



2026 South Central Kansas Library System Grant-in-Aid Program

Funding for services and programs of the South Central Kansas Library comes from a tax on all property outside of established public library districts in Barber, Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Kingman, McPherson, Reno, Rice, Sedgwick, Stafford and Sumner counties. The SCKLS Grant-in-Aid program, which is budgeted at \$1,635,259 for 2026, partially compensates public library members of SCKLS for services they provide to registered library users who are not residents of their public library tax district.

In the case of academic library members of SCKLS, the Grant-in-Aid program compensates your library for registered library users who are not enrolled as students or who are not employees of your institution. As a condition for SCKLS membership, participating libraries agree to “permit any citizen of the territory comprising the system to borrow materials or receive services without charge, subject to reasonable library rules” (K.A.R. 54-1-8). The SCKLS grants-in-aid program facilitated access for 101, 114 library users and the interlibrary loan of 40,513 items in 2024.

The certification process for SCKLS grant-in-aid eligibility occurs during February--April of each year. Four factors comprise the formula for the distribution of grants-in-aid:

- (1) a base grant calculated from the official population of your library service area
- (2) a supplemental grant calculated on the number of interlibrary loan resource sharing provided to other libraries via KICNET, the computerized statewide interlibrary loan network and/or OCLC, the computerized worldwide interlibrary loan network, and
- (3) a supplemental grant calculated on the basis of the number of registered users outside your library taxing district or not enrolled at your academic institution, and
- (4) in the case of a public library, the amount of local base tax support budgeted for your public library

The following definitions will assist your library in reporting data used to determine your library’s grant-in-aid. Grants-in-aid are distributed twice a year: One-half the base grant is distributed by April 30 and the other half of the base grant is distributed by September 30. Along with the April base grant is a supplemental grant for out-of-district borrowers and with the September base grant, a supplemental grant for

interlibrary loans is included. No restrictions exist on how SCKLS grants-in-aid may be used by your library, but the SCKLS grants-in-aid must be used for library purposes only and expended, encumbered or transferred within one-year of December 31, 2026.

Determining Official Service Population for Public Libraries

The official population of your public library’s service area is based each year on the number provided by the State Library of Kansas, Topeka in your library’s Kansas Public Survey Annual Report. Official population data for SCKLS grants-in-aids are based on the previous year’s population for your community. To identify your library’s official service population, use the Kansas Certified Population number shown in “Item 1.5 Official Service Population” for your library’s most recent Kansas Public Survey Annual Report for the State Library of Kansas.

Determining Official Service Population for Academic Libraries

The official service population for your academic library population is based on the Full Time Equivalency (FTE) for student enrollment as reported on the 20th day after the beginning of the Fall Semester. In addition to the FTE student enrollment, the number of FTE faculty and staff should be counted to determine the service population. Official service population figures for SCKLS grants-in-aid are based on the previous year’s FTE of student enrollment, faculty and staff for your institution. FTE is the basis for your academic library service population and not headcount. When an academic library changes its official service population to a new category, SCKLS requires verification of FTE enrollment, faculty and staff for your institution. Verification should be submitted by the appropriate institutional official such as the college registrar and provided on institutional letterhead.

Population and Grant Categories for SCKLS Public and Academic Libraries

Annually in March, your library must complete an SCKLS Grants-in-Aid Eligibility Form which is available at the SCKLS website: www.sckls.info. Once the official service population has been identified and reported for your public or academic library, SCKLS categorizes public and academic libraries according to population categories that are outlined in the State Library of Kansas document *Guidelines for Kansas Public Libraries, 2024-2028*. SCKLS population categories are as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Population</u>
Gateway	Fewer than 500 service population
Linking	501 – 1,000 service population
Service Center I	1,001 – 2,500 service population
Service Center II	2,501- 10,000 service population
Major Service Center I	10,001 – 25,000 service population
Major Resource Center II	25,001 – 100,000 service population
Major Resource Center	More than 100,000 service population

<u>Category</u>	<u>Increased 2026 Base Grant Amounts</u>	<u>Libraries</u>
Gateway	\$ 3,090	13
Linking	\$ 4,460	20
Service Center I	\$ 5,310	26
Service Center II	\$ 7,590	16
Major Service Center I	\$15,502	8
Major Resource Center II	\$45,705	2
Major Resource Center	\$74,511	1
Estimated 2025 Total	\$678,807	86

A member public or academic library that increases in population and moves to a higher service population category will be eligible for a higher base grant one year after the service population increase is officially reported to SCKLS. Note also that the higher service population must be maintained for a two-year period in order for the library to qualify for a higher base grant. A member of public academic library that decreases in population moves to a lower service population category in the year the decrease is recorded. These stipulations allow SCKLS to budget the increased grant amount needed for the eligible member library rather than reduce the grant-in-aid total available for other eligible member libraries.

