

Zip Books Purchasing Policies for FY20-21

This is an overview of the Zip Books purchasing policies as set by NorthNet Library System and the California State Library. With approval from the Zip Books Project Coordinator, libraries can adapt policies to fit their specific needs. In cases where policies are unclear or when specific situations fall into a grey area, library staff are encouraged to reach out to the Zip Books Project Coordinator for clarification or guidance on program policies and procedures. However, if faced with a time sensitive issue, staff may make their own call, choosing a course of action that provides customer service.

1. Zip Books users must be registered borrowers in good standing

- 1.1. This is generally defined as having a current library card with no more than \$5 in accumulated fines. However, libraries may choose to establish their own definition or restrictions, such as requiring the patron to be a resident of their jurisdiction.
- 1.2. Borrowers may request Zip Books on the same day their library cards are issued.
- 1.3. Libraries may choose to establish a two-strike policy that would withdraw the good standing (either temporarily or permanently) of Zip Books users who do not follow program policies or that have lost/damaged items.

2. Allowable Zip Books purchases

- 2.1. Books available in tangible format – regular print, large print, or audiobook (MP3/CD/Playaway), including current titles in hardback or paperback and in any genre. E-books, E-audiobooks, CDs, DVDs, and any other non-book related items are not allowed unless purchased with local library funds. However, books that come with a CD/DVD included are allowed.
- 2.2. Items not already owned by your library or whose status is listed as LOST, including items available through a shared system but that are not owned by your individual jurisdiction
- 2.3. Prime and Non-Prime materials – so long as it can be purchased on the Amazon.com website and the cheapest shipping option is selected
- 2.4. Used copies – if they are in good condition. Note that items purchased from other Amazon sellers will not have an option to include a gift slip/message.
- 2.5. There are no restrictions as to genre. Current fiction is okay, but many libraries choose to limit requests to items not published in the last 6 months in order to weed out the core materials that would normally be ordered by your library.
- 2.6. Duplicate requests for unowned items are allowed up to 3 copies
- 2.7. Book sets can be purchased and are recommended if it is more cost-effective
- 2.8. Textbooks and Study Guides – if they are general enough in nature to appeal to a broad audience and will be added to your collection. Textbook rentals (printed or digital) are not allowed.
- 2.9. Adult fiction best sellers in alternative formats only (large print or audiobook/Playaway)



- 2.10. Non-fiction best sellers and young adult/children's best sellers in any format
- 2.11. Former best seller titles that are no longer on the New York Times Best Seller list or that have been on the New York Times Best Seller list for more than a year
- 2.12. Items from non-US vendors, such as foreign-language materials, so long as the cheapest shipping option is selected
- 2.13. Items that would have formerly been requested through interlibrary loan (includes current fiction/non-fiction if not part of a library's collection development focus or outside the scope of a library's ability to purchase with their own funds). You may continue to use traditional interlibrary loan at your discretion.
- 2.14. Exercise judgment when ordering items of higher cost, such as textbooks and study guides. Make sure that these titles or types of materials are appropriate for your collection.

3. Five item limit per patron, per month

- 3.1. Libraries should monitor the number of Zip Books requested by a patron at any one time, and may determine the maximum number, with a maximum allowable of 5 items per customer per month.
- 3.2. Libraries can choose to allow patrons their maximum allowable items all at once, or limit it to one item at a time, depending on their own borrowing policies.
- 3.3. Libraries should take into account their budgeted allotment when determining item limits. Limits can be adjusted as needed so long as patrons are informed of any changes.

4. Two-tiered expenditure cap

- 4.1. \$75 pre-tax and shipping for audiobooks and foreign-language items, and \$50 pre-tax and shipping for all other allowable items.
- 4.2. Higher per-item expenditures must be pre-approved by NorthNet. Should you wish to order an item more than the set expenditure cap, send the Project Coordinator an email (nuesca@northnetlibs.org) detailing what you want to purchase or a link to the item.

5. Shipping

- 5.1. When placing orders, you should take advantage of the Amazon Prime free two-day shipping option whenever possible. If the free two-day shipping option is not available, select standard shipping. You should not use expedited shipping.
- 5.2. Items should be shipped directly to the customer from Amazon and not to the library first for processing.
- 5.3. If it is in the best interest of the patron, exceptions may be made and items can be shipped to the library, a PO Box, or Amazon Locker (i.e....unsafe for deliveries to be made, patron request for personal reasons). Some sort of indication should be made on the shipping label identifying this as a Zip Books request so as to not raise any red flags when our Fiscal Dept reviews monthly reports. For example, the shipping name would be entered as "Patron Name – ZIP" or "Library Branch Name – ATTN: Zip Books".

- 5.4. If the patron is requesting multiple items and your library allows more than one request at the same time, a bulk order can be processed for convenience.

6. Staff requests

- 6.1. Library staff members that are also patrons may be allowed to request Zip Books for personal use only and should be limited to no more than 1 or 2 items per month.
- 6.2. Staff requests should be monitored onsite by the Zip Books coordinator. This will help to ensure that grant funds are used as intended.
- 6.3. Library volunteers are also allowed to request Zip Books for personal use only and are not subject to the 2 item staff limit.

7. Zip Books Discards

- 7.1. Items not added to your library collection should first be offered to other participating Zip Books libraries within your consortium or throughout the state prior to donating it to your Friends of the Library.
- 7.2. To help save on labor and shipping costs, libraries are welcome to share Zip Books discards with other participating libraries within their cooperative system instead of making them available to all libraries, allowing you to take advantage of your local shipping resources.
- 7.3. Items deemed too damaged for inclusion into a library collection, such as water-damaged books, do not need to be offered to other libraries and can instead be donated/discarded according to staff discretion.
- 7.4. Libraries may choose to give patrons the option to purchase their requested Zip Books if it is not added to their library collection. The price charged should be the exact amount paid by the library at the time of purchasing. Funds received should be put back into your library's collection development budget towards purchasing more materials. We are unable to add funds back to your Zip Books allocation at this time.

8. Using Local Library Funds

- 8.1. Libraries using local library funds to supplement their Zip Books program may choose to expand Zip Books parameters if they wish, such as allowing requests for DVDs and e-books.
- 8.2. If Zip Books parameters are expanded, you must make some sort of distinction on your program webpage and other program materials indicating that these exceptions are only being allowed while your library is using your own funds.

If you have any questions, please contact the Zip Books Project Coordinator (nuesca@northnetlibs.org).

