

COUNTY PAYMENTS FOR LIBRARY SERVICES

Wisconsin citizens annually borrow 57.6 million items without regard to county boundaries, an average of 10 items per person.

3.6% of statewide library usage is by residents of municipalities without a library who use adjacent-county libraries.

Statute 43.12 allows libraries to annually bill adjacent counties a portion of the \$8 million of operating costs for serving their residents who live in municipalities without libraries.

Counties reimburse adjacent-county libraries at a much lower amount than it would cost to build, stock, and staff additional in-county libraries to cover underserved areas.

Wisconsin
Statute
43.12
works!

**Sharing
services**
through cross-
county cooperation

distributes
costs and
**saves counties
money**

while providing
all citizens
**vital library
access**

Since 1872, Wisconsin has been committed to providing tax supported public libraries for all. Wisconsin residents contribute to public library operations through local property taxes if they live in a municipality with a library, or through their county's library tax if they live in a municipality without a library.

Most residents choose to use libraries that are accessible to their home, workplace, or school, irrespective of geographic or tax boundaries. Sometimes that library is across a county line.

Wisconsin Statute 43.12 allows libraries to bill an adjacent county when residents of a non-library municipality in that county borrow items from them.

Cross-county payments are beneficial to residents, municipalities, counties, and libraries. Here's how:



Counties pay only for services that were actually used. Libraries bill counties only for actual usage during the previous calendar year by residents of municipalities without libraries. The county reimburses the library in the following budget year.



Cross-county library payments are exempted from levy limits.

- Payments do not reduce a county's ability to fund other services.
- Payments need not reduce a county's commitment to fund its in-county libraries.



Cross county payments require no reimbursement for capital costs incurred by the lending library. This means that counties pay far less than the full cost of providing service to their residents.



Municipalities with libraries are relieved of some of the costs of serving residents of municipalities that have chosen not to build their own libraries. Taxes follow use.

When any library succeeds, all libraries benefit. Strong libraries build strong communities. Strong communities help strengthen the state of Wisconsin and improve the quality of life for its residents.

Ending cross-county library payments could result in a statewide loss of over \$5 million in library funding, or in an unfair shift of the financial responsibility from one governmental entity to another. That's not good for Wisconsin residents, municipalities, counties, or libraries.