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The following Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) contained in [Subchapter 10.102.11 Public Library Development](#), constitute the standards public and accredited tribal college libraries must meet to receive state aid per capita and/or federation funding.

### *ARM History Key*

<b>IMP</b>	<b>MCA</b>	<b>NEW</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>Eff.</b>	<b>AMD</b>
Implementing Statute	Montana Code Annotated reference for rulemaking authority	Year the rule was first adopted	Montana Administrative Register and page number	Effective date of the rule	Amendment year

For more information visit [msl.mt.gov](https://msl.mt.gov) or contact your library consultant.



# Public Library Standards

## Public Library Standards

### 10.102.1155 Annual Statistical Report

- 1) The commission, in setting up minimum standards of free public library service and in certifying such libraries for state monies shall require the filing of an annual statistical report.
  - a) This annual report may include such types of information as the Montana State Library commissioners shall deem necessary.
  - b) In no instance shall the commission require new cumulations of statistical data without providing to each affected public library, 60 days prior to the beginning of the period of which information will be collected, notice of the commission's intention to require such cumulations as part of the annual report.

History: NEW, 1999 MAR p. 2626, Eff. 11/19/99; AMD, 2006 MAR p. 1571, Eff. 6/23/06.

### Additional Information

The Public Library Standards Report opens in May and is due in July each year.

[Visit the MSL Public Library Standards webpage](#) for current dates and additional information.

## 10.102.1158 Library Board, Governance, and Working with the Director

- 1) A public library is defined at [22-1-301\(3\)](#), MCA, established in Title 7, MCA, or an accredited tribal college library that provides service to the public. All libraries must comply with the standards set forth in ARM Title 10, chapter 102, subchapter 11.
- 2) The public library board shall meet at least six times a year and shall comply with Montana's open meeting laws.
- 3) The public library board members shall learn about the services the library provides to users, the role of the board in providing administrative and financial oversight, and the role of the board in planning for new services for users.
- 4) The public library board shall receive at least three hours of continuing education each year.
- 5) The public library board shall understand the revenue sources that fund the library, the budgeting process, and shall adopt an annual budget for the library.
- 6) For a public library defined at [22-1-301\(3\)](#), MCA, and created under Title 7, MCA, at least 70% of the revenue shall be derived from local tax revenues. Grants, donations, and other revenue sources supplement but do not supplant local tax support. For an accredited tribal college library that serves tribal members, the tribal council shall recognize and support the efforts of the library to obtain funding.
- 7) Public library boards and directors shall identify the requisite financial resources necessary to provide adequate library services pursuant to the library's mission and shall regularly communicate with community and local government leaders about financial needs and ability to meet community needs.
- 8) The public library board, in consultation with the director, shall identify in writing what they want to accomplish in the next three to five years, and that plan shall be focused on meeting community needs. The board and director shall annually review their plan and progress made.
- 9) The public library board shall adopt emergency response plans that ensure the safety of the public and staff as the primary priority.
- 10) The public library director or designee shall submit the Montana Public Library Annual Statistical Report to the Montana State Library. The public library board and director shall annually review public library statistics.
- 11) The public library board shall adopt and regularly review policies that reflect the mission, objectives, and goals of the public library. The policies shall govern use of the public library, its materials, and services. No single policy may exist more than four years without review.
- 12) The public library board and director shall be familiar with the most current Public Library Standards Road Map maintained by the Montana State Library.

History: 22-1-103, MCA; IMP, 22-1-103, MCA; NEW, 2021 MAR p. 1138, Eff. 7/1/22; AMD, 2023 MAR p. 1858, Eff. 12/23/23; AMD, 2024 MAR p. 605, Eff. 3/23/24.

[Current Roadmap](#)

## 10.102.1159 Serving the Community

- 1) The library is open during convenient hours. On average, the library is open the following number of hours weekly, as reported by the library in the annual public library survey:

<b><u>Service Area Population</u></b>	<b><u>Minimum</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended</u></b>
Fewer than 3,500	10.5 hours	25-40 hours
3,501 – 9,999	21 hours	40-50 hours
10,000 – 24,999	28 hours	50-60 hours
More than 25,000	35 hours	60+ hours

- 2) Everyone has safe, comfortable, and convenient access to the library and its services.
- 3) Everyone has access to updated and regularly maintained physical and digital library content and services.
- 4) Everyone can find library materials online.
- 5) Everyone has access to virtual and face-to-face programming.
- 6) Everyone has access to information about local community and government activities that assists them with understanding local community issues and allows them to engage civically in the community.
- 7) Children and caregivers have access to early literacy programming and materials either through the library or by being directed to another community organization that specializes in early literacy.
- 8) Everyone has access to information about library programs and services through internal and external marketing efforts of library staff.
- 9) Everyone has access to a library website or social media site.
- 10) Everyone can obtain materials and services from another library through interlibrary loan services.
- 11) Everyone has access to the Internet via wired and WIFI connections.
- 12) Reasonable accommodations are made so that people with disabilities have access to the library's services.

