

Chapter FLC 1

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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FLC 1.01 Purpose. The following basic definitions, standards, and requirements were developed pursuant to section 43.165, Wis. Stats., to aid librarians, library board members, and governing bodies of public libraries in the improvement and extension of library service; in evaluating the library's contribution to the cultural, educational, and recreational life of the community; and in developing and using a balanced collection of books, films, recordings, pamphlets, periodicals, and other materials for these purposes.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1963, No. 86, eff. 3-1-63.

FLC 1.02 Policy. As an organizational means of insuring adequate government-supported library service within reasonable reach of all the people of the state, which will connect them with the total library resources of the region, state, and nation, the free library commission declares that its policy shall be:

(1) To promote the establishment and development of a network of library systems based on interlibrary and intergovernmental relationship of all libraries in a natural area.

(2) To encourage the financing of library systems from local sources to a maximum extent but also with added support from higher levels of government, particularly from the state.

(3) To encourage library co-operation among all types of libraries.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1963, No. 86, eff. 3-1-63.

FLC 1.03 Definitions. (1) LIBRARY SYSTEMS AUTHORIZED BY CHAPTER 43, AND SECTION 66.30, WIS. STATS. A library system is an organization based on a formulated plan and procedure in which library units work together, sharing services and resources in an effective manner which results in improved services to library users:

(a) *Consolidated system.* A library system established by vote of one or more municipal governing bodies, governed by one library board and having individual units operating as branches of the system.

(b) *Federated system.* A library system formed by joint action of municipal governing bodies, by contract, in which one administrative library unit is designated or created to provide all or certain specified central services or processes for the member libraries, with each local library board retaining its identity and control over the local aspects of library service, and with a joint library board or committee of the system planning, co-ordinating, and advising on the system's co-operative services.

(c) *Co-operative system.* A system of improved library service made possible by joint action of a group of independent municipal libraries, by formal agreement or contract to provide certain specified central services or processes for the member libraries, with each library governed by its own library board. The common services may be co-ordinated and planned by an advisory board or committee.

(d) *Mixed system.* A system made up of more than one of the above types and operating special services by contract.

(2) **PUBLIC LIBRARY.** A public library is a library which provides services and materials to all residents of a community, district, county, or region, and is financially supported in whole or in part from public funds; this definition shall not include libraries which are organized to serve primarily a special clientele, or have only special collections, such as law, medical, university, college, or school libraries, except when such special libraries are operated as departments or branches of public libraries.

(a) *Types of public libraries.* Types of public libraries in Wisconsin are defined broadly as large, medium-sized, and small libraries. Because the Type I library determines the over-all quality of the service offered in a library system, any library which is not part of a system must meet the standards for Type I.

1. Type I. A Type I library is the central library of a system, or a large library so situated geographically as to serve logically as the resource and administrative center for an area. It may be the central library in a city, county, multicounty, or area library system.

2. Type II. A Type II library is a community library whose community normally encompasses a radius of approximately 20 miles, or a community library serving a densely populated urban section. It is a part of a library system. It may be either a county, city, or village library, or a unit in a large city, county, multicounty, or area library system.

3. Type III. A type III library is a community library serving a small, well-defined area, or group of people. It is a part of a library system, either a city, town, or village library, or a unit in a city, county, multi-county, or area library system.

4. Library service outlet. A library service outlet is a unit, mobile or stationary, in a library system, organized and administered to provide a link between small communities or neighborhoods and the central library.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1963, No. 86, eff. 3-1-63.

FLC 1.04 Requirements necessary to meet standards for public libraries in Wisconsin.

(Note: A detailed statement of goals and standards, entitled A DESIGN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN WISCONSIN—STANDARDS FOR MEASURING PROGRESS, 1962, was adopted October 4, 1962, by the Free Library Commission.)

(1) **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF ALL PUBLIC LIBRARIES.** (a) *Study and planning.* In the interest of insuring adequate public library service, all public librarians, library board members, and other governing officials of public libraries shall recognize local and regional library

needs in relation to modern library functions, and examine alternative methods of meeting such needs.

(b) *Organization and financial support.* Public libraries unable to provide adequate staff, materials, and services shall affiliate with larger libraries to form library systems, in the organizational patterns most appropriate and economically sound for the area to be served.

(c) *Governmental basis.* Every public library and every public library system shall have a clear, legal basis for its organization and financial support, as provided for in Wisconsin Statutes.

(d) *Reports.* Every public library and every public library system shall make reports regularly to appropriate levels of government as required.

