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Basic Summary  
Of  
Montana State Library  
Public Library Standards  
2007 – 2020  
(inclusive)

By:

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Tracy,

Here is a brief summary of the Public Library standards that you requested. If you need additional output to assist with the PLS evaluation please feel free to ask for more.

## Data

The data source was found in three (3) databases on the SQL Server. These three (3) databases were MSL2008, ASPeN, MSLForms1. As there is no documentation about those databases and tables lets define a few things which will help explain the limitations of the results.

### MSL2008:

MSL2008 contains most of the historic data at MSL. After having to review all of the Public Library Standards (PLS) tables and then all of the Public Library Statistics (PLS) tables it was determined that the results were found in:

- PLStandardsDeferrals
  - Data ranges from 2007 – 2018
  - Only deferral responses from The State Librarian
- PLStateAid\_DeferralDefinitions
  - Assumed to be for all years except 2010, 2011, 2019, 2020
  - Defines categories, question id, and text of standard
- PLStateAid\_DeferralDefinitions\_2010
  - Assumed to be for ONLY 2010
  - Defines categories, question id, and text of standard
- PLStateAid\_DeferralDefinitions\_2011
  - Assumed to be for ONLY 2010
  - Defines categories, question id, and text of standard
- PLStateAid\_StandardsStatus
  - Data ranges from 2009 – 2018. This limits the respondent summary.
  - Public library responses to the Library Standards

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## ASPeN:

ASPeN is the current (2020) MSL System used as the library directory. While ASPeN was designed as a system to track and issue continuing education certification there are several parts to aspen that exist in support of that goal. Data collection for services is one of those features. In an effort to collect this data a service with a registration form was created for both 2019 and 2020. This data was then processed through a python script to evaluate pass or fail based on the questions. Limited table description will be listed as the database is somewhat self-documenting based on naming techniques. The tables used were:

- ServiceParticipation
- Forms
- FormFields
- FormFieldOptions

## MSLForms1:

MSLForms1 is part of the ASPeN framework and is where form responses are stored. The tables used were:

- Form\_185
- Form\_201

## Data Normalization

The key to this comparison was assuring that the same questions were represented through time. With four (4) data sources there was no assumption of this normality existing so the original four (4) character codes were not assumed to be constant. In addition to the different question order ASPeN stores field identifiers as a numeric value. As such a spreadsheet was used to align questions and a unique UID was assigned to each question. Those questions can be found in the Appendix.

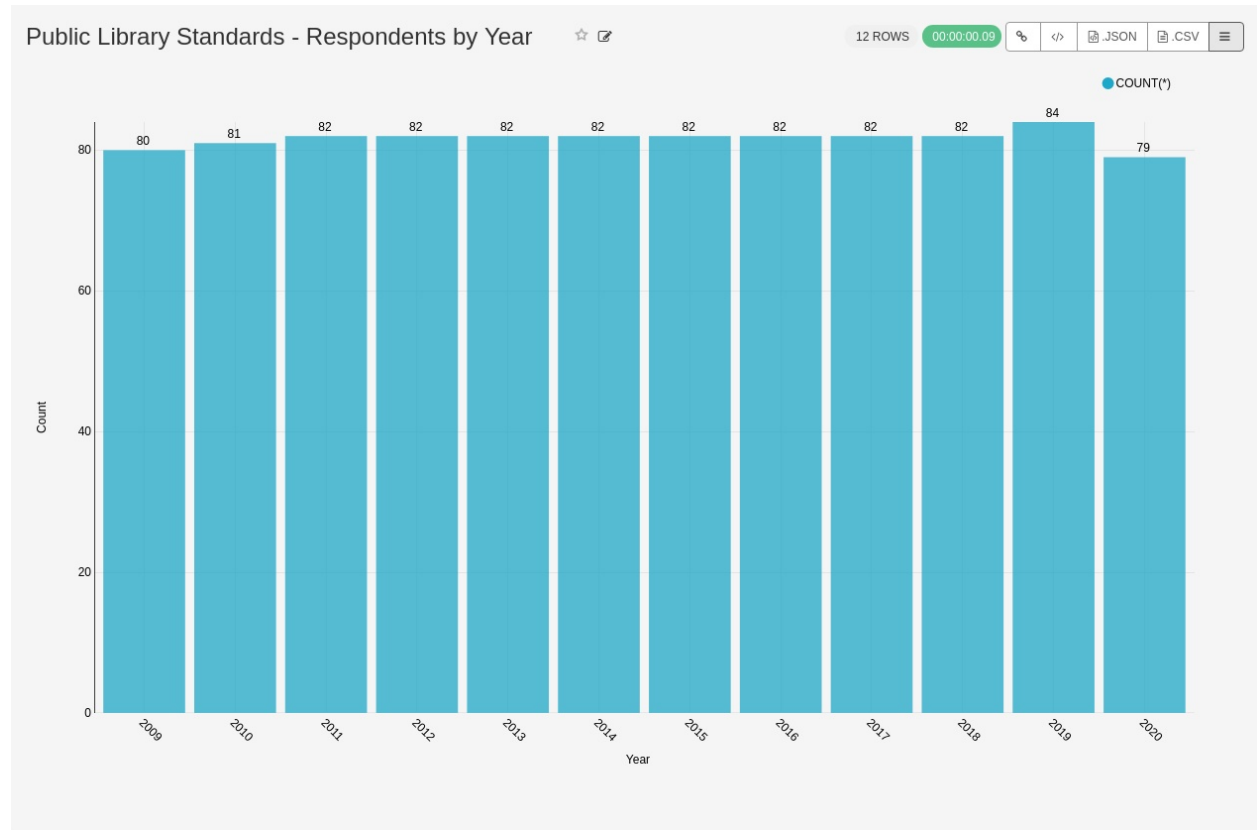
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## Results

