

Chapter 1

Core Standards

National Public Library Definition

Public library statistics are collected annually from more than 9,000 public libraries through the Public Library Statistics Cooperative (PLSC) for public library data and disseminated by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Descriptive statistics are collected for all public libraries. Data are available for individual public libraries and are also aggregated to state and national levels.

In order to accurately compare public library data from all fifty states, every state has agreed to collect public library data using the "PLSC Public Library Definition" as detailed below:

A public library is an entity that is established under state enabling laws or regulations to serve a community, district, or region, and that provides at least the following:

1. an organized collection of printed or other library materials or a combination thereof;
2. paid staff;
3. an established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public;
4. the facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule; and,
5. is supported in whole or part with public funds.

Introduction

The late librarian, director, and library leader Susan Roberts commented that strong libraries need strong standards to provide quality customer service. The *Serving Our Public 2.0* Task Force has struggled in finding the balance between inclusivity and setting the bar at a meaningful level. The consensus of the task force is that a "one-size-fits-all" document is not plausible. Public libraries are largely locally funded and should be uniquely suited to the needs and resources of their communities and users. Nevertheless, it is in the public interest and the interest of the library community to have the word "library" signify certain standard conditions that one could expect to find. A library that does not currently meet one or more of the core or other standards might cite that deficiency in making a case for increased funding. Coming up to the standard might be the focus of one or more objectives in a library's strategic plan. The staff and boards of libraries that meet basic standards might pose the query, "What makes a library effective?" and consider ways of enhancing the library's effectiveness in serving its community. After reviewing the federal library standards and other states' library standards, the task force has outlined the following basic essential standards that all Illinois public libraries should work daily to uphold:

1. operate in compliance with Illinois library law;*
2. have an organized collection of information;
3. have written library policies approved by the library's governing body;
4. have a fixed location(s) with posted regular hours of services;
5. have a trained, paid staff to manage the collection and provide access to it;
6. be supported in part or in whole by public funds; and,
7. have an identifiable library materials budget.

* Illinois law does also recognize contractual libraries.

In addition to these essential standards, listed below are standards that have been enhanced and defined.

Illinois Public Library Core Standards

- Core 1** The library provides uniformly gracious, friendly, timely, and reliable service to all users.
- Core 2** The library is established and operates in compliance with Chapter 75 of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes*.
- Core 3** The library is governed by a board of trustees elected or appointed and constituted in compliance with the relevant sections of Chapter 75 of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes*.
- Core 4** The library complies with all other state and federal laws that affect library operations. (See Appendix F)
- Core 5** The library adopts and adheres to the principles set forth in the American Library Association's (ALA) *Library Bill of Rights* and other ALA intellectual freedom statements and interpretations. (See Appendices A, B, and C)
- Core 6** The library adopts and adheres to the *Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees*. The library adopts and adheres to the *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*. (See Appendices D and E)
- Core 7** The board of trustees adopts written bylaws that outline the board's purpose and operational procedures and address conflict-of-interest issues. (See Appendix H)
- Core 8** The board of trustees appoints a qualified librarian as library administrator and delegates active management of the library to the library administrator. (For the purposes of this document, a qualified librarian is a person holding a Masters of Library Science (MLS) degree from an ALA-accredited program and/or actively participating in continuing education opportunities each year offered by the Illinois State Library, regional library systems, and the Illinois Library Association. Library boards and communities should strive to have a minimum of one staff member holding an MLS from an ALA-accredited institution and/or utilize the consultant services of their regional library system.)
- Core 9** The board of trustees meets regularly, in accordance with the *Illinois Compiled Statutes*, with the library administrator in attendance. All board meetings and board committee meetings shall comply with the *Open Meetings Act*.
- Core 10** The board of trustees has exclusive control of the expenditure of all monies collected, donated, or appropriated for the library fund and all property owned by the library.
- Core 11** The library has a board-approved written budget. The budget is developed annually by the library administrator and the board with input from the staff.
- Core 12** The board of trustees annually determines if the library's revenues are sufficient to meet the needs of the community. If the revenues are not sufficient, the board of trustees will take action to increase the library's revenues.
- Core 13** The library has a board-approved mission statement, a long-range plan, disaster prevention and recovery plan, collection management policy, personnel policy, and other policies as appropriate to the library's operation. (See Appendices J, M, O, P, and R)

Appendix A

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services:

- I.** Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II.** Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III.** Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV.** Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V.** A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI.** Libraries, which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

A history of the *Library Bill of Rights* is found in the latest edition of the American Library Association publication titled *Intellectual Freedom Manual*.

