

Chapter 6

Access

Access refers to the ease with which all residents can use the library. Some of the factors that affect access are hours of service; quality of cataloging; the physical facility and distance to the physical facility; the quantity, quality, relevance, formats, and arrangement of the collections; quality and quantity of staff; public relations; policies on use of collection and services; and availability of collections and services outside the library. The extent to which the library uses existing and emerging technology to provide in-house as well as remote access is an additional factor. While existing budget limitations may prevent immediate use of some technology, it is important that those responsible for long-range planning keep current on products and services so that informed decisions can be made if funding becomes available. Standards that relate directly to the building or “fixed assets” such as lighting and furniture are included in Facilities chapter.

Applicable Core Standards—Please see Core Standards 1, 2, 5, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 22 in Chapter 1.

Access Standards

1. Hours of service are posted on a sign visible to the public from outside the library building.
2. Hours of operation are established for the convenience of the community. To accommodate school children and working adults, the library is open as many evening and weekend hours as possible. (See appendix N for recommended hours of service by population.) Some information is available electronically twenty-four hours per day (minimally the library Web site and online catalog). (See Appendix N)
3. The library has a Web site with current information and content updated at least monthly. The Web site allows for patron inquiry or comment and feedback. The Web site may also provide the opportunity for remote 24/7 access to online databases, virtual reference, registration, access by users to their own accounts, and other library services. Staff responds to online requests for information.
4. All basic services are available when the library is open. For the purpose of this document, basic services are circulation, reference, reader’s advisory, and computer/Internet access. If reference and reader’s advisory are provided to children and adults from two separate points, then the library provides adequate staffing at both locations at all hours the library is open. Internet access is available to adults and children with a sufficient quantity of computers and bandwidth to meet most needs. Some access may be provided through wireless installations that enable people to use their own laptops for Internet searching.
5. The collections are arranged and housed in a way that provides the greatest accessibility for all users.
6. Materials and guides for library use are made available in languages and formats appropriate to the community.
7. Materials are not sequestered from any user except for the purpose of protection from theft and damage.
8. All circulating materials may be borrowed by all persons with a valid library card who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the library regardless of the age, sex, or social or economic status of the patron.
9. All materials, except those judged by the library administrator to be irreplaceable or needed in the collection for reference service, are available for use within the library by all persons regardless of the age, sex, or social or economic status of the patron.
10. Lending regulations facilitate maximum use of library materials.

11. The library publicizes and promotes interlibrary loan to its patrons. Library staff develops procedures that ensure that interlibrary loan is a simple and effective way for patrons to receive materials and information.
12. The library's bibliographic and holdings information are in machine-readable form using the MARC format. Accurate and easily understood bibliographic access is provided through a computerized catalog that is accessible remotely as well as in the library. This access may be provided through the library's catalog or the catalog of a Local Library System Automation Project (LLSAP) to which the library contributes records. Either through a local consortial Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) or through WorldCat from OCLC, a current record of the library's holdings is available in the Statewide Illinois Library Catalog (SILC).
13. Through clear signage or logical placement, the services, collections, and amenities of the library are easily located.
14. The library ensures access to its collections and services for patrons with disabilities through the provision of auxiliary aids and alternate formats.
15. The library provides access to its collections and services for patrons unable to travel to the library. (Some of the ways to provide this kind of service are deposit collections, programs held in sites outside the library, and home delivery.)
16. Telephone, text telephone, and telefax numbers are listed in both white and yellow pages. The library has sufficient incoming telephone lines for voice and data transmission to accommodate staff and user needs.
17. If a meeting room is available for the public, its use is limited by time, place, and manner only and not by the subject or content of the program.
18. The library has policies for Internet use, retention of patron-associated records, and for responding to search warrants and subpoenas.

Access Checklist

- _____ Library has a publicized, fixed schedule of open hours.
- _____ Library has a Web site and online catalog for 24/7 access.
- _____ All basic services are available when the library is open.
- _____ All materials are available for use in the building or for checkout by persons regardless of age, sex, or social standing.
- _____ Library participates in and promotes interlibrary loan.
- _____ Library's holdings information is in machine-readable form and part of a remotely accessible electronic database.
- _____ Library provides auxiliary aids and alternate formats to enable persons with disabilities to use collections and services.
- _____ Library has a sufficient quantity of computers and bandwidth to meet most needs.
- _____ Library publishes and promotes the telephone and Fax numbers and also the Web site address for the library.
- _____ Library has policies for Internet use, retention of patron-associated records, and for a meeting room, if one is available.

Appendix N
Hours of Service by Population

	Minimum		Growing		Established		Advanced	
Less than 1,000	25		28		32		36	
1,000-2,499	28		36		40		48	
2,500-4,999	36		40		56		64	Sunday Sept.- May
5,000-9,999	48		56		64	Sunday Sept.- May	72	Sunday Sept.- May
10,000-24,999	56		64	Sunday Sept.- May	68	Sunday Sept.- May	72	Sunday All Year
25,000-49,999	64	Sunday Sept.- May	68	Sunday Sept.- May	72	Sunday All Year	72	Sunday All Year
50,000-74,999	72	Sunday Sept.- May	72	Sunday All Year	72	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year
75,000-99,999	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year
Over 100,000	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year	75	Sunday All Year

Note: Consideration should be given to the convenience of users in establishing hours of operation. Every library should have some evening hours past 5:00 P.M. and some weekend hours including a minimum of four hours on Saturday.

This table was reviewed by the *Serving Our Public 2.0* Task Force. The statistics were compared to other state compilations as well as the last two years of *Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR)* and found to be appropriate.

Bibliography

- Adams, Helen R., Robert F. Bocher, Carol A. Gordon, and Elizabeth Barry-Kessler. *Privacy in the 21st Century: Issues for Public, School and Academic Libraries*. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2005.
- American Library Association Office for Intellectual Freedom. *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. 7th ed. Chicago: ALA, 2005.
- Chmara, Theresa. *Privacy and Confidentiality Issues: A Guide for Libraries and their Lawyers*. Chicago: ALA, 2009.
- Lord, Catherine. *Defending Access with Confidence: A Practical Workshop on Intellectual Freedom*. Chicago: PLA, 2005.
- McClure, Charles R. and Paul T. Jaeger. *Public Libraries and Internet Service Roles*. Chicago: ALA, 2008.

Web sites

Freedom to Read Foundation
<http://www.ftrf.org/>

Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service
<http://www.ilbph.org>

Library Terms That Users Understand
<http://www.jkup.net/terms.html>

PolyTalk, a library interpreter's network
<http://www.polytalk.info/languagekit.html>