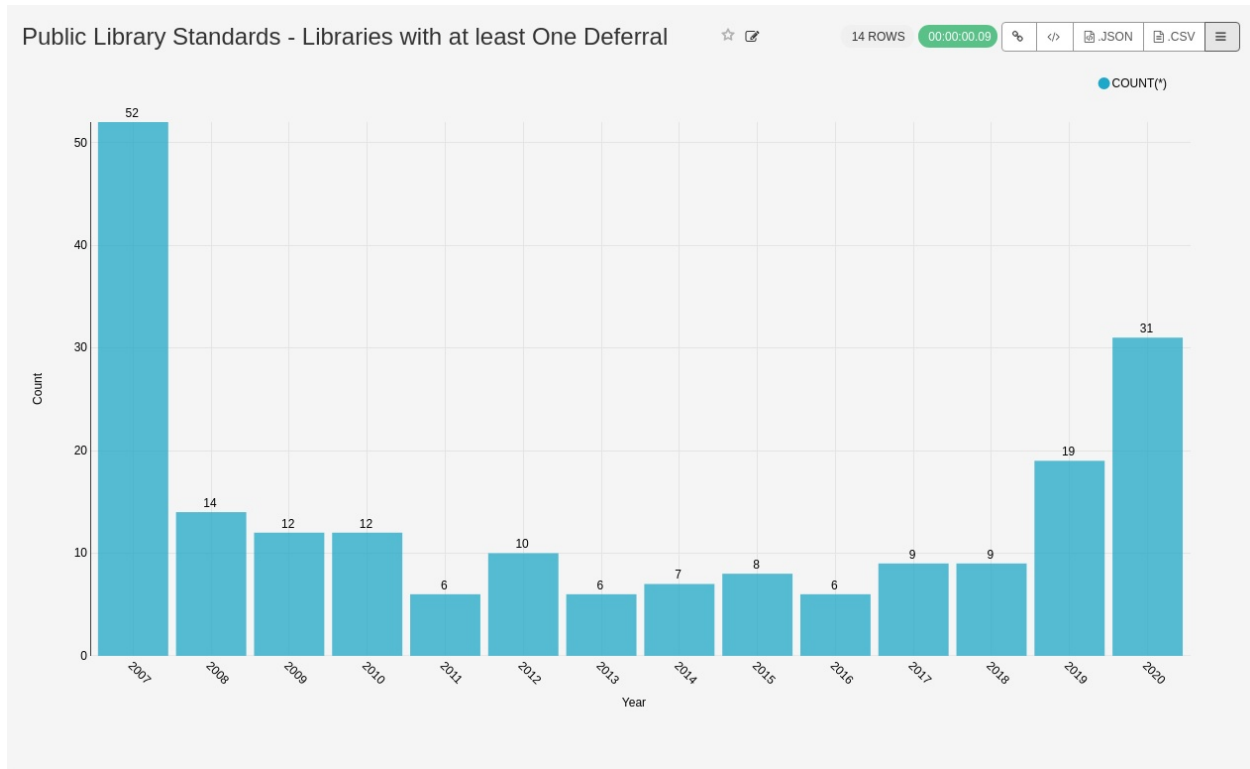
The data set contained 14 separate categories that were applied across all time periods. These categories were:

