**Bloomfield Township PL:** We do offer Library by Mail. It has been a program here now for about 10 years, or so. Wow, time flies! Anyways, when a staff member speaks to a patron, and the patron indicates that they have issues coming into the library, or if they have had surgery or if their neighbor will be in to pick up the item or just about any other indicator that we pick up on, we offer our library by mail program.

1. An application is filled out by a staff member, could be a circulation clerk or a youth or adult services librarian.

2. Application is verified. If this is a long standing patron, with a library card, the application is sent to circ for updating. If this is a new patron a Pledge of Responsibility is sent out, and upon return a library card is created.

3. A letter is sent to the patron welcoming them to the program. This letter also has the rules, ie. Only items that fit in the bag will be sent, no MelCat requesting, and some other things.

4. Patron items are collected to be sent out either by patrons calling in or on a continuing basis i.e. they like certain authors and we send the books out upon return of the last books sent.

5. We send audio books, DVDs, music cds, magazines, large print, just about everything.

We have bags in two sizes. A pocket is on the outside of the zippered bag, and the address postcard goes in that. The patron turns it over and sends it back. All postage is prepaid. We put a small zip tie on each bag when sent out, and we include one for the journey back to our library. We purchased our bags from Janway.

We have had a few lost items in the mail, and a couple times an audio book cd has been left behind. We just call and ask them to include it in the next shipment. The mail has been running slow here, and a new LBM patron was calling us daily looking for an answer about her items. It took about a week or more for the items to arrive, and now we tell new patrons, things may be slow.

Also, I try to go through all the applications twice a year to make sure our patrons are still with us. This can be a sad task. I search for obituaries, home sales on Zillow and look for them in Reference USA, and I make lots of phone calls to make sure they still need the service. Sometimes a patron moves, and that is okay. I did a check after our Stay Home Stay Safe order was lifted, and we had lost four patrons during that three month period. You just want to keep up with it.

If you have any other questions let me know. I’ll help if I can.

**Roseville PL:** 1. How have you implemented this service, either now or historically? Do you only ship books/audiobooks, or do you allow other materials to circ? We created an "outreach" profile for "Materials by Mail" patrons which automatically gives a four-week due date when we check out our materials on these cards instead of the normal three weeks or one week. The extra week is for time to go back and forth in the U.S. mail, however we should consider adding more time because it takes considerably more time for the bags to go through the mail now. We arranged to have our local post office charge the postage to the patron and back to our Business Reply Mail account. Patrons who become Outreach patrons must figuratively give up their regular "public profile" card and may only check out materials through the MbyM program. They may not place holds on materials owned by other libraries and may not just walk in and use the library. This is due to the four-week checkout provided by their outreach profile. We will lend any materials they want from our collection excluding new and in-demand fiction and new movies which only circulate for one week. We set up their outreach account my asking them questions by phone about their taste in materials and the information is kept in their file. Each time they check out materials they receive a receipt which lists the authors/titles and due dates of the materials in the bag and a comment sheet that allows them to rate the materails we sent. They are very honest! The comment sheet helps the librarian to make selections for the patron going forward. The patron determines how many items they want and how frequently. We often send our most recent print calendar of events with information about upcoming programs and flyers/brochures about new services or collections. We think this helps our outreach patrons to feel more connected to the library. The librarian in charge of MbyM gets to know her clients and often sends them the free magazines the library recieves each month (Senior Living, Macomb Now, BookPage (free to patrons, paid by the library), bookmarks and leftover take and make crafts if they are interested.

2. Do you require your patrons to certify their disability, and if so, why? We do not require any formal information regarding their disability or reason for requesting Materials by Mail. We take their word. Patrons use the service for many reasons and normally offer their reason without an inquiry by the librarian: long-term disability, short-term disability, recent surgery and general concerns about coming to the library due to advanced age.

