



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT GUIDE

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2027

Posted in compliance with
5 ILCS 140/4

Freedom of Information Act Guide

About Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)

RAILS is a regional library system, a government agency that provides services to libraries in the northern and west-central areas of the state of Illinois.

We serve approximately 1200 academic, public, school, and special library members, which have a total of more than 4000 library facilities in a 27,000-square-mile area.

Although the city of Chicago is within our boundaries, and a number of our member libraries are located in Chicago, the Chicago Public Library constitutes a separate library system. Members have several opportunities to network with each other through email lists, networking groups, member updates, and at networking events.

We are governed by a Board of Directors, elected by member libraries.

Library systems are established by state law (75 ILCS 10/, the Illinois Library System Act). Funding for Illinois Library Systems is provided through the Illinois State Library and the Secretary of State, with funds appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly.

RAILS was formed in 2011 from a merger of the Alliance, DuPage, Metropolitan, North Suburban, and Prairie Area library systems.

Our Mission

We Connect Libraries

Our Vision

Thriving libraries are essential to all who learn, live, or work in Illinois.

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) Website

www.railslibraries.org

Operating Budget

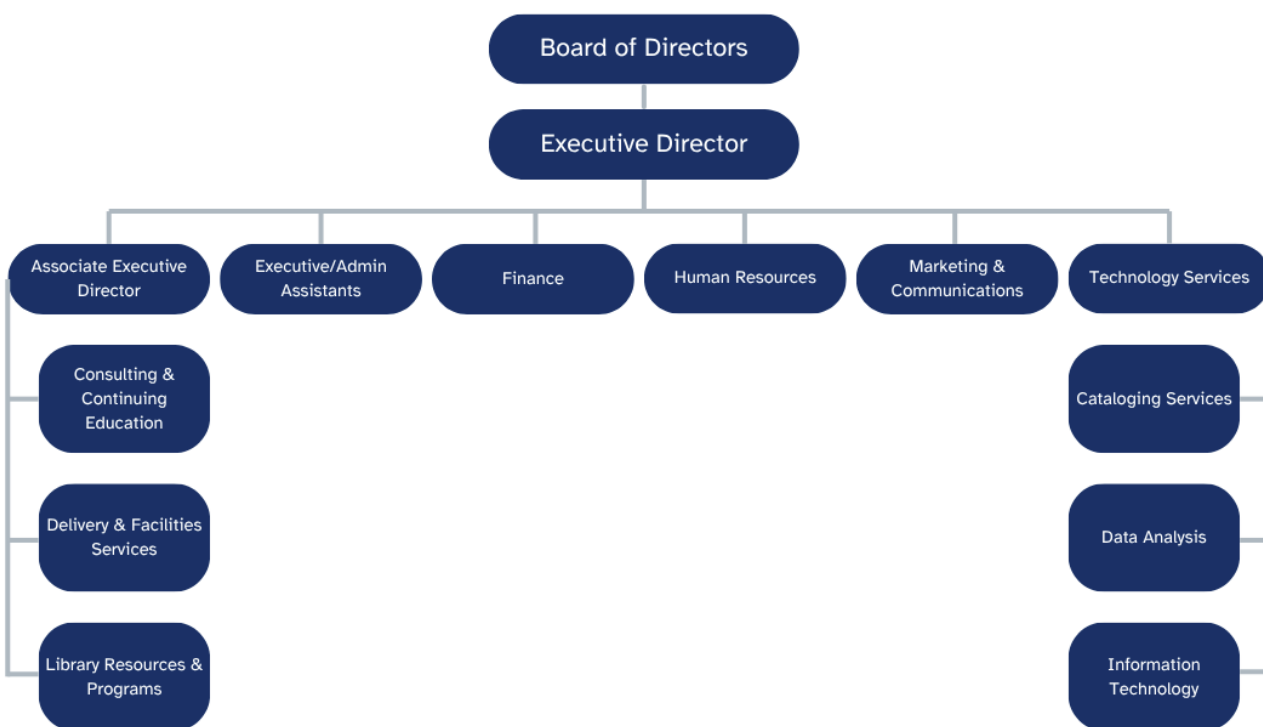
The total amount of our operating budget for FY2027 is \$17.5 million, with an additional special revenue budget of \$0.9 million and a capital projects budget of \$0.9 million. Funding sources are the State of Illinois and member libraries.

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) Locations

The primary office is located at 125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. Branch offices are located at 715 Sabrina Drive, East Peoria, IL 61611; 4717 Colt Road, Rockford, IL 61109; 220 W. 23rd Avenue, Coal Valley, IL 61240; and 1000 W. Crossroads Parkway, Bolingbrook, IL 60490.