<b>CATEGORY ID</b>	<b>CATEGORY TITLE</b>
<b>AC</b>	Access to the Collection
<b>AS</b>	Access
<b>CD</b>	Collection Development
<b>CE</b>	Collection Evaluation
<b>CS</b>	Certification Statement
<b>FC</b>	Facilities
<b>FN</b>	Finance
<b>GN</b>	General
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources: General
<b>LD</b>	Library Director
<b>PB</b>	Policies and Bylaws
<b>PE</b>	Planning and Evaluation
<b>PR</b>	Public Relations
<b>SV</b>	Services

Responses through time remained steady ranging from 79 – 84 libraries. This was one of the initial data limitations. No data was available for the 2007, 2008 samples. At the time of this evaluation there was one missing library in 2020.



Of the total responses it is now possible to see the count of libraries with at least one deferral response in the following graphic.

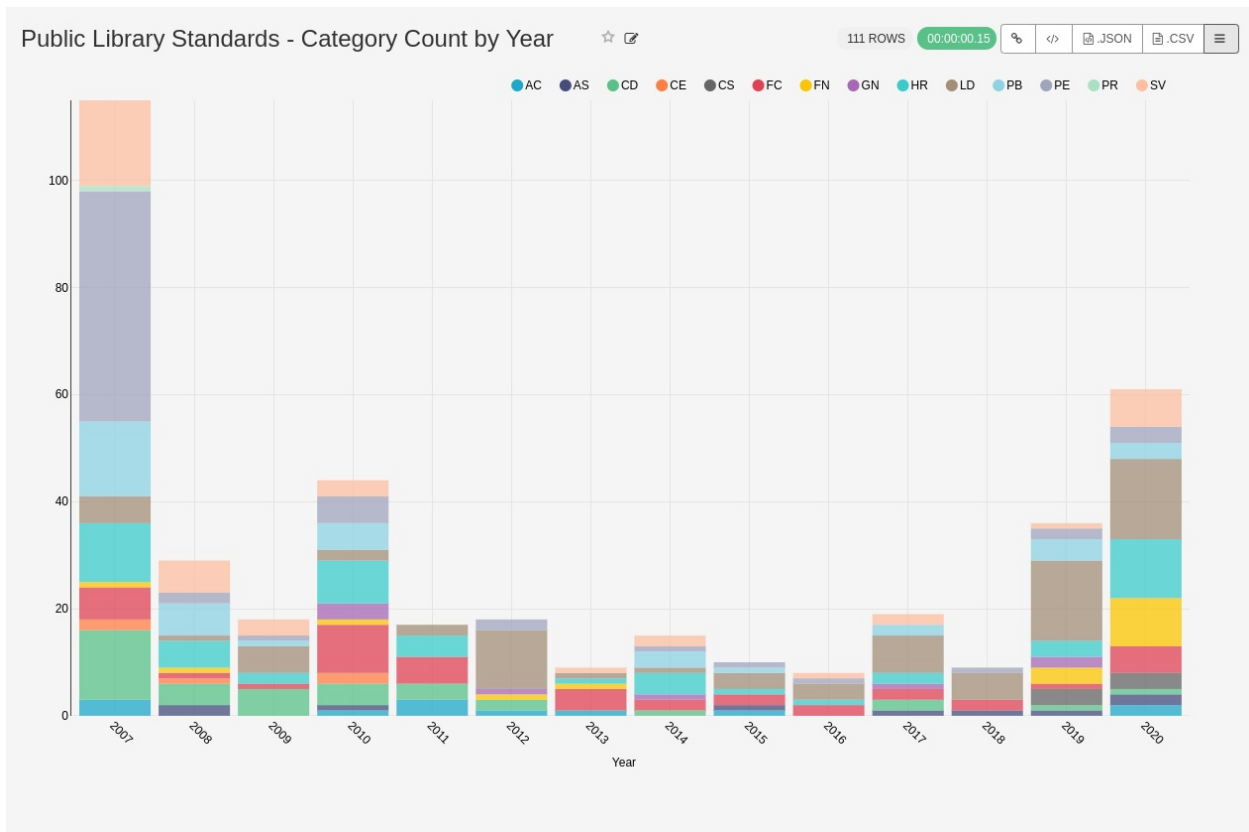


NOTE: After speaking with the Lead Consultant Tracy Cook some significant information was gleaned to help interpret these results.

