



545 E. Tennessee St. ▪ Ste. 100-D ▪ Tallahassee, FL 32308 ▪ 850-270-9205 ▪ www.flalib.org

Mr. John Sargent
Chief Executive Officer
Macmillan Publishing
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

Florida Library Association Calls for Macmillan to Reverse Library eBook Embargo

On July 25, Macmillan Publishing announced it would become the only major (Big 5) publisher to limit eBook lending for U.S. libraries. Under its new licensing model, scheduled to begin November 1, 2019, a library is limited to purchasing one copy upon release of a new title eBook format. After an eight-week embargo, only then will Macmillan allow additional copies of that title for sale to libraries.

American Library Association (ALA) President Wanda Brown asserted, “Macmillan Publishers’ new model for library eBook lending will make it difficult for libraries to fulfill our central mission: ensuring access to information for all. Macmillan’s new policy is unacceptable.” Echoing her concerns, Public Library Association (PLA) President Ramiro Salazar stated, “Access to digital content in libraries is more than a financial issue: it is an equity issue. We encourage Macmillan Publishers to reverse course before libraries and the people they serve are harmed.”

Here in Florida, libraries are worried that this model will become one that is imitated by the other publishers who offer eBook lending to libraries. Millions of people now use digital content as their preferred access to books, music, and movies. There are excellent reasons for this: digital content is portable, accessible to people with print disabilities, and available anywhere 24/7. When brokered by libraries, digital content provides diverse options to our communities. Unfortunately, making this content hard to use and unaffordable results in denying many people access, and it often means denying authors the sales that library users would make once they discovered the author via library-provided digital content.

The Florida Library Association joins the ALA in denouncing this measure and calling for Macmillan Publishing to cancel the embargo and restore full access to its complete eBook catalog upon release to the public.

The Florida Library Association affirms the principles that:

- All Published works must be available for libraries to purchase and lend to library users.
- Access to and use of eBooks must equitable balance the rights and privileges of readers, authors and publishers.
- Digital content must be accessible to all people, regardless of physical or reading disability.
- Library patrons must be able to access digital content on the device of their choosing.
- Reading records must remain private in the digital age.

Eric Head
2019 FLA President