3. Do you use cloth or plastic reusable mailers? We use rectangular cloth bags with zippers and a plastic pocket for the address card. The patron's address is written on one wide of a manilla cardboard card and a label with the library's address is on the opposite side. The patron is supposed to flip the piece of cardboard when they return the bag, however the postal employees normally know where to send the bag even if the patron did not flip the card. Our library is in a City of approximately 48,000 residents.

4. Where did you get those mailers? We originally purchased the cloth zippered mailers from A. Rifkin Company, ariftin.com, but have also priced other companies. The Rifkin bags have held up for over twenty years.

At any one time we may have 10 or so residents using the program. This is a very small number considering the population of Roseville. However it is fortunate the number is small because each bag of materials costs between $4 and $11 to mail one way, depending upon weight. If the program becomes more popular, money would have to be shifted from another account to the postage account. Selecting, mailing, updating files and checking in returned materials is time-consuming, but the librarians generally enjoy handling outreach and they enjoy talking to the patrons.

Best of luck with your service.

**East Lansing PL:** We are only sending our materials at this time. We just rejoined MeL last week, as we’re having real trouble getting borrowed items back to their home libraries. At this point I’d hesitate on sending MeL items through the mail, as it would just be another layer of complication until we get that straightened out.

I would not decline a request for AV materials, but we’re trying to focus on books. The processing & shipping time (both ways) for AV materials would mean they’d almost always exceed their loan period. We decided to call it Books by Mail to emphasize print materials.

We’re not limiting who can participate. We’re using language to gear the program towards people with mobility issues, but we’re not checking IDs or asking for further information.

We’re allowing each patron one “order” at a time. Order size is somewhat limited by our bags (more on that later). Many of the patrons who use our system are doing so on behalf of an older relative, so we often get basic requests like “send Westerns” so we’ll send what will fit.

Correct, we’re not using “books by mail” as a pickup location in our catalog. We’d like patrons to sign up first, so we know where & to whom the books should be sent. We just put a note in our ILS saying that our patron is using Books by Mail, & we have the specific for each patron saved separately. I think adding a pickup location in our catalog would just cause confusion and/or abuse of the system. We’re happy to sign up anyone, but we want to make sure they understand (or at least read about) the intention of the program first. Having said that, we are about to add two new location codes. We’ve never had options before, so I think there will be a learning curve for all of us!

We do have our own postage meter. As our building is closed, it’s really nice to have a postage meter so we don’t have to wait in line at the post office. We’re pre-paying the return postage, so patrons just have to flip the address label over & send it back to us (I’ll post a link later). I inherited the materials from my predecessor, so I’m not exactly sure where they came from. If I had to start all over again, I’d choose different bags. The labels from our postage meter do not fit in the window for the address label on the bag. Also, our bags are rather small – we can only fit 2-3 books in them, tops. If you wanted “War and Peace” it would barely fit. I would get larger bags with the correct window size. Our bags also have the “cut out window”. This might make it a little easier to get the shipping label in and out, but I worry that the label might get ripped. Fortunately, that hasn’t happened yet.

Overall, it’s going well. AFAIK we’ve never offered this service before, so patrons are very happy just to get books. Most people who are getting books for relatives are also glad that we can choose or recommend titles, so we’re really providing two services at once.

**Clinton-Macomb PL:** The Clinton Macomb Public library just started a Library by Mail service. It was in the works pre-Covid, and soft-launched in July, with an announcement in our fall newsletter to our whole service area. We ship books, audiobooks, CDs and DVDs. If someone requested only LT books, we would refer them to our County-Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically handicapped.

[Do patrons have to certify disability?] No.  Just that they can’t get to the library.

[Cloth or plastic mailers?] Cloth.

[Where did you get mailers?] A Rifkin, trans-sac; I think we bought a Nylon blend?

And finally, a link from a listserv member to a library that they know about in Florida that provides this service: <https://www.ocls.info/using-library/home-delivery/what-request-home-delivery-mayl>