

Montana State Library Certification Course of Study - DRAFT

Contents

Feedback Form	1
Administrative Rules of Montana	2
FY2027 Course of Study	3
Initial Certification	3
Basic Laws Competency: Understand state and federal laws that apply to libraries	3
Financial Management Competency: Understand the budget, library finances, and financial reports	3
Board, government, and community relations Competency: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library	3
Policy Competency: Assist the board with policy development and adoption	3
Planning Competency: Work with the board to create a plan for the library	3
Facility Management Competency: Manage the library facility and ensure community members can safely access and use the building	4
Library Services Competency: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology.	4
Personnel Management Competency: Supervise library staff and volunteers	4
Data and Reporting Competency: Data management and reporting	4
Renewal Certificate	4

Feedback Form

Review the contents of this draft course of study and then [submit comments](#).

Montana State Library Certification Course of Study - DRAFT

Administrative Rules of Montana

10.102.1160 Personnel

(6) The director is or will be certified by the Montana State Library within the required timeframe mandated by the certification program adopted by the Montana State Library Commission.

(a) The purpose of the certification program is to ensure library directors have the foundational skills necessary to manage a public library that meets standards set forth in ARM Subchapter 10.102.11 Public Library Development.

(b) A course of study will be reviewed by the Commission annually for approval at its final meeting of the state fiscal year.

(c) Continuing education credits issued through the State Library certification program are the only eligible credits that can be applied to certification.

(d) The certification program will be reviewed on a regular schedule with no more than 10 years between reviews.

Adopted December 10, 2025; Effective July 1, 2026.

Montana State Library Certification Course of Study - DRAFT

FY2027 Course of Study

The Course of Study is a pathway of learning that outlines competencies librarians need to provide basic library services. It identifies which courses align with specific competencies. It is a required part of the certification process of the State Library.

Trustees and staff may voluntarily certify following the Certification Program Requirements.

Initial Certification

Applicants complete 20 credits within two years of employment from a course of study and catalog pre-approved by the State Library Commission.

The following foundational courses are required to earn initial certification.

Basic Laws Competency: Understand state and federal laws that apply to libraries

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Montana Library Law (1 credit)
 - Next Level Montana Library Law (1 credit)
 - Public Library Standards (1 credit)
 - Legal and Operational Issues Facing Montana's Libraries (1 credit)

Financial Management Competency: Understand the budget, library finances, and financial reports

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Trustee Essentials: Understanding Local Government Budgeting and Finance (1 credit)

Board, government, and community relations Competency: Work with boards, local government officials, community members, and the Montana State Library

- MSL Learn Courses
 - MSL: A Greater State of Knowledge (2025) (1 credit)
 - Connecting with Local Government Officials (1 credit)
 - Board Member Basics (2 credits)
 - Trustee Essentials: Responsibilities (1 credit)

Policy Competency: Assist the board with policy development and adoption

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Lawful and Fair: Policy Development for Public Libraries (2 credits)

Planning Competency: Work with the board to create a plan for the library

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Written Plans (1 credit)

Montana State Library Certification Course of Study - DRAFT

Facility Management Competency: Manage the library facility and ensure community members can safely access and use the building

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Safety Inspections: What to Know and What to Do (.5 credit)
 - Facilities Management for Libraries (.5 credit)

Library Services Competency: Understand the basics of library services and oversee collection management, programming, outreach, information services, and technology.

- WebJunction Courses
 - LiFT
 - LiFT: Public Library Fundamentals (1 credit)
 - LiFT: Introduction to Library Collections (1 credit)
 - LiFT: Organizing and Maintaining a Collection (1 credit)
 - LiFT: Introduction to the Library Catalog (1 credit)

Personnel Management Competency: Supervise library staff and volunteers

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Legal Topics: Personnel Questions and Laws (1 credit)

Data and Reporting Competency: Data management and reporting

- MSL Learn Courses
 - Patron Privacy and Practical Steps for Data Management in Montana Public Libraries (1 credit)

Renewal Certificate

Applicants complete 60 credits within 5 years from a course of study and catalog pre-approved by the State Library Commission.

Applicants may select a combination of courses across different competencies that best fit individual interests as well as knowledge and skill gaps specific to their position.

To create a personalized continuing education plan, refer to the most current catalog approved by the Montana State Library Commission.