- In 2007 the original system and online reporting was new. It was suggested that there were many technical problems that could contribute to the high number of deferrals.
- In 2019 the Library Commission granted automatic deferrals for the inability to access the Public Library Statistics reports due to the migration process to a new statistics system.
- In 2020 the global pandemic of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) caused widespread closures of libraries and thus disrupted services causing the Library Commission to grant deferrals for both the requirements of regular in person public board meetings as well as the requirement for hours that the library must be open as the Governor of Montana mandated closures.

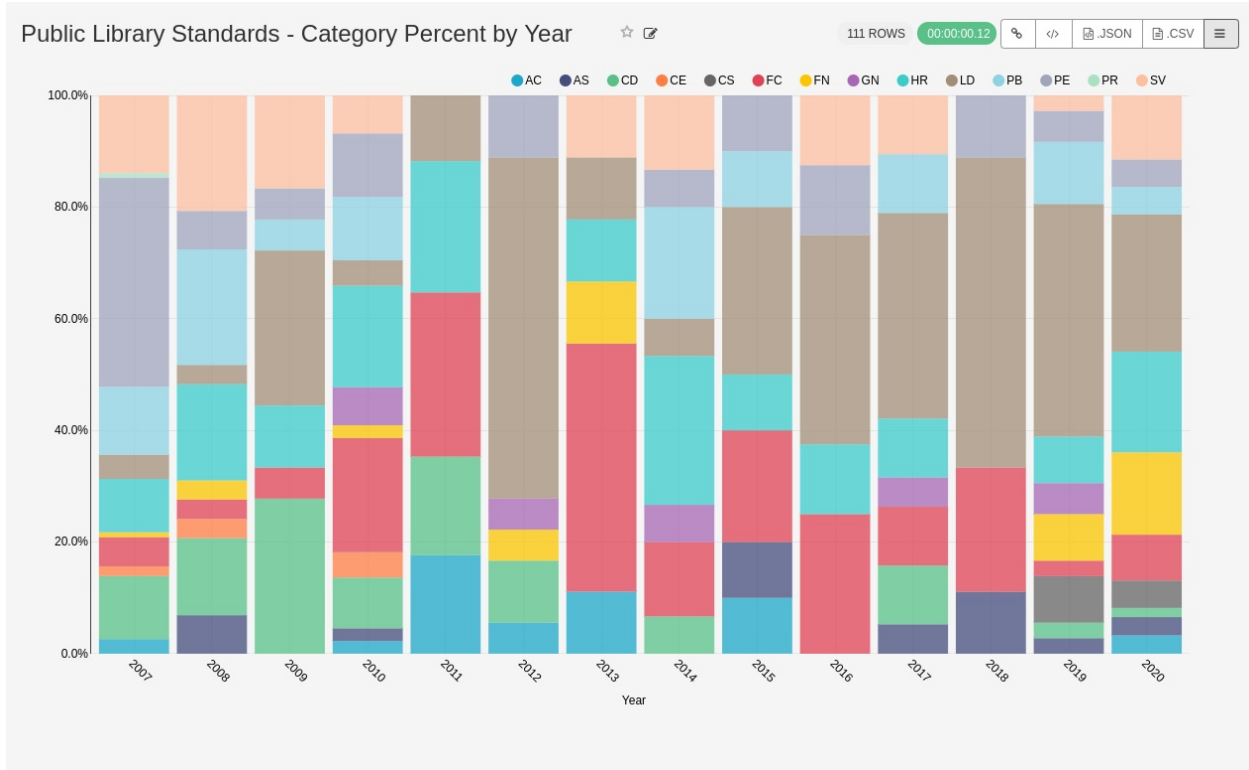
The “automatic” deferrals were not factored into those results and were still counted as deferrals. It will be possible to eliminate those in the following summaries.

Of the total responses the results can be broken down to categories as seen below.