Library Bill of Rights: Interpretations

Access for Children and Young People to Non-print Materials

Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks

Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation

Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program

Challenged Materials

Diversity in Collection Development

Economic Barriers to Information Access

Evaluating Library Collections

Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards

Expurgation of Library Materials

Free Access to Libraries for Minors

Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries

Labels and Rating Systems

Library-initiated Programs as a Resource

Meeting Rooms

Privacy

Restricted Access to Library Materials

The Universal Right of Free Expression

Note: These documents were current at the time of printing. Please look at the American Library Association (ALA) Web site, <http://www.ala.org/> for updated versions and more information.

Appendix B

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority. Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the

freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are safer, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a “bad” book is a good one; the answer to a “bad” idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader’s purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently endorsed by:

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.
The Children’s Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
National Association of College Stores
National Coalition Against Censorship
National Council of Teachers of English
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Appendix C

Freedom to View Statement

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

Appendix D

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association *Code of Ethics* states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I.** We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II.** We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III.** We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted.
- IV.** We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V.** We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI.** We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII.** We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII.** We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted June 28, 1997, by the ALA Council; amended January 22, 2008.

Appendix E

Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees

Trustees in the capacity of trust upon them shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity, and honor.

Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.

It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.

Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.

A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.

Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all of the functions of library trustees.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985.

Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988.

Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.

Appendix F**Useful Illinois Statutes with Citations to the Illinois Compiled Statutes**

An electronic version of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes* (ILCS) is posted at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs.asp>

Illinois Statute	Legal Citation
<i>State Library Act</i>	15 ILCS 320/1
<i>Local Library Act</i>	75 ILCS 5/1
<i>Public Library District Act</i>	75 ILCS 16/1
<i>Library Systems Act</i>	75 ILCS 10/1
<i>Library Records Confidentiality Act</i>	75 ILCS 70/1
<i>Literacy Act</i>	15 ILCS 322/1
Collection and Payment of Tax Monies	65 ILCS 5/8-3-2
Ownership of Library Building	75 ILCS 16/10-45 & 75 ILCS 16/5-40
Time for Paying Over of Tax Monies	65 ILCS 5/8-3-3
<i>Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Qualifications Based Selection Act</i>	30 ILCS 535/1
Audit of Accounts	50 ILCS 310/1
Campaign Finance	10 ILCS 5/10-6.1
<i>Conflict of Interest (Prohibited Activities Act)</i>	50 ILCS 105/3
<i>Disclosure of Economic Interests (Ethics Act)</i>	5 ILCS 420/4A-101
<i>Drug Free Workplace Act</i>	30 ILCS 580/1
<i>Election Code</i>	10 ILCS 5/1-1
<i>Employment Record Disclosure Act</i>	745 ILCS 46/1
<i>Environmental Barriers Act (Illinois Accessibility Code)</i>	410 ILCS 25/1
Estimate of Revenues	35 ILCS 200/18-50
<i>Ethics Act (Governmental Act)</i>	5 ILCS 420/4A-101
<i>Ethics Act (Officials & Employees Act)</i>	5 ILCS 430/1-1
<i>Financial Statement Act (semiannual)</i>	50 ILCS 305/1 (see 30 ILCS 15/1)
<i>Fiscal Responsibility Report Card Act</i>	35 ILCS 200/30-30
<i>Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)</i>	5 ILCS 140/1
<i>Human Rights Act</i>	775 ILCS 5/1-101
<i>Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)</i>	40 ILCS 5/7-171
<i>Illinois Procurement Code</i>	30 ILCS 500/1
Interest Rate on Public Debt	30 ILCS 305/2
<i>Intergovernmental Cooperative Act</i>	5 ILCS 220/1