To be eligible for an annual grants-in-aid, an academic member library must have employed a Master of Library Science level staff member who administered the library at least 12 months during previous calendar year as well as currently employ a Master of Library Science level staff member who administers the library or currently employ a library staff member who is enrolled in a Master of Library Science level graduate program.

Supplemental Grants-in-Aid

While base grants-in-aid are determined by service population category and distributed twice a year, the supplemental grants-in-aid are distributed by April 30 and September 30. The April supplemental grant amount is calculated on the number of registered borrowers who reside outside your public library's taxing district or in the case of an academic library, the number of registered borrowers who are not enrolled as students or are not employees of your institution. The September supplemental grant is based on the number of interlibrary loans your library provided other libraries via KICNET and/or OCLC.

For example, if \$1,500,000 was available for the grants-in-aid program and \$600,000 of the total was used for base grants, then \$900,000 would be available for distribution as supplemental grants. Since supplemental grants-in-aid are distributed according to the formula 50% for interlibrary loans to other libraries and 50% for out-of-

district or institution users, using \$1,500,000 as the basis for supplemental grants would mean \$450,000 or 50% would be allocated to interlibrary loans to other libraries and \$450,000 or 50% for out-of-district users. Each member library's figures for interlibrary loans to other libraries and out-of-district users would be calculated as a percentage of the \$450,000 in order to identify a dollar amount each library would receive.

Determining the Number of Registered Users Outside of Your Public Library Taxing District or Academic Institution

As part of your public library's new user registration process, a notation should be made whether the user resides outside of the boundaries of your library's taxing district. In the case of an academic library, a notation should be recorded if a new library user is not a student or employee of your academic institution. Some academic libraries refer to this category of borrowers as "community" users. The number of out-of-district or out-of-institution registered users for your library should be counted each year. **SCKLS requires that your library delete registration records of all users who have been inactive for a period of more than four years.**

Determining the Number of Interlibrary Loans Provided to Other Libraries

The number of interlibrary loans via KICNET and/or OCLC your library provides to other libraries is another important number to record and count. KICNET is the computerized statewide interlibrary loan network and OCLC is the computerized worldwide interlibrary loan network. SCKLS partially compensates member libraries that share their resources through KICNET and/or OCLC because these two resource sharing methods benefit all SCKLS member libraries. Interlibrary loan is defined as physical items lent by your library to other libraries through interlibrary loan via KICNET and/or OCLC. E-lending of books should not be counted as interlibrary loan.

Annually, public and academic libraries report interlibrary statistics to the State Library of Kansas, Topeka using the "Kansas Interlibrary Loan Annual Activity Report." For SCKLS, **only** report the number of interlibrary loans via KICNET and/or OCLC that your library provided, filled or lent including original items and copies to other libraries during the previous calendar year. Do not report the number of interlibrary loans requested from other libraries nor requests from other libraries that were unfilled nor items loaned to other libraries not using standard interlibrary methods. Intralibrary loan, the lending of library materials among libraries in an automation consortium, should not be counted as interlibrary loan since intralibrary loan benefits only libraries in the automation consortium and not SCKLS member libraries as a whole.

Determining the Amount of Local Tax Support Budgeted for Your Library

SCKLS will not provide a base grant-in-aid in an amount greater than the amount of local tax support budgeted for your public library. The maintenance of local tax support is critical for your public library since SCKLS cannot be the primary funding source for local public library service. In determining the local tax support budgeted for

your public library, SCKLS will annually identify the amount using the official budget information submitted by your city or township to the Kansas Department of Administration and found at: <https://admin.ks.gov/offices/accounts-reports/local-government/municipal-services/municipal-budgets> If the amount of local base tax support is less than the base grant-in-aid for your category of public library, SCKLS will only provide a grant-in-aid equal to amount of local base tax support.

Compliance with Free Basic Library Service Policy

SCKLS defines free basic library service as follows:

1. Initial issuance and renewal of a library card;
2. Borrowing privileges for any item in a member library's circulating collection;
3. Provision of interlibrary loan services;
4. Access to library programs;
5. Access to the Internet and public computers.

Since funding for SCKLS derives from public tax-support, grant-in-aid funds shall not be used to pay costs associated with services or programs for which a local member library charges fees. A member library will be subject to loss of funding from SCKLS when the member library uses SCKLS funds to pay for costs associated with services or programs for which the member library charges. Please refer to Free Basic Library Service and Considerations for SCKLS Member Libraries at: <https://www.sckls.info/home/showdocument?id=38>

Grant-in-Aid Eligibility Certification

Annually, an SCKLS Grants-in-Aid Eligibility Form is available on the SCKLS website: www.sckls.info. Complete and return the form by March 14, 2026. The eligibility form asks for information that has been defined in the form itself and explained in the previous portions of this document. Information provided by a member library in the SCKLS Grants-in-Aid Eligibility Form will be the basis for certifying and determining the amounts of grant-in-aid the library may receive for that year. No new information will be accepted until the following year when the eligibility certification process begins again.