In 2007 you can clearly see that many of the categories were areas with deferrals and Planning and Evaluation being ranking the highest. If we focus on later years the largest absolute numbers are seen in the Library Director category and every period shows Facilities category deferrals while not large is consistent.

In an attempt to make the trends clear it was useful to place the values on a relative scale as seen below.



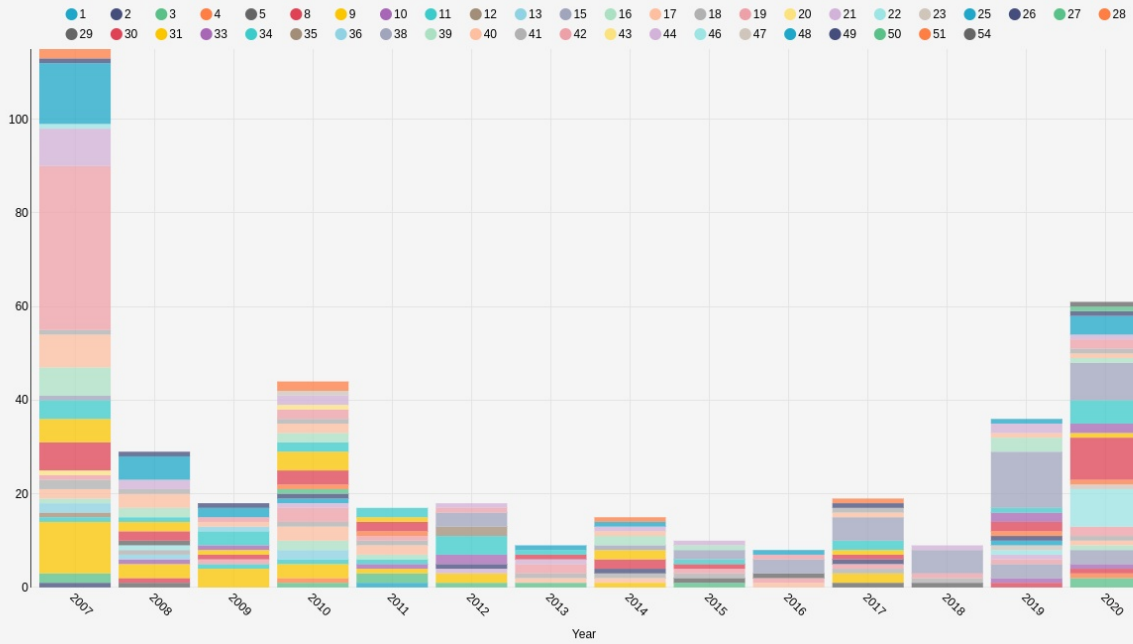
This is where trends again start to stick out visually again it can be seen that the Library Director, Facilities and Human Resources categories tend to be the biggest contributors.

Moving from the general to the specific it is possible to see the specific normalized questions that libraries requested deferrals for. Those results can be seen below.