History: 22-1-103, MCA; IMP, 22-1-103, MCA; NEW, 2021 MAR p. 1138, Eff. 7/1/22; AMD 2025 MAR p. [TBD], Eff 7/1/2026.

## 10.102.1160 Personnel

- 1) Staff members are offered health insurance according to local policy.
- 2) Staff members are offered retirement benefits according to local policy.
- 3) The board adopts a sufficient budget for continuing education.
- 4) During 90% of open hours, paid staff are available to assist users.
- 5) Staff have the tools and training they need to perform their work.
- 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 Title 10, chapter 102, subchapter 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 ten years between reviews.

History: 22-1-103, MCA; IMP, 22-1-103, MCA; NEW, 2021 MAR p. 1138, Eff. 7/1/22; AMD, 2023 MAR p. 1858, Eff. 12/23/23; AMD 2025 MAR p. [TBD], Eff 7/1/2026..

### Certification Program

## 10.102.1161 Standard Notification, Final Arbiter, and Appeal Process

- 1) The State Library will notify libraries of any proposed changes to the standards at least six months before requiring libraries to implement standards.
- 2) Any library shall have the right of appeal. The request for the appeal shall be made to the state librarian using the contact methods indicated on the State Library's website. Appeals must be made within 12 days of the receipt of notification denying payment.
  - a) Upon receiving a notice of appeal, the state librarian, acting on behalf of the commission, shall convene an independent review committee. The committee shall consist of:
    - i) a member named by the appellant who is not a member of the appellant's library staff, library board, or city or county commission;
    - ii) a member chosen by the chair of the State Library Commission, who is not a commissioner or a state library staff member; and,
    - iii) a member from the library community who is not affiliated with the appellant's library, the State Library Commission, or state library staff, named by the president-elect of the Montana Library Association.
  - b) The independent review committee shall hear the appeal based on the following procedures:
    - i) Both the appellant and the State Library shall have equal opportunity to present testimony, either in writing or orally, and to respond to points raised by the other party.
    - ii) The independent review committee shall make its findings and recommendations to the Montana State Library Commission, which shall take final action on the appeal.
  - c) The commission can affirm, deny, or modify the findings and recommendations of the independent review committee.
  - d) The state librarian, upon final determination of the appeal by the commission, shall notify the appellant in writing. This notice shall conclude the appeals process.
  - e) Neither the independent review process nor any subsequent review and decision process of the commission is a contested case, and common law and statutory rules of evidence do not apply to these proceedings.
- 3) For any questions arising because of ARM 10.102.1158 through 10.102.1162, the final arbiter is the State Library Commission.

History: NEW, 2021 MAR p. 1138, Eff. 7/1/22.

## 10.102.1162 Deferrals

- 1) Any library may request, in writing, a waiver from the state librarian by July 25 of each year.
  - a) The state librarian may grant a waiver of any of the standards in ARM 10.102.1158 through 10.102.1162 if the library:
    - i) explains why the standard(s) is not being met; and
    - ii) provides a compliance plan by which the library will meet the standard(s).
  - b) State Library staff will work with the library director to decide upon a timeline for achieving the standard(s). The state librarian shall make the final decision on the amount of time the library has to comply with the standard(s) and will notify the library requesting the waiver of the decision by letter by October 1.
- 2) Any library may request a one-year extension of the waiver from the state librarian in writing by July 25 of each year. The library shall provide the state librarian with an updated compliance plan with an explanation of why they cannot meet the standard(s).
- 3) The state librarian may grant an extension for one year only. No further extensions will be granted.

History: 22-1-103, MCA; IMP, 22-1-103, MCA; NEW, 2021 MAR p. 1138, Eff. 7/1/22.

[Visit the MSL website](#) to access the current *Standard Operating Procedure for Public Library Standards*.