Staff

We have approximately the following number of persons employed: 95 (91 full-time & 4 part-time)



Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) Board of Trustees

The following organization exercises control over our policies and procedures: The Reaching Across Illinois Library System Board of Directors, which meets most months at various locations.

President:	Catherine Yanikoski (June 2028)
Vice President:	Amanda Kowalcze (June 2027)
Treasurer:	Megan Gove (June 2028)
Secretary:	Emily Porter (June 2027)
Ethics Officer:	Jennifer Cutshall (June 2027)
OMA:	Jennifer Cottrill (June 2029)
FOIA:	Victoria Ferguson (June 2029)
Trustee:	Victor Hinojosa (June 2029)
	Gwen Gregory (June 2029)
	Ron Holohan (June 2027)
	Rebecca Hunt (June 2029)
	Joanna Marek (June 2029)
	Roberta Parks (June 2028)
	Emily Porter (June 2027)
	Carolyn Sennett (June 2027)
	Karen Voitik (June 2027)

Committees

Executive Committee

Admin: Stacy Palmisano
President: Catherine Yanikoski
Vice President: Amanda Kowalcze
Secretary: Emily Porter
Treasurer: Megan Gove
At Large Seat: Jennifer Cutshall

Ethics, FOIA & OMA Officers

Ethics: Jennifer Cutshall
FOIA: Megan Gove
OMA: Megan Gove

Advocacy Committee

No Term Limits
Admin: Alice Grabowski
RAILS Lead: Monica Harris
Chairperson: Emily Porter
Board Members: (2 minimum)

- Ron Holohan
- Karen Voitik

- Víctor Hinojosa
- Joanna Marek

Members:

- Stephanie Nissen (Academic)
- Monica Caldicott (School Library)
- Jean Carroll (Public Library)

Ex Officio:

- Board President, Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Dan Bostrom

Consortia Committee

No Term Limits

Admin: Alice Grabowski

RAILS Lead: Anne Slaughter

Chairperson: Megan Gove

Board Members: (one additional)

- Amanda Kowalcze

Members:

- Elizabeth Clarage, CARLI Rep
- Martin Kong, CARLI Alternate
- Kate Hall, CCS Rep
- Rebecca Malinowski, CCS Alternate
- Paul Mills, Pinnacle Rep
- Matt Hammermeister, Pinnacle Alternate
- Jason Shirley, PrairieCat Rep
- Carolyn Coulter, PrairieCat Alternate
- Jennifer Slaney, RRLC Rep
- Antony Deter, RSA Rep
- Jenny Jackson, RSA Alternate
- Aaron Skog, SWAN Rep
- Laura Van Cleve, SWAN Alternate

Ex Officio:

- Board President, Cassandra Thompson (IHLS), Anne Slaughter (RAILS), Jennifer Baugh (SHARE)

Nominating Committee

One-Year Term Limit

Admin: Stacy Palmisano

RAILS Lead: Monica Harris

Chairperson: Gwen Gregory

Board Members: (one additional)

- Karen Voitik

Members: 3

- Open
- Open
- Open

Ex Officio:

Board President, Monica Harris, Dan Bostrom

Resource Sharing Committee

Two-Year Term Limit

Admin: Gwen Gemmell

RAILS Lead: Joe Filapek

Chairperson: Gwen Gregory

Board Members: (one additional)

- Karen Voitik

Members:

- Open
- Open
- Jesse Henning
- Kelly McCully

Ex Officio: Board President, Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Mark Hatch, Leila Heath, Anne Slaughter, Leslie Bednar (IHLS)

Policy Committee

One-Year Term Limit

Admin: Mary Kate Murray

RAILS Lead: Monica Harris

Chairperson: Amanda Kowalcze

Board Members: (5)

- Jennifer Cutshall
- Carolyn Sennett
- Roberta Parks
- Rebecca Hunt

Ex Officio:

Board President, Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Sam Daly

Universal Service Committee

No Term Limits

Admin: Liana Hirner/Stacy Palmisano

RAILS Lead: Joe Filapek

Chairperson: Jennifer Cutshall

Board Members: (2 minimum)

- Roberta Parks
- Jennifer Cottrill
- Victoria Ferguson

Members:

- Brooke Sievers
- Open
- Open
- Open

Ex Officio: Board President, Monica Harris, Joe Filapek, Kate Niehoff

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Reaching Across Illinois Library System adheres to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 ILCS140/1 et.seq., which is the principal Illinois statute governing the inspection of public records. The Act requires that public bodies make available for inspection or copying all public records to any person, with limited exceptions.