Public Library Standards - Normalized Question Number Count by Year

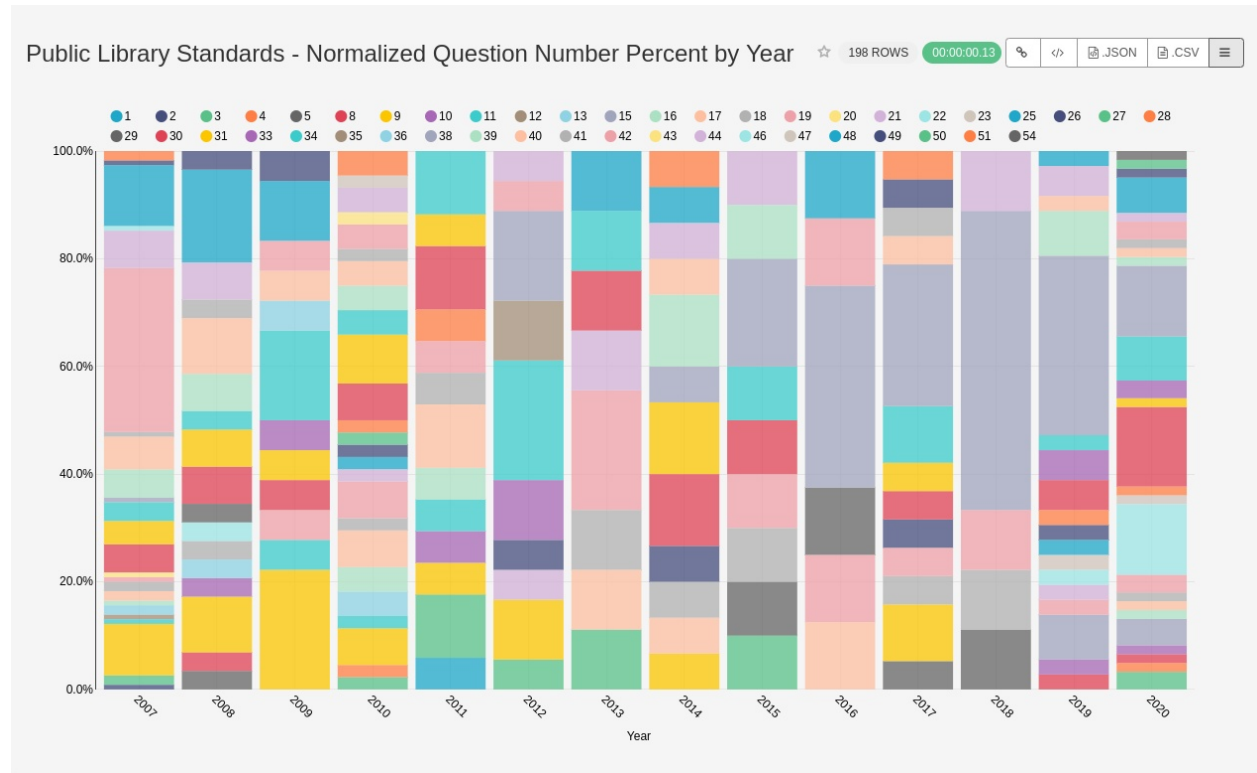
☆ 198 ROWS 00:00:00.13



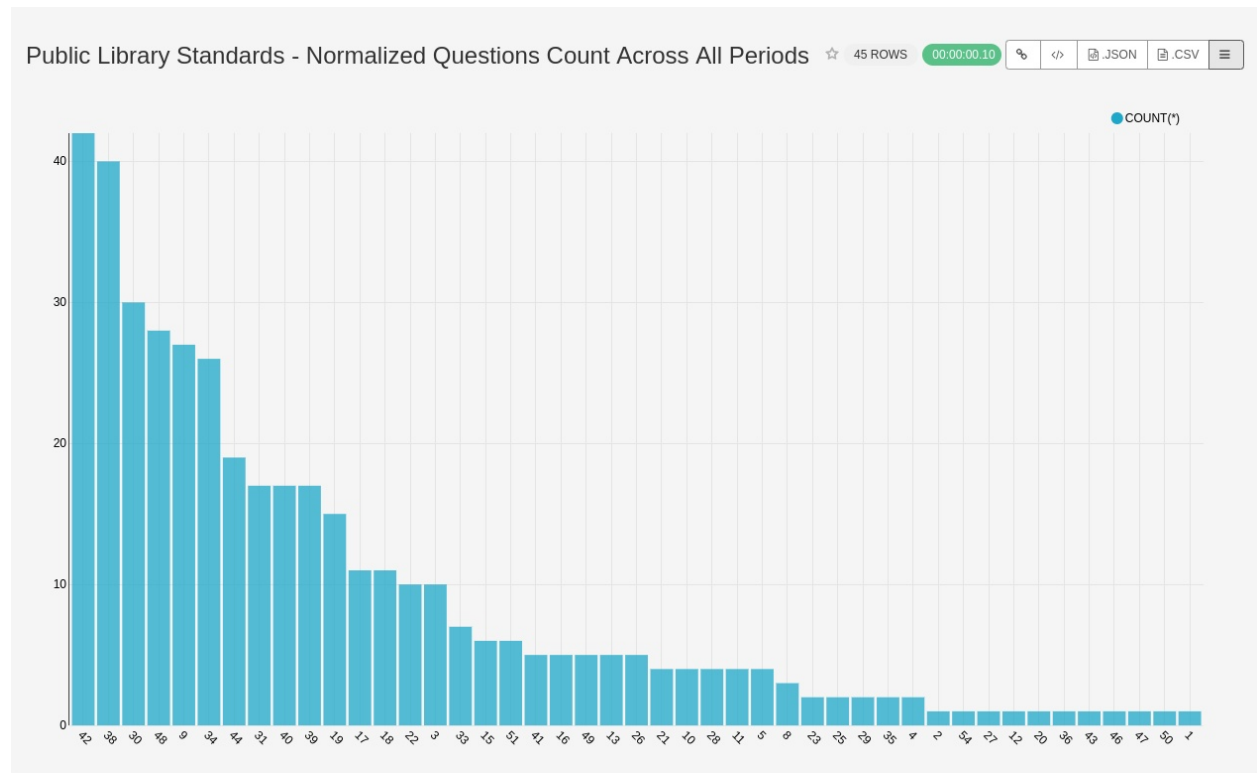
On an absolute scale the largest contributor in the last 5 years is question 38.

