

LIBRARY STAFF

OUTCOME

The public library empowers diverse staff who provide excellent service, represent all residents, and proactively adapt and respond to changing community needs.

OVERVIEW

Library staff are the heart of the public library, serving all with professionalism and hospitality. To achieve this level of service excellence, libraries create a “culture of learning,” in which continuous growth and improvement are expected and supported. Ongoing development is not just for library staff; trustees and library users also benefit from this learning culture.

Library staff respond to and track the ever-changing needs of their communities, using data to inform innovation. Library leadership values staff as the essential component to library success and rewards creative solutions, risk taking, and reaching into the unknown.

To address staffing, the library’s governing authority is responsible for personnel policy and oversight as well as the supervision of the

director. The library director is responsible for personnel supervision, policy implementation, legal concerns, professionalism, and employee well-being.

Municipal, county, and other libraries typically use the town/county/school human resources department to support their personnel needs. Library districts, as separate governmental entities, are responsible for all human resource requirements and activities. To this end, some areas below call out specific and additional requirements and resources for library districts.

This standard includes three elements: general procedures for library staff employment, guidelines for staffing the library operations, and guidance on professional development.



40: Staff at the Pine River Library District.

LIBRARY STAFF ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST FOR ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ❑ Follow state and federal laws in recruiting, hiring, onboarding, supervising, and terminating employees.
- ❑ Recruit and select staff to represent the community demographics, especially focusing on cultural and multilingual diversity while avoiding discrimination. Provide library staff with a pay benefit for multilingual duties and other specialized skills that uniquely address local needs.
- ❑ Use written job descriptions to hire and assign duties.
- ❑ Pay all staff based on cost of living standards within the community.
- ❑ Conduct background checks as part of the hiring process.
- ❑ Establish a healthy library culture in which all employees understand the local library's mission, vision, and/or values and can apply them in their work.
- ❑ Conduct formal performance evaluations at least annually to document performance, justify pay increases, and, when necessary, remove staff members who are underperforming.
- ❑ Maintain library staff/human resource policies and procedures and orient staff to these resources.
- ❑ Create an Employee Handbook for employee orientation and reference. Review for updates at least every two years.
- ❑ Develop work goals and activities that align with the job description and strategic plan.
- ❑ Offer each staff member regular coaching, feedback, and support for development.
- ❑ Library Districts: Employ or contract for Human Resources expertise to keep abreast of legal requirements, wage trends, and other personnel considerations.



41: Poster promoting Longmont Public Library Staff Recommendations.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ❑ Ensure all library employees (including temporary and substitute) are proficient in carrying out the library's policies, values, philosophy, management, and operational practices as these relate to their job duties.
- ❑ Verify that all library employees (including temporary and substitute) are proficient in the use of the library's technology to do their work efficiently and to assist library users in the use of the technology. Staff onboarding includes training on software (e.g., integrated library system,

online catalog, digital resources, etc.), hardware, security, hacking, social engineering, etc. All staff receive cyber security training.

- ❑ Allocate time and funding for external staff development; communicate this benefit to staff.

LIBRARY STAFF ESSENTIALS +
CHECKLIST FOR LARGER LIBRARIES

GENERAL

- ❑ Maintain current staff compensation policies and provide wages and benefits that reflect community and market standards.
- ❑ Adopt a staffing plan that addresses job descriptions, competencies, performance evaluation, compensation, organizational development, and succession planning.
- ❑ Establish practices to be an employer of choice.
- ❑ Analyze comparative salary data to determine just wages, including using state and national salary data for libraries. Consider total compensation that includes wages, benefits, and other support for library staff.
- ❑ Employ professionals that have earned a master's degree in library and information science (MLIS) in recognition of the essential skills and competencies developed through a graduate program. When feasible, support staff in earning their MLIS degree.
- ❑ Library Districts: Seek expertise and guidance to keep abreast of legal requirements, wage trends, and workplace culture. Contract with outside agencies, as needed, for payroll and other human resources services.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ❑ Allocate funding for all library staff and trustees to participate in professional development.
- ❑ Offer in-house and continuing education activities for staff, trustees, and volunteers.
- ❑ Connect library staff development opportunities during the year with performance and annual plans.
- ❑ Prioritize staff proficiencies in effective communication, service quality, cultural competency, access, intellectual freedom, privacy, equity, copyright, and sustainability. Ensure staff have knowledge of human developmental stages as they relate to library use, skills in library functions, and technology competence required for their job duties.