Certification requires that a library director or other library official attest that the library meets the following requirements of **(KAR)** Kansas Administrative Regulations 54-1-8, "*Provision for free service: Libraries participating in a regional system of cooperating libraries shall permit any citizen of the territory comprising the system to borrow materials or receive services without charge, subject to reasonable library rules*". In addition, certification requires that in accordance with the requirements of the SCKLS Grants-in-aid Program the library delete the registration records of all users who have been inactive for a period of more than four years.

If a member library does not return the grant-in-aid form by the March 14, 2026 deadline, the library will not receive a grant-in-aid during the calendar year and the amount of grant the member library would have received will be used towards the

SCKLS grant-in-aid program. SCKLS provides notice of the grant-in-aid process on its website beginning in January of each year. Additional notices are posted to the SCKLS Main List-serv and directly to a public or academic member library that has not submitted its grants-in-aid eligibility form by March 14, 2026.

Grants-in-aid Service Contract

SCKLS requires a grants-in-aid contract between itself and each eligible public and academic member library. If a library has submitted the grants-in-aid eligibility form by March 14, 2026 a grants-in-aid contract will be mailed to the eligible public and academic library member prior to April 30, 2026. The grants-in-aid contract must be signed and returned by a designated representative of each eligible public and academic member library no later than June 30, 2026.

SCKLS is not required by statute or regulation to provide a member public or academic library with an annual grants-in-aid. However, to be eligible for a grants-in-aid service contract, a public or academic library must provide SCKLS with the annually required eligibility form by the March 14, 2026 deadline. Additionally, eligible public and academic member libraries must sign and return the completed grants-in-aid service contract no later than June 30, 2026.

In an instance in which SCKLS determines that a public or academic library is not operating in accordance with (1) Member Library Responsibilities as outlined in the SCKLS Annual Plan and Tentative Budget, (2) any current grants and services policies or procedures of SCKLS or the State Library of Kansas, Topeka, (3) any applicable state or federal laws, or (4) any situation that might expose SCKLS staff to avoidable risk or harm, SCKLS reserves the right to require the library to document its compliance with the issue within a reasonably specified amount of time in order to be eligible for a current or future grant-in-aid.

If you have questions about any of the previous information, please feel free to contact Paul Hawkins, SCKLS Director, 321 North Main Street, South Hutchinson, KS 67505, paul@sckls.info or phone 800-234-0529, Ext. 113.

Frequently Asked Questions About the SCKLS Grant-in-Aid Program

Q: How much money is available in the SCKLS Grant-in-aid Program?

A: The amount of money budgeted to the SCKLS Grant-in-aid Program is \$1,635,259 for 2026.

Q: What can the grant be spent on?

A: No restrictions exist on how SCKLS grants-in-aid may be used by your library other than it must be used for library purposes and expended, encumbered or transferred within one-year of December 31, 2026.

Q: What if I don't return my library's eligibility form on time?

A: If a member library does not return the grant-in-aid form by the annual deadline, the library will not receive a grant-in-aid during the calendar year and the amount of grant the member library would have received will be placed in the supplemental grant fund for distribution to eligible libraries on the basis of interlibrary loans and out-of-district users. Forms must be postmarked or faxed by no later than March 14, 2026.

Q: Can SCKLS withhold grant-in-aid funding for a library?

A: Yes, in an instance in which SCKLS determines that a public or academic library is not operating in accordance (1) Member Library Responsibilities as outlined in the SCKLS Annual Plan and Tentative Budget, (2) any current grants and services policies or procedures of SCKLS or the State Library of Kansas, Topeka, (3) any applicable state or federal laws, or (4) any situation that might expose SCKLS staff to avoidable risk or harm, SCKLS reserves the right to require the library to document its compliance with the issue within a reasonably specified amount of time in order to receive a current or future grant-in-aid.

Q: When will I receive my check?

A: Eligible public and academic libraries that sign and return their grants-in-aid service contract to SCKLS prior to June 30, 2026 may expect a first grants-in-aid check within 14 – 21 business days of SCKLS receiving the grants-in-aid service contract. Your library should receive the second grants-in-aid check by September 30, 2026.

Q: What if I disagree with the official population for my taxing area or other information used to calculate my library's grant?

A: Contact Paul Hawkins, SCKLS, paul@sckls.info or 800-234-0529, Ext. 113. The official source for public library taxing area population is the Kansas Certified Population <https://budget.kansas.gov/population/> used by State Library of Kansas, Topeka.

Q: What if my service population, borrower or interlibrary loan statistics change during the year?

A: Data used to calculate SCKLS grants-in-aid is certified once a year in March. Any changes in data are accounted in the following year.