FOIA Officers

Executive Director:	Monica Harris (monica.harris@railslibraries.org)
Associate Executive Director:	Joe Filapek (joe.filapek@railslibraries.org)
Trustee:	Megan Gove (megan.gove@railslibraries.org)

Filing a Request and Fees

A request for RAILS records must be made in writing and should include the requester's name, address and/or email address, and phone number. A request must specify whether the request is being made for commercial purposes and provide a clear description of the records being sought. If submitted by email, the request must be in the body of the email, rather than available by attachment or link.

Records may be inspected or copied. Inspection is available from 8:30 AM–5:00 PM at 125 Tower Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527 under the supervision of a RAILS employee. RAILS will respond to requests for copies of records within the statutory timeframes set forth in FOIA. While FOIA creates a presumption that records in the custody or possession of RAILS are open to inspection or copying, RAILS reserves the right to deny (in whole or in part) any request seeking records which are exempt from disclosure under Section 7 of FOIA.

RAILS charges fees for certain records requested in accordance with FOIA, which RAILS has determined to be reasonably calculated to reimburse its actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use of RAILS equipment to copy records:

Item(s)	Cost
Copies (black-and-white, letter/legal size)	\$0.15 per page
Copies (color/oversize)	Actual cost of reproduction
Certification	\$1.00 per document
Recording Media (disks, drives, etc.)	Actual cost to purchase medium

Statutory fees

Fee(s) otherwise provided by FOIA will be imposed at the rate(s) authorized

Records Immediately Available Upon Request

Certain types of information maintained by us are exempt from inspection and copying. However, the following types or categories of records are maintained under our control:

- A. Monthly Financial Statements
- B. Annual Receipts and Disbursements Reports
- C. Budget
- D. Annual Audits
- E. Minutes of the Board of Directors
- F. System Policies and Bylaws
- G. Adopted Ordinances and Resolutions of the Board
- H. Total Compensation Chart [PA 97-0609] current fiscal year

Records Retention

The Reaching Across Illinois Library System adheres to the guidance for retaining business records set out by the Local Records Commission through the State of Illinois.

Categories of Public Records Maintained by the Reaching Across Illinois Library System

- 1 APPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORITY TO DISPOSE OF LOCAL RECORDS
- 2 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS
- 3 ADMINISTRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE
- 4 APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT
- 5 APPRAISALS
- 6 ASBESTOS REMOVAL RECORDS
- 7 AUDITS
- 8 BANKING & INVESTMENT RECORDS
- 9 BIDS, SPECIFICATIONS, PROPOSALS
- 10 BOARD AND COMMITTEE PACKETS
- 11 BUDGETS
- 12 BUILDING & EQUIPMENT
- 13 CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE
- 14 CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPT PROPERTY
- 15 COLLECTIONS AGENCY AND DELINQUENT ACCOUNT RECORDS
- 16 CONSTRUCTION RECORDS
- 17 CONTRACTS, LEASES, AGREEMENTS
- 18 DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

18	DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN (electronic)
19	E-RATE
20	FINANCIAL RECORDS
21	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS AND DENIALS
22	GIFT & DONATIONS
23	GRANT RECORDS
24	ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM ANNUAL REPORT AND PER CAPITA
25	ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT FUND OTHER
27	INSURANCE OTHER
28	INVENTORIES EQUIPMENT
29	JOB DESCRIPTIONS
30	LEGAL CASE FILES
31	LEGAL NOTICES, PRESS RELEASES, CERT OF PUBLIC
32	LIENS
33	MEMBERSHIP RECORDS
34	MINUTES AND AGENDAS
35	NEWSLETTERS AND BROCHURES
36	OPEN MEETING ACT AND FOIA TRAINING CERT
37	ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS
38	O.S.H.A. LOGS
39	PAYROLL REPORTS OTHER
40	PERSONNEL OTHER
41	POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUALS
42	PROJECT REPORTS & SURVEYS
43	PROPERTY RECORDS
44	RECEIPTS, DELIVERY, POSTAL, CASH
45	STATE & FEDERAL TAX STATEMENTS
46	STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTEREST LISTS AND RECEIPTS
47	SYSTEM BOARD APPOINTMENTS
48	TAX EXEMPT CERTIFICATES
49	TIME RECORDS
50	TREASURER BONDS
51	UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
52	US IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION FORM
53	WORKERS COMPENSATION
54	CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM RECORDS
55	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
56	QUESTIONNAIRES & SURVEYS
56	QUESTIONNAIRES & SURVEYS (ELECTRONIC)
57	SECURITY SURVEILLANCE RECORDINGS (ELECTRONIC)
58	WAGE GARNISHMENT