**Reaching out to Public Affairs Programs and Submitting Public Service Announcements**

**[Created for library use specifically, but libraries may want to enlist support from readers, local leaders, library-users, and library supporters]**

Following are guidelines to craft and submit information to broadcast media, who are always interested in learning about issues that have an immediate impact on their viewers or listeners.  In many states stations are required to offer public affairs programming to satisfy federal regulations. Although not traditionally scheduled to air in prime time, public affairs programs offer a valuable platform for more substantive conversations about community issues

**Guidelines.** Check out your local station guidelines by calling the station or finding info on their website.

* **Create a contact list.** Includenames and contact info of your local radio and/or television media station community affairs and public service directors. These media targets lead efforts to book guests for public affairs programs. In the majority of markets they are also responsible for posting information to broadcast community calendars and airing Public Service Announcements (PSAs).
* **Keep it simple.** Draft a pitch email (see sample letter and PSAs below) requesting an in-studio or phone interview with these public affairs programs. *REMEMBER*: Keep your pitch short and to the point as media contacts receive hundreds of pitches per day and may not take the time to read your entire email.
  + Keep all relevant information (e.g. expert’s name and title, availability and issue summary) toward the top.
  + Provide a short summary of how this issue will impact your community.
  + Include ALA’s *eBooks For All* press release issued when the embargo was first announced.
* Make your **email subject line** Catchy. Draft a subject line that is thought provoking, but not misleading. Samples: eBooks For All Embargo Will Impact your Viewers and the Entire Community.
* **Follow up with your contacts.** Email and phone your contacts a day or two after you send materials.  If you already have a relationship with the contacts then you may be able to anticipate their response and response time. Please note: Some media do not respond well to overly aggressive efforts to secure interviews.  While your goal is to secure placement, we suggest taking a firm “no” as a “maybe next time.”  Encourage your media contacts to provide feedback to keep the lines of communication open and help enhance future pitches.

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**Sample Pitch Letter**

Dear Public Service Director,

In response to recent efforts to limit library access to eBooks, the American Library Association and Public Library Association are running a public campaign to provide readers with the opportunity to voice their concerns.

Millions of people now use digital content as their preferred - or only - access to books, and yet the two month embargo on new titles, to be imposed by Macmillan Publishers beginning November 1, will make it difficult for libraries to fulfill our central mission: *ensuring access to information for all, regardless of the format.*

Under the new model, a library may purchase only one copy upon release of a new title in eBook format, after which the publisher will impose an eight-week embargo on additional copies of that title sold to libraries. In some instances, the embargo will force readers to wait a year or more to borrow an eBook. For more information about the embargo, read the [statement](http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2019/07/ala-denounces-new-macmillan-library-lending-model-urges-library-customers) issued by ALA when the embargo was first announced.

We need more people reading, not barriers that limit access. The number of Americans who read for pleasure dropped by more than 30% between 2004 and 2018, according to the latest American Time Use Survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Embargoing new eBooks is no way to encourage reading.

We hope that you will help raise awareness of this important issue within our community by running one of the following PSAs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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**Sample PSAs**

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Libraries boost knowledge, creativity, literacy, ideas, and imagination. eBook access for libraries should not be denied or delayed.  Visit eBooksForAll.org.

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Eager to read that new release by your favorite author? Need to explore a new book to help with your term paper? Your local library wants to make them available to you but access to new eBooks is in jeopardy. eBook access should not be denied or delayed Visit eBooksForAll.org to learn more and sign a petition. We need more people reading, not barriers that limit access.