

PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS

SECTION 1 – GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

GENERAL

Essential Standards

- **The library is legally established under Montana’s Laws according to Montana Code Annotated, 22-1-301 through 22-1-317, 22-1-701 through 22-1-711 or Title 7.**
- **The board conforms to all applicable state, local, and federal laws, rules, and regulations.**
- **Monthly (or at least quarterly) library board meetings are held in an accessible location, at times and a place convenient to the public and according to state laws on public meetings.**
- **The library submits the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to the Montana State Library.**

Enhanced Standards

- **In order for the board to be knowledgeable about current library issues, new board members receive an orientation by the library director and/or others.**
- On an annual basis, board members report on how they have promoted and supported the library, its programs and services
- Library board meetings are held every other month.

Excellent Standards

- **The library provides for continuing education for its trustees by allocating funds to support continuing education costs, including travel expenses.**
- At least two members of the library board attend a regional or statewide library related activity each year.
- Board members discuss library issues with local government officials at least twice a year, and state and/or national government officials at least once a year.
- Every 3 years, the board reviews, evaluates and compares its own governance structure with different governance structures for the library. This includes districting, county library systems, etc.
- At least 3 library board members join a professional library association and dues are paid by the library

POLICIES AND BYLAWS

Essential Standards

- **Every three years, the board reviews and updates as necessary its bylaws.**
- **The board develops, studies, evaluates, reviews updates, and adopts as necessary all library policies at least once every three years. When the board**

reviews library policies, the policies' effect(s) on the library's relations with the public are evaluated.

- **The public has easy access to written policies, procedures, and bylaws.**

PLANNING & EVALUATION

Essential Standards

- **The board uses the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to review the library's year-to-year progress and performance.**
- Library has a written mission statement.
- Library governing authority adopts emergency response plans that ensure the safety of the public and staff as the primary priority.

Enhanced Standards

- The library has a written three to five year long-range plan, and reviews it annually. The long-range plan addresses services, facilities, public relations, technology, etc.
- The board evaluates the library's performance against the stated objectives in the long-range plan.
- Library has a vision statement.

Excellent Standards

- Community representatives, the board and director develop a long-range plan for the library
- At least every 5 years, the library conducts community studies and makes use of other needs assessment techniques to ensure community participation in the design and delivery of library service.

FINANCE

Essential Standards

- **The board and director follow fiscal procedures consistent with state law and local government requirements in preparing, presenting, and administering its budget.**
- **Local tax revenues provide at least 50% of the support for the library's operating budget. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support.**
- **The director works with the board to develop an annual financial plan or budget.**
- **The board and director annually review the adequacy of insurance coverage for the collection and building and update the coverage as necessary.**

Enhanced Standards

- Library sets aside money in a depreciation fund to meet requirements for capital expenditures.

- Local tax revenues provide at least 60% of the support for the library’s operating budget. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support.

Excellent Standards

- The library has established a foundation or endowment.
- The Foundation Board and/or the Library Board develop a plan for planned giving.
- The Foundation Board and/or the Library Board establishes a policy regarding the acceptance of gifts of real and personal property, endowment funds, and planned giving.
- The library has a Friends of the Library organization.
- Local tax revenues provide at least 70% of the support for the library’s operating budget. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support.

SECTION 2 – HUMAN RESOURCES

THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Essential Standards

- **The board hires the director according to local, state, and federal regulations and delegates the day-to-day management of the library to the director.**
- **The board evaluates the performance of the director annually.**
- **Each public library has a paid director who is responsible for the administration of library services.**
- **Libraries that serve more than 25,000 employ a library director with a graduate degree in library or information science or its equivalent.**
- **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.**

Enhanced Standards

- Director conducts a formal performance appraisal of each staff member at least annually.
- The library director informs the board of pending legislation that affects libraries on the local, state, and national levels.
- **Library director reviews and updates procedures every 3 years.**
- Library director joins the state library association.

Excellent Standards

- Library director provides a climate that encourages development of innovative programs and projects by providing at least 3 informal staff discussions about innovative programs or opportunities.
- Director keeps the community and funding officials aware of the library's purpose, planning, and services through the use of newspaper articles, websites, radio programs, attending meetings, etc.
- Director forms collaborative partnerships with other agencies and organizations in the library's service area.
- Libraries that serve less than 25,000 employ a library director who has an AA/AS or higher degree
- In addition to the library director's annual evaluation, library director is evaluated every three years by the board with the input of staff, library users and/or library non-users.

GENERAL

Essential Standards

- **The library board provides continuing education for the director and staff members by allocating funds to support continuing education costs, including travel expense and salary. At least 50% of staff makes use of this money each year.**

- **Paid staff persons are present during 90% of all open hours.**
- **The board adopts and reviews a personnel policy every three years.**
- Library maintains written, up-to-date job descriptions.
- All libraries have Internet access for staff.

Enhanced Standards

- Volunteer programs have written policies, procedures, and job descriptions.
- Every staff member attends at least one CE eligible training program per year.
- Appropriate library staff have e-mail accounts available for communication and professional development.
- There is at least one PC for staff use only.

