MORE Operations Committee Meeting Materials

May 18, 2023

6. Mark Damaged option

The most recent Sierra update included an option to "Mark Items Damaged," a more specific way to note that charges are related to damage to library materials, distinct from "Mark Items Lost." ("Mark Items Lost" would still be available to create a replacement charge due to lack of return outside the normal overdue process.) Marking lost is currently referenced throughout the Damaged Items Procedure.

This feature has been long-awaited by some! We haven't enabled the feature for MORE yet.

Here is the Sierra documentation on this feature:
https://docs.iflsweb.org/more/files/administration/Sierra%20-%20Marking%20Items%20as%20Damaged.pdf

While not specifically mentioned in the document, this feature does not include notice differentiation for patrons compared to Marking Lost. There will still be a single system-wide set of notice text that begins "REPLACEMENT BILL: The library material listed below was lost or damaged..."

Points to ponder:

- Is there likely to be confusion about which of the three action options staff should choose (described in #5 in the Sierra documentation)?
- It looks like items will have a Damaged status in a few distinct situations:
    1. the item's status was previously changed to Damaged by staff (there are just over 400 items with "damaged" status system-wide right now)
    2. the item is damaged but still checked out to a patron,
    3. a partial charge is applied to the patron account, or
    4. the item is damaged but the replacement charges are paid

    Is this a problem for tracking items or following up with collection maintenance?

- The monthly "Lost and Paid" report: https://www.ifls.lib.wi.us/knowledge-base/lost-and-paid/. I intend to include all of those items that are now gone from collections but

also paid for. I currently gather up item records with status "Lost and Paid," but it looks like the Mark Damaged option will switch the status to Damaged once the replacement charge is paid. I can add Damaged status to my report, but will this interfere with local tracking of these situations?

- Overall, do you think having both the new Mark Damaged and the existing Mark Lost options in Sierra will be helpful?

Questions and feedback from library staff:

Question 1: It sounds like a damaged -billed - paid book will go to 'damaged,' but is a 'mark damaged' book that is not paid also 'damaged' as its status? Do both give a 'd' status? If so, that will be difficult to tell what is paid for what isn't paid for.

Answer 1: It sounds like the item status will be "damaged" if you add no charge or a partial charge. If you add a bill, the status is "billed" until it's paid. Once paid, the status becomes "damaged." I did hear from III that there are some system-generated messages added to the item record similar to the "item x lost by patron y," but it sounds like you'd need to dig into the item and/or patron record to figure out what's going on with items with the "damaged" status.

Question 2: What is the point of the first option where we change it to damaged, but it still is checked out to the patron and they are not charged at all? If we are holding the book, why would it be in a damaged status at all rather than noting the damage? Is this for when we call other libraries to tell them we received a book of theirs with damage, and can we still circ it to our patron?

Answer 2: I couldn't think of a use case for that first "mark damaged" option where it stays on the patron account, but maybe it's that "circ with damage" situation you note. When it's returned and if it's checked in, I believe staff would see a message about clearing that status. This seems like an area where it will be tricky to get everyone to use the options in the same way...

Question 3: For option 2, maybe it's because Hudson doesn't charge a partial fee for damage, but why would we add a charge and leave it checked out to the patron if they have just

returned the book? Or is this just the step needed before checking the item in?

Answer 3: Most MORE libraries don't partial fees, so I think that option would (or should!) also be rarely used. It does seem like "damaged" should be a temporary status before staff take a next step, and there should be more follow-up with these "damaged" items than libraries probably do right now.

Question 4: One more question - if we mark it damaged while it is still checked out to a patron, and they return the book, does the damage status clear just like the Lost status clears so it becomes 'available?'

Answer 4: I'd expect so, leading with a message like "Status is damaged. Clear?"

I could take it or leave it. I don't find it useful as designed but I also will not be horribly inconvenienced if we implement it.

If we do add the button EC will have to revamp some procedures as we are one of the libraries regularly using the damaged field for other purposes. So it will cause some confusion on the tracking end. However, this can be done pretty easily so it's a minor opposition.

I definitely think we will be confused by the options of what to do with the status. I see enough manually billed items now to know that we will probably do that penalty fee option frequently but probably type in the full charge. I also don't love the damaged but stays in circulation option. That seems just plain wrong to me and I can see libraries charging and continuing to circulate items because there is a button there encouraging it.

Lastly, because the bill won't be any different this isn't as useful as I would have hoped (which is my slogan when it comes to Sierra). The real downside of not having this option in play now is the customer who gets the bill and then calls and says "it's not lost I returned it" and then we manually explain the damage. So without this distinct billing option, I don't see any advantages of implementing this button for my staff.