(2) BASIC REQUIREMENTS BY SIZE OF LIBRARY UNIT. (a) *Type I public library.* 1. Shall be located so that the people served by it may conveniently use the library within one day's round trip from their homes.

2. Shall be open for service at fixed times and uniform hours at least 69 hours per week, including evening hours.

3. Shall provide lending, reference, research, and referral services and guidance and assistance on books and nonbook materials to individuals and groups and other libraries in a library system.

4. Shall provide a book and nonbook materials collection adequate to support the service program, including at least 100,000 currently useful books, and shall have access to additional materials at the state and national levels.

5. Shall have on its staff at least one experienced professional librarian, meeting the requirements of the Wisconsin Grade I certificate, responsible for each of the following aspects of library service in the central library and for guidance and assistance to other libraries in the system:

- Administration
- Information and advisory service for adults
- Information and advisory service for young adults
- Information and advisory service for children
- Organization of materials
- Extension services

and additional subject specialists as needed. There shall be an adequate number of additional professional librarians to meet demands upon the library, and a supporting staff of library assistants and clerical workers.

6. Shall have and maintain a clearly defined and efficient system of organization of materials that provides aid to other libraries in the system. There should be a public catalog which lists the book collection materials by author, title if distinctive, and subject, as well as appropriate indexes for nonbook materials; and a shelf list.

7. Shall have a building, or buildings, aesthetically designed, functional, and equipped to accommodate the existing library program and flexible for changing requirements; built to meet all applicable codes for public buildings contained in the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

(b) *Type II public library.* 1. Shall be located within one hour's round trip from most of its users, as easy to reach as the local shopping center.

2. Shall be open for service at fixed times and uniform hours at least 56 hours per week, including evening hours.

3. Shall provide lending, reference, research, and referral services and guidance and counsel on books and nonbook materials to individuals and groups and other libraries in a library system.

4. Shall provide a book and nonbook materials collection, adequate to support the service program, including at least 20,000, or 2 per person served, whichever is larger, currently useful books, with ready access and established channels to the resources of other libraries in the system.

5. Shall be headed by a librarian meeting the requirements of a Wisconsin Grade I license. There shall be at least two additional full-time staff members, who shall be college graduates with some training in library science; there shall be supporting clerical staff.

6. Shall have a public catalog which lists the book collection materials by author, title if distinctive, and subject, as well as appropriate indexes for nonbook materials; and a shelf list, following the established procedure in the system.

7. Shall have a building or quarters aesthetically suitable to the community, functional, and designed and equipped to accommodate the library program and flexible to provide for changing requirements, and constructed in accordance with applicable codes for public buildings contained in the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

(c) *Type III public library.* 1. Shall be located within one hour's round trip from most of its users, as easy to reach as the local shopping center.

2. Shall be open for service at fixed and uniform hours at least 20 hours per week, including evening hours.

3. Shall provide lending, informational reference, and referral services and assistance in the choice and use of books and nonbook materials.

4. Shall provide a book and nonbook materials collection, adequate to support the service program, including at least 6,000, or 2 per person served, whichever is larger, currently useful books, with ready access and established channels to the resources of other libraries in the system.

5. Shall be in charge of a person who meets the requirements of the Wisconsin Grade III certificate. Additional full-time staff members, as needed, should meet the requirements of the Grade III license.

6. Shall have a public catalog which lists the book collection materials by author, title if distinctive, and subject, as well as appropriate indexes for nonbook materials; and a shelf list, following the established procedure in the system.

7. Shall have library quarters aesthetically suitable to the community, functional, and equipped to accommodate the library program with maximum flexibility for rearrangement, should the program change, and constructed in accordance with applicable codes for public buildings contained in the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

(d) *Library service outlet (stationary)*. 1. Shall follow established procedures of the library system of which it is a part.

2. Shall be open at least 8 hours a week, scheduled on the basis of maximum potential use.

3. Shall provide lending, simple reference, and regular referral services.

4. Shall have at least 30 basic and up-to-date reference books, and rotating book collections for circulation.

5. Shall have a qualified person paid to administer the service.

6. Shall have easily accessible, suitable, and properly equipped quarters.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1963, No. 86, eff. 3-1-63.

FLC 1.05 Application. (1) The foregoing requirements are applicable to all tax-supported public libraries in Wisconsin.

(2) A library must meet the above requirements or present a plan for meeting them within a stated period of years, approved by the Free Library Commission, in order to qualify for grants-in-aid administered by the commission.

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