Excellent Standards

- Regardless of population, total library staff is not less than 1 FTE.
- Library board encourages and supports staff involvement in community organizations and activities.
- Employees have access to health insurance and retirement through the public library.

SECTION 3 – ACCESS

Essential Standards

- **The board and the director determine the days of the week and the hours during the day to be open to provide maximum service.**
- **The library is open during the week at least the following minimum hours. Many libraries exceed this minimum because the community, the board and director recognize that the number of hours of public service leads to greater use by the public. A library with more than one service outlet may use the total non-overlapping hours of all outlets to meet the minimum requirement.**

Population	Minimum	Desirable
Less than 3,500	15	25-40
More than 3,500	30	40-50
More than 10,000	40	50-60
More than 25,000	50	60+

- **Library users who wish to copy materials available from non-circulating items or from computer files have access to a photocopy machine or printer.**
- **The library has a telephone and answers telephone inquiries.**
- The library provides access to resources and services for patrons with disabilities.

Enhanced Standards

- Library customers are able to access library information from remote locations.
- When necessary, the library refers customers to other places to fulfill the customer's information needs.

Excellent Standards

- The library provides appropriate access to library services for specialized populations, including, but not limited to the homebound, the institutionalized, and non-English speaking populations.

SECTION 4 – MATERIALS AND COLLECTIONS

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Essential Standards

- **The board adopts a collection management policy that it reviews every three years. The policy addresses the use of electronic resources. The library submits its collection development policy to the Montana State Library.**
- **The board and the director develop an annual materials budget as part of the library budget.**
- **The library uses at least one professionally recognized review source.**
- **The library provides access to federal, state, and local government documents that are appropriate to its community.**

Enhanced Standards

- **The library cooperates with other community institutions to plan and implement access to electronic resources.**
- The library provides access to materials for those with disabilities and others who may have special needs.
- Library is on the Collection Management Honor Roll.

Excellent Standards

- 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.

ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

Essential Standards

- **Materials are purchased to ensure a steady flow of materials for the public.**
- **The library catalogs and organizes its collection according to standard cataloging and classification systems and procedures. Automated records comply with the machine-readable catalog (MARC) format.**
- **The library offers interlibrary loan and follows the Montana State Interlibrary Sharing Protocols.**

Enhanced Standards

- Library uses an online ILL system.
- Library has an automated system for circulation, cataloging, and public access catalog that has reporting features and supports MARC records.

Excellent Standards

- Library collection is available online.
- Library, if appropriate, has joined a shared integrated library system, also known as a shared catalog.

COLLECTION EVALUATION

Essential Standards

- **The library's collection is continually evaluated based on the library's collection management policy. The entire collection is evaluated within each three-year period.**

Enhanced Standards

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

SECTION 5 – FACILITIES, PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND SERVICES

FACILITIES

Essential Standards

- **The board and the director evaluate the library building(s) every three years to determine adequate space needs.**
- **The board and the director address any identified facility shortcomings in a building plan.**
- **The library facility is safe for the public and staff.**
- The library's facilities conform to local requirements for accessibility.

Enhanced Standards

- Library has an exterior sign visible from the nearest roadway that identifies it as the library.
- Library has public meeting area available.
- Library facility is evaluated for accessibility.

Excellent Standards

- Library has adequate, well-lit parking.
- **The library's facilities conform to federal requirements for accessibility.**

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Essential Standards

- **The library cooperates in state, regional, and national efforts to promote library services.**
- The library uses basic PR/marketing tools such as brochures, flyers, bookmarks, newspaper, radio, TV, public service outlets, websites, story times, displays, and programs in the library.

Enhanced Standards

- Library targets special groups within the community for programs or services (seniors, ethnic populations, etc.)
- Funds are budgeted for publicity either by the library and/or the Friends of the Library.
- Staff and board are encouraged to bring the library's message to the community at appropriate venues.

Excellent Standards

- Library allocates funds for public relations, has a community awareness program, and actively promotes its mission.
- The library conducts a community assessment to evaluate the library's marketing efforts.

- Library establishes or works with existing community advisory groups to encourage community involvement and improve service. Examples of such groups include youth, seniors, genealogy, local history, and other identified segments of the population.
- The library has a Friends of the Library organization.
- Library maintains an up-to-date webpage.

SERVICES

Essential Standards

- On an annual survey, library customers indicate that they have received courteous and helpful service from all library staff.
- The library uses comparative statistics, annual surveys or other methods to evaluate the services offered.
- Library offers programming for children and adults.
- Library has policies and/or procedures for services provided.
- Library programming is free and open to all.
- Library must make every effort to maintain confidentiality of library records as addressed in Montana Code Annotated (MCA 22-1-1103.)
- **Core library services as defined by the local community and library are provided all hours the library is open. Examples include lending circulating materials, reference, and interlibrary loan.**

Enhanced Standards

- Library provides information about the community to customers.
- Library offers programming for children, adults, and young adults.
- Library offers or makes patrons aware of virtual reference services.

Excellent Standards

- Library collaborates with other community organizations and educational institutions to promote library services.
- Library provides library outreach services.
- The library has a Friends of the Library organization.
- Library has wireless access for patrons.