



SCHENECTADY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S WITHDRAWL FROM JOINT AUTOMATION -FAQ

Is Schenectady County Public Library (SCPL) leaving the Mohawk Valley Library System (MVLS)?

SCPL is not withdrawing from the Mohawk Valley Library System but rather the Joint Automation Project (JA). The Joint Automation Project is a separate contract SCPL has for third party managed IT and automation (catalog) services.

Why is SCPL withdrawing from JA?

As SCPL continues to grow, and after much discussion and investigation, it was determined outsourcing our IT requirements to the Joint Automation Project no longer serves the needs of our patrons or staff, and all would be better served by bringing IT services in-house, under the management of the Schenectady County IT Department. In addition, and perhaps even more importantly, membership in the Joint Automation Project did not afford us the flexibility and autonomy we need to best serve our community and adapt and innovate to continually evolving needs. To that end, the Board of Trustees voted to cancel the current contract with Joint Automation. The Joint Automation Project requires six months notification of this change, which gives both parties time to plan for a smooth transition.

Will Schenectady County Public Library cardholders still be able to check out at other MVLS libraries?

We will still provide cards and borrowing privileges to all residents of MVLS and vice versa as members of MVLS. SCPL cardholders will be able to visit MVLS libraries to get a card and check out there.



Will other MVLS library cardholders still be able to check out items at SCPL locations?

We will still provide cards and borrowing privileges to all residents of MVLS and vice versa as members of MVLS. MVLS cardholders will be able to visit SCPL libraries to get a card and check out there.

Will SCPL cardholders be able to request items from other MVLS or SALS libraries for pick up at a SCPL location?

This will still be possible through interlibrary loan, a process where libraries who do not have a shared catalog request items from other libraries. We do this currently to request items from all over the country currently when a patron wants an item that is not held anywhere within our shared catalog. In 2023, less than 10% of the physical materials checked out at SCPL locations came from outside SCPL's collections.

Will this reduce the access SCPL patrons have to physical or digital collections?

We don't anticipate any reduction in service as a result of this change, and in fact expect an expansion of access for SCPL cardholders through continued direct access to MVLS libraries as well as resource sharing agreements with other regional libraries.

Will SCPL cardholders be able to use their cards at SALS libraries and vice versa?

This is dependent upon policy set by each individual library's board of trustees. Many of the libraries who participate in Joint Automation currently also issue cards to any resident of the MVLS or SALS service areas. For example, SCPL's policy is to issue cards to anyone within SALS and MVLS currently. Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library's policy is to issue cards to anyone within SALS, MVLS or UHLS.