*Question 38: All public library directors will be certified by the state library.*

Using a relative scale to help show trends this becomes more clear over the last five (5) years.



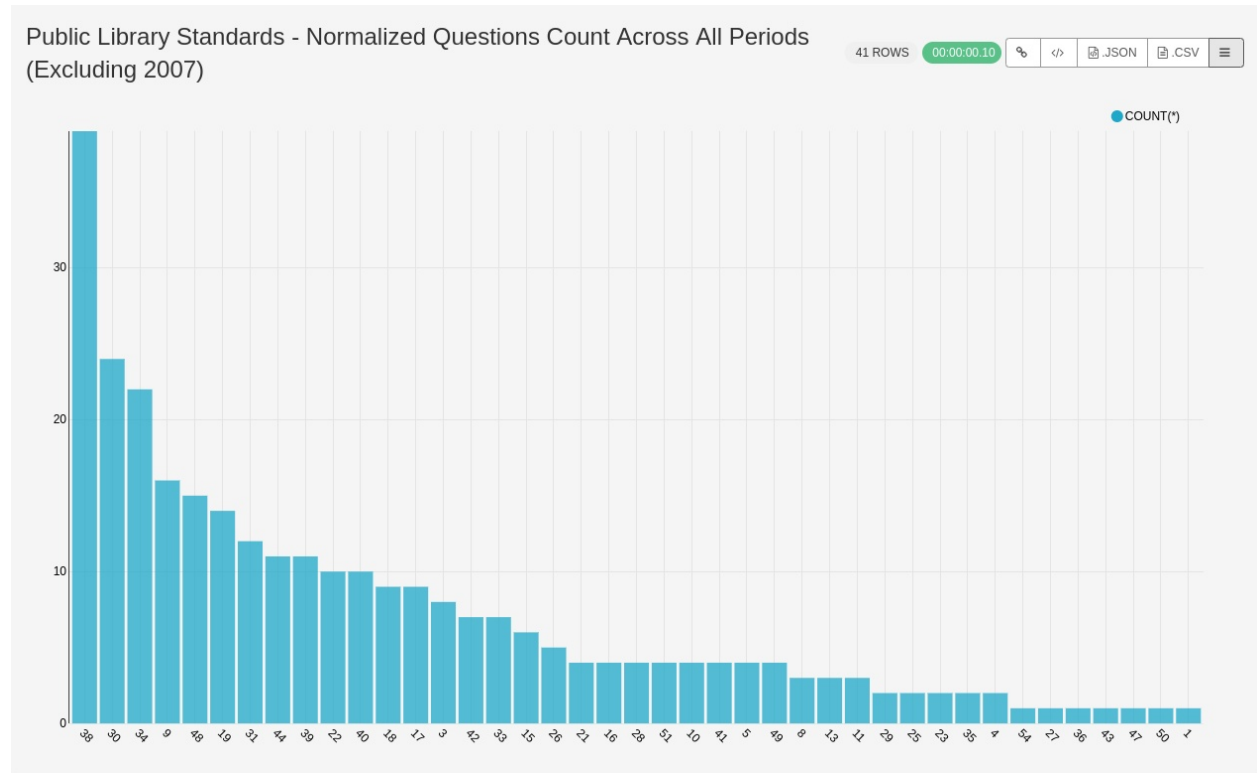
In the final summary series looking at a count of deferrals by question across all the years 2007 – 2020 the top two questions that deferrals were requested for are Question 42 and 38.