Illinois Statute	Legal Citation
<i>Investment of Public Funds Act</i>	50 ILCS 340/1 & 30 ILCS 235/1
<i>Joint Purchasing Act (Governmental)</i>	30 ILCS 525/1
<i>Local Government Employee Tort Immunity Act</i>	745 ILCS 10/1-101
<i>Local Government Employees Political Rights Act</i>	50 ILCS 135/1
<i>Local Government Professional Services Selection Act (exempted in 720 ILCS 5/33E-13)</i>	50 ILCS 510/0.01
<i>Local Government Property Transfer Act</i>	50 ILCS 605/0.01
<i>Local Records Act</i>	50 ILCS 205/1
<i>Meal Periods</i>	820 ILCS 140/3
<i>Municipal Budget Law</i>	50 ILCS 330/1
<i>Oath of Office Act</i>	5 ILCS 255/0/01
<i>Open Meetings Act</i>	5 ILCS 120/1.01
<i>Parental Responsibility Law</i>	740 ILCS 115/1
<i>Personnel Record Review Act</i>	820 ILCS 40/0.01
<i>Prevailing Wage Act</i>	820 ILCS 130/0.01
<i>Privacy in the Workplace Act</i>	820 ILCS 55/1
<i>Prompt Payment Act</i>	50 ILCS 505/1
<i>Property Tax Code (Revenue Act)</i>	35 ILCS 200/1
<i>Property Tax Extension Limitation Act (PTEL, Tax Cap)</i>	35 ILCS 200/18-185
<i>Public Contracts Act</i>	720 ILCS 5/33E-1
<i>Public Officers Simultaneous Tenure Act</i>	50 ILCS 110
<i>Removal of Officer (board member)</i>	65 ILCS 5/3.1-35-10
<i>Right to Breastfeed Act</i>	740 ILCS 137/1
<i>Smoke Free Illinois Act</i>	410 ICLS 82/1
<i>Statement of Receipts and Disbursements</i>	30 ILCS 15/1 (see 50 ILCS 305)
<i>State Property Act</i>	30 ILCS 605/1
<i>Tax Anticipation Note Act</i>	50 ILCS 420/0.01
<i>Time Off for Official Meetings Act</i>	50 ILCS 115/0.01
<i>Truth in Taxation Act</i>	35 ILCS 200/18-5
<i>Victim's Economic Security and Safety Act</i>	820 ILCS 180/1 <i>et seq.</i>
<i>Wage Assignment Act</i>	740 ILCS 170/1
<i>Wage Payment and Collection Act</i>	820 ILCS 115/1
<i>Workers' Compensation Act</i>	820 ILCS 305/1
<i>Wage Assignment Act</i>	740 ILCS 170/1

This table is based on information from Phillip Lenzini with the law firm of Kavanagh, Scully, Sudow, White & Frederick, P.C., and various Illinois librarians. December 2008.

Appendix H

Topics Recommended for Inclusion in Board Bylaws

1. **Official name and location of library**
2. **Trustees**
 - Method of election or appointment
 - Length of terms
 - Duties and responsibilities
 - Filling a vacancy
 - Conflict of interest/ethics provision
 - Removal
3. **Officers**
 - Definition
 - Duties
 - Nomination and election procedure and meeting
 - Filling a vacancy
 - Removal
4. **Committees**
 - Standing
 - Appointment of ad hoc
5. **Meetings**
 - Time and place of regular meetings
 - Method for calling special meeting
 - Quorum for making decisions
 - Compliance with *Open Meetings Act*
 - Quorum for board action
 - Follow a current edition of a standard parliamentary procedure manual
6. **Order of business**
 - Roll call
 - Approval of previous meeting minutes
 - Correspondence and communications
 - Officers' reports
 - Committee reports
 - Financial report and approval of expenditures
 - Library administrator's report
 - Unfinished business
 - New business
 - Adjournment
7. **Minutes**
 - Reflect attendance and actions taken
8. **Appointment/termination of library administrator**
9. **Amendments—procedures for repealing, amending, or adding**
10. **Time frame for review**