

Norwalk Public Library Loan Specialist Vicky Lucarelli works on returning books to other libraries through the statewide library delivery service deliverIT CT on Tuesday.



Alex von Kleydorff / Hearst Connecticut Media

DELIVERIT CT

Interlibrary loan service revamped

System restructured to meet budget constraints

By Kaitlyn Krasselt and Julia Perkins

NORWALK — For decades, if a particular book was not available at the local library, a patron could order it from another one in the region. The item would then be

delivered to the nearest library for pickup.

About 3 million items have been delivered from one library to another throughout Connecticut, but on July 3, the Connecticut State Library temporarily suspended the service, called deliv-

erIT CT, in an effort to restructure the system while meeting budget constraints.

Vicky Lucarelli, who runs the interlibrary loan program at Norwalk Public Library, said the service is expected to be back up and running Tuesday. In the meantime, employees at the library are doing what they can to

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Norwalk Public Library books set to be returned to other state libraries through the statewide library delivery service, deliverIT CT, on Tuesday.

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ensure customers are able to find what they need.

“We’re still here,” Luca-relli said. “Patrons can still get what they need. We’re hoping after the 18th of July, it will be a better service than before. The state took over the delivery about a year ago, but they’re doing this right now to start fresh.”

State library officials expect the service to feature changes designed to make the system more equitable among 167 local libraries of different sizes. When the deliveries resume, each library will be able to get or receive about 375 books and other items a week.

“We don’t get as much, but we still will get what we need for our patrons,” Luca-relli said.

State funding for deliv-erIT CT has been relatively

steady for 27 years, but the overall state library budget has been cut significantly in recent years. The agency is projected to receive about \$8.3 million next fiscal year, about \$5 million less than 2009, said Dawn La Valle, the library’s director of library development. President Donald Trump has also threatened to cut federal funds for state libraries.

“At this point we are focused on retooling to provide this equitable service, but it’s all contingent on the availability of state and federal resources,” La Valle said.

DeliverIT CT has been available for about 40 years. At one point, state employees and a private vendor shared delivery duties, but in 2015 the vendor terminated its contract, La Valle said. Since then, the state has handled the service alone, but keeping up has been tough, she said.

“We have been working

with the library community over the past year-and-a-half because it’s not sustainable,” La Valle said.

Under the current system, delivery trucks pick up and drop off items more frequently at some libraries than others, depending on size, La Valle said. The new system will transfer roughly the same amount for each library.

Librarians praised DeliverIT CT, saying it allows them to save money and resources, while offering a wide range of items they do not have in their own buildings.

“We’re going to create a service that is fair and equitable to all libraries in the state of Connecticut,” she said. “They all get the same level of service, whether they’re a small library or a large library.”

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