

Draft Standards

Montana is fortunate to have many legal ways to establish public libraries. Usually communities establish libraries under the laws contained in Title 22. In cities or counties operating under Title 7, the charter or an interlocal agreement establishes the governance of the library and may define the responsibilities of the library board and city or county governments. In the standards below, please substitute the appropriate body, e.g., city or county commission, for “board” as applicable.

Governance

General

1. *The Library is legally established under Montana’s Laws according to_ Montana Code Annotated, 22-1-301 through 22-1-317, or Title 7.*

2. *The Board conforms to all applicable state, local, and federal laws, rules and regulations.*

3. The Board is knowledgeable about current library issues.
4. Regular library board meetings are preferably held each month but not less than quarterly.
5. Meetings are held in an accessible location, at times and places convenient to the public, and according to state laws on public meetings.
6. The library provides continuing education for its trustees by allocating funds to provide for continuing education costs, including travel expenses.

Policies and bylaws

7. The Board has written bylaws that it reviews and updates as necessary every three years.
8. The Board works with the director to develop, study, evaluate, and adopt library policies, which are available to the public.
9. The Board reviews and updates as necessary all library policies at least once every three years.

Personnel

10. The Board hires the director according to local, state, and federal regulations.
11. The Board delegates the day-to-day management of the library to the director.
12. The Board evaluates the performance of the director annually.
13. The Board adopts a personnel policy.

Planning

14. The Board works with the director to adopt a long range plan that they review and update as necessary each year. They base the plan on an assessment of community needs. The long range plan contains a mission statement, goals and specific measurable objectives, with a timetable for achievement.
15. The Board uses the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to review the library's progress and performance from year-to-year.

Management

Staffing

16. Regardless of size, each public library has a paid director who is responsible for the administration of library services.

17. Libraries that serve more than 25,000 employ a library director with a graduate degree in library or information science or its equivalent.

18. Libraries that serve less than 25,000 employ a library director who is, or will be within three years of hire, certified by the state library.

19. Library staff have salaries, hours, and benefits comparable with other positions in the community which have similar education requirements and job responsibilities.
20. The library provides continuing education for its director and staff by allocating funds to provide for continuing education costs, including travel expense and salary.

1. Paid staff persons are present during 90% of all open hours.

General

22. The Board reviews with the director the use and services of the library at its meetings.

23. The library has procedures for carrying out library policies. Procedures are reviewed and updated as needed once every three years.

24. The library submits the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to the Montana State Library.

Finance

25. The library is primarily supported by local tax revenues. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support.

26. The director works with the Board to develop an annual financial plan or budget based on the library's goals and objectives.

27. The Board and director follow fiscal procedures consistent with state law and local government requirements in preparing, presenting, and administering its budget.

29. The Board and director annually review and update as necessary the adequacy of insurance coverage.

Public Relations

30. The Board and the director communicates a positive image of the library and its services.

31. The library cooperates in state, regional, and national efforts to promote library services.

Facilities

32. The Board and the director evaluate the library building(s) regularly to determine adequate space needs to support staff, collections, services, program needs, and public use.

33. The Board and the director address any identified facility shortcomings in a building plan.

34. The library facility is safe for the public and staff.

35. The library's facilities conform to federal requirements for accessibility.

Services

36. The library provides free access and core services, as defined in local library policies, to its community.

37. Core library services are offered during all hours the library is open.

38. The Board and the director determine the days of the week and the hours during the day to be open to provide maximum service to the public.

39. The library's hours of service and scheduled activities are publicized.

40. The library is open during the week at least the following minimum hours. Many libraries exceed this minimum because the community, board and director recognize that the number of hours of public service leads to great use by the public.

A library with more than one service outlet may use the total non-overlapping hours of all the library's service outlets to meet the minimum weekly hours open requirement.

Population	Minimum	Desirable # of Libraries Not Meeting Standard	(1995-1996 Report)
Less than 3,500	15	25-40	6
More than 3,500	30	40-50	4
More than 10,000	40	50-60	1
More than 25,000	50	60+	1

41. The library provides interior and external signs to help the public with finding library services.

42. Patrons who wish to copy materials available from non-circulating items or from computer files have access to a photocopy machine or printer.

43. The library has a telephone and answers telephone inquiries.

The Collection

Collection Development

44. The board adopts a collection development policy that they review every three years.

45. The Board and the director develop an annual materials budget as part of the library budget.

46. The library cooperates with other local and regional libraries in collection development to provide a wide range of materials in a variety of formats to meet the needs of the community.

47. The library uses at least one professionally recognized review source.

48. The library provides access to federal, state and local government documents that are appropriate to its community.

49. The library cooperates with other community institutions to plan and implement access to electronic resources.

50. Library users can access electronic resources, including the Internet, without a staff intermediate.

51. The board adopts a policy for the use of electronic resources.

Access to the Collection

52. Materials are purchased to ensure a steady flow of materials for the public.

53. The library catalogs and organizes its collection according to standard cataloging and classification systems and procedures. Automated records comply with Machine Readable Catalog (MARC) format.

54. Users may check out all materials except those that are irreplaceable, fragile, or needed in the reference or designated special collections.

55. The library participates in the interlibrary loan system and follows the Montana State interlibrary loan protocols.

Use of the collection

56. The library monitors the use of the collection through analyzing statistical information, including circulation per capita and the collection's turnover rate.

Collection evaluation

57. The library's collection is continually evaluated based on currency, use, physical condition, outmoded or outdated information, and conformance with the library's collection management plan. The entire collection is evaluated within each three-year period.