*Question 42: The board uses the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to review the library's year-to-year progress and performance.*

*Question 38: All public library directors will be certified by the state library.*

If we eliminate the 2007 values from the totals the top three (3) questions that triggered deferrals are 38, 30 and 34 as seen below.



*Question 38: All public library directors will be certified by the state library.*

*Question 30: The board must adopt and review a personnel policy every three years.*

*Question 34: The board evaluates the performance of the director annually.*

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## Appendix

### Normalized Question ID's

<b>NORM ID</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>1</b>	Materials are purchased to ensure a steady flow of materials for the public.
<b>2</b>	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.
<b>3</b>	The library offers interlibrary loan and follows Montana state interlibrary loan protocols.
<b>4</b>	The board and the director determine the days of the week and the hours during the day to be open to provide maximum service.
<b>5</b>	The library is open during the week at least the following minimum hours. Many libraries exceed this minimum because the community, the board, and the director recognize that the number of hours of public service leads to greater use by the public. A li
<b>6</b>	Library users who wish to copy materials available from non-circulating items or from computer files have access to a photocopy machine or printer.
<b>7</b>	The library has a telephone and answers telephone inquiries.
<b>8</b>	The library provides access to resources and services to patrons with disabilities.
<b>9</b>	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.
<b>10</b>	The board and the director develop an annual materials budget as part of the library budget.
<b>11</b>	The library uses at least one professionally recognized review source.
<b>12</b>	The library provides access to federal, state and local government documents that are appropriate to its community.
<b>13</b>	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.
<b>14</b>	This statement will provide for a status report regarding each essential standard and will require the signature of the library director and library board chair.
<b>15</b>	The signed and dated certification statement will be returned to the state library by July 25th of each year.
<b>16</b>	The board and the director evaluate the library building every three years to determine adequate space needs.
<b>17</b>	The board and the director address any identified facility shortcomings in a building plan.
<b>18</b>	The library facility is safe for the public and staff.
<b>19</b>	The library's facilities conform to local requirements for accessibility.

NORM ID	DESCRIPTION
20	The board and the director follow fiscal procedures consistent with state law and local government requirements in preparing, presenting, and administering its budget.
21	Local tax revenues provide at least 50% of the support for the library. Grants, donations and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support.
22	Every three years the board and the director review the adequacy of insurance coverage for the collection and building, and update the coverage as necessary.
23	The director works with the board to develop an annual financial plan or budget.
24	The library is established under Montana's laws according to 22-1-301 through 22-1-317, 22-1-701 through 22-1-1711, or Title 7 MCA.
25	The board conforms to all applicable state, local and federal laws, rules and regulations.
26	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.
27	The library submits the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to the Montana state library.
28	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.
29	Paid staff persons are present during 90% of all open hours.
30	The board has adopted and reviewed a personnel policy within the past three years.
31	The library maintains written, up-to-date job descriptions.
32	The library has internet access for staff.
33	Board hires the director according to local, state and federal Regulations and delegates the day-to-day management of the library to the director.
34	The board evaluates the performance of the director annually.
35	Each public library has a paid director who is responsible for the administration of library services.
36	Libraries that serve more than 25,000 people employ a library director with a graduate degree in library or information science or its equivalent.
37	Libraries that serve less than 25,000 people employ a library director who is or will be within three years of hire certified by the state library.
38	All public library directors will be certified by the state library.
39	Every three years, the board reviews and updates its bylaws as necessary.
40	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 on the library's relations with the public are evaluated.
41	The public has easy access to written policies, procedures, and bylaws.
42	The board uses the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to review the library's year-to-year progress and performance.

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<b>NORM ID</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
43	The library has a written mission statement.
44	The library governing authority adopts emergency response plans that ensure the safety of the public and staff as the primary priority.
45	The library cooperates in state, regional and national efforts to promote library services.
46	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.
47	On an annual survey, library customers indicate that they have received courteous and helpful service from all library staff.
48	Every two years the library gathers feedback on library services from library users and nonusers. The library can use a variety of methods, including but not limited to, surveys, focus groups, and community meetings.
49	The library uses comparative statistics, annual surveys or other methods to evaluate the services offered.
50	The library offers programming for children and adults.
51	The library has policies and/or procedures for services provided.
52	The library programming is free and open to all.
53	The library makes every effort to maintain confidentiality of library records as addressed in 22-1-1103 MCA.
54	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.