

Juan Lee

From: Juan Lee
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2019 9:14 PM
Subject: IMPORTANT - Boycott of Macmillan eBooks in OverDrive
Attachments: Macmillan Press Release 11-27-2019.pdf

Dear Staff,

Today, the boycott of Macmillan Publishing ebooks in OverDrive went into effect in Utah public libraries. Attached is the [press release](#) drafted by the State Library Division and the administrative committee of Utah's Online Public Library Overdrive Consortium. As you know, the majority of items available in OverDrive to Wasatch County residents are purchased by the State Library and other consortium libraries. However, as we meet our consortia duties to purchase items for OverDrive, we will be honoring the boycott.

If you receive questions, comments, or concerns from our patrons, please keep in mind the talking points listed below. Also, if you receive a call from any media outlet (e.g., newspaper, radio, etc.), please refer the caller to me.

MACMILLAN BOYCOTT TALKING POINTS

- Macmillan is one of the five major trade book publishing companies in the United States.
- On November 1, 2019, Macmillan changed its policy, and now public libraries, regardless of size, can purchase only one copy of each new eBook title for the first eight weeks after a book's release.
- After eight weeks, the library can purchase at premium prices additional metered copies, but these cannot be shared among libraries in the OverDrive consortium like we currently do.
- Macmillan's policy change directly impacts the library's core mission to make information accessible to the public.
- Additionally, Macmillan's embargo harms patrons with physical disabilities, learning difficulties like dyslexia, and visual challenges.
- Public libraries want two things: (1) To fulfill the mission of ensuring that the public has access to information, regardless of format, and (2) To be able to purchase eBooks without unreasonable delays.

I strongly encourage you to visit the website <https://ebooksforall.org/> and review the [FAQs](#) to learn more about this issue.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Juan Tomás Lee, Director

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Utah Public Libraries Begin Boycott of Macmillan eBooks

SALT LAKE CITY (November 27, 2019) – Nearly 70 public libraries in Utah will join a nationwide boycott of Macmillan because of the company’s new policy that limits access and increases costs for new books.

The six-month boycott, effective immediately, is supported by Utah’s Online Public Library Overdrive Consortium, which includes 69 libraries statewide. The decision to begin the boycott was unanimous among the seven voting members who attended the consortium’s administrative committee meeting on November 13, 2019. The committee has nine members.

The Utah State Library, which operates Utah’s Online Library, will honor the consortium’s decision and will not purchase any new eBooks from Macmillan until at least May 2020. Macmillan’s eAudiobooks, as well as physical formats such as print or CD, are not impacted by the boycott.

Throughout the United States and Canada, libraries and library systems are protesting a decision by Macmillan, one of five major publishers, to only allow the purchase of one copy of new eBooks for the first eight weeks after release. After the eight week, libraries can only purchase additional metered copies at a premium price, and they will not permit the sharing of eBooks among members of the consortium.

Utah’s consortium is comprised of smaller suburban and rural libraries that depend on the shared resources to provide a wide range of books and other materials to their patrons. The costs to provide them individually would be prohibitive and ultimately limit the information available to their patrons.

The consortium did not make the decision to boycott lightly. Utah’s libraries are committed to promoting literacy and a lifelong love of reading and learning. Additionally, libraries and librarians believe in promoting equal access, and Macmillan’s policy has created a barrier to that access.

“Public libraries are the people’s university, but access will be more limited because of this policy from Macmillan,” said Provo City Library Director Gene Nelson, a voting member of the administrative committee who represents the Utah State Library. “Wait times for thousands of patrons will increase significantly and costs to libraries will escalate. Our hope is that Macmillan will work with librarians to find a solution.”

Join libraries across the country in opposing Macmillan’s embargo of eBooks. Sign the petition at <https://ebooksforall.org> and demand #eBooksForAll.