PINES libraries so that we're all on the same page, and then our feet can be held to the fire when we fail to comply!
- I think that bubble wrap would work.
- I would suggest that AV materials be boxed instead of placing the items in green bags. The cardboard would be more protective. If you purchase items from Amazon like we do, you always have some boxes sitting around. I see this as a cheap solution.
- Our Region always packages the items with bubble wrap, but no other material should be all wrapped up in the courier bags. This wrapping for books causes extra time unwrapping, which is not fair to the receiving library staff.
- Perhaps look into purchasing padded bags in the future.
- Sorry the DVD cases were broken but isn't that what they are for? To protect the materials inside? DVD cases are relatively inexpensive. Less expensive than elaborate packaging and the additional staff time involved.
- Several layers of plastic bags or pieces of cardboard that you have laying around.
- Small boxes filled with recycled paper would easily work. Everyone gets some small boxes that could be recycled for this use. Otherwise you're looking at bubble wrap cause none of the padded mailers that I've used would protect a DVD or Audiobook case from damage.
- The long term solution for A/V in transit would be to invest in reusable green transit bags that are padded THEN put into policy that these bags are to be used. This would be the most economical in the long haul.

- We have not seen much damage as a result of the item being in transit. I have opened a green bag and pulled out the bubble wrap because it wasn't secured to the item needing protecting. This seems to be more a common sense practice not something needed in a policy.

Additional Comments

Comments From People In Favor of the Change:

- From the PINES policy - This should already be in practice. Items should be appropriately packaged to protect them from damage while in transit [2008.11]. All materials should be treated the same as each library would want its own materials handled [2009.05].
- I spoke to several members of the circulation desk staff here and they agreed that this would probably be a useful policy.
- It sounds a little sophomoric, but if everybody would just pitch in and help out when it comes to preparing the items to be returned, it would go a long way. It usually only takes an extra minute to protect a book, cd or dvd. Nobody is that stressed. Thanks.
- It would be great if AV materials were packed so they didn't slid around in their container and most importantly if they were wrapped or padded to prevent breakage.
- No materials, books or media, should be sent in cardboard boxes without any packaging at all. We are still receiving books AND MEDIA in cardboard boxes from at least one system. They are not in PINES bags, they are not separated by branch--in fact, there is no protection for the items at all.
- Our system doesn't buy padding, we just reuse envelopes...
- This is just being considerate of Library materials. We stress to patrons not to get items wet, not drop food on, etc. Now we just have to practice what we preach and make the condition of the materials a priority.
- We have a patron who brings us empty dvd cases. It saves me money not having to purchase dvd cases to replace the worn out ones from repeated use.
- When packed in tubs, AV materials should go on top!

Comments From People Against the Change:

- According to policy "Audio-visual items and age-protected items are only available for holds by patrons registered to the owning library/region, and are only available for pickup within the item's owning system. [2007.02]". So, I think it should be up to the regional system whether or not they choose to require that a/v materials be in padded packaging for transit. I know that occasionally a/v materials are returned to a non-owning system and must travel distances through the courier but that still does not justify requiring libraries to invest in additional packaging.
- I currently do not have any suggestions for padded packaging that would hold up to repeated uses other than that mentioned above. The materials cost for disposable supplies could be used for higher priority material issues instead of creating more waste.
- We should do more to encourage patrons to return AV materials to the owning library. The items aren't holdable in PINES, so if I can't put on a hold on it and have it sent via courier, why should I be able to return it to another library and expect it to be returned via courier.

- We never refuse a return of any library materials and can't help if someone returns in our bookdrop, but we do encourage patrons to return AV to their home library, if possible.
- Need to make clear that these types of damages are not courier claim-worthy items.

Comments from People Who Are Undecided:

- Our system has not had a problem at all with receiving damaged AV items. With that being said we understand it may be a problem in other areas. Our system will not be able to afford to purchase bubble wrap or padded envelopes for this purpose but will reuse any supplies that are we receive. If required to package AV items it may slow down the return time if appropriate packing is not readily available.
- This seems like one more layer of rules laid down to address a situation that should be a matter of common sense.