Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries
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# ACLPD Public Library Standards Task Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kate Byroade</td>
<td>Cragin Memorial Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Cook</td>
<td>Cheshire Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Cormier</td>
<td>Connecticut State Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandie Doyle</td>
<td>Russell Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su Epstein</td>
<td>Saxton B. Little Free Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Erickson</td>
<td>Waterford Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Farwell</td>
<td>Otis Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Fisher</td>
<td>Wallingford Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Forsyth</td>
<td>Cyrenius H. Booth Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurel Goodgion</td>
<td>Emeritus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Gray</td>
<td>Darien Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Joseph</td>
<td>The Ferguson Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vince Juliano</td>
<td>ACLPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawn LaValle</td>
<td>Connecticut State Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betsy McIlvaine</td>
<td>ACLB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Parmelee</td>
<td>Westport Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Schadlich</td>
<td>Norwalk Public Library System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion M. Sheehan</td>
<td>Canterbury Public Library/CLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Smayda</td>
<td>Southington Library and Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise Stankovics</td>
<td>ACLPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn White</td>
<td>Terryville Public Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Across Connecticut, communities are using their public libraries in unique and exciting ways. From Makerspaces to Farmers’ Markets, our libraries are transforming to meet the changing needs of their communities and continuing to serve as centers of learning and knowledge creation.

The Aspen Institute describes a “new world of knowledge,” with the public library serving as a “vital learning institution and engine for individual, community, and civil society development.” While each of our communities will approach this new era differently, there are common benchmarks that can be utilized to ensure that the public library remains “the essential civil society space where this new America will make its democratic character.”

These “best practices” were carefully designed to guide libraries toward 21st-century practices and principles. Changes in technology, education, communication and social connection are just a few areas to which the public as well as libraries and policymakers will need to respond. Advocating for our libraries requires new tools and information. We cannot simply continue with the status quo; we must make clear our need to adapt and thrive in the new information landscape.
How to Use the Best Practices

*Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries* is a tool that a library can use to evaluate its services. The best practices are not intended to be used as a comparison tool but are designed to be used for a library’s self-evaluation and improvement.

Libraries can use the information gathered from completing the checklist as a springboard for discussions with their stakeholders. You can use it to show:

a) Where the library is doing well.
b) Where improvement is needed.
c) How requested funds will be used to improve the quality of the library.
d) How you have used appropriated funds to improve service (e.g., moving the library from “Essential” to “Enhanced” in a particular area).

1. Self-measurement
The Best Practices document provides you with a tool to evaluate your library. It can help you determine where your library is doing well and identify areas of weakness. This information can form the basis for your library’s strategic planning by identifying objectives to achieve. Some items are repeated in multiple sections because they apply to those sections.

2. Progress documentation
On first pass through this document, you will find that you will be checking some items in different levels in each benchmark. Once you have achieved all of the items in the Essential level for a specific benchmark, which may take some time and focused effort, then you can progress to the higher levels in that benchmark. As you track the library’s improvement, you can identify new areas on which to focus to continue the development of the library.

3. Staff education
By introducing and discussing the Best Practices tool with your library staff, you will expand their understanding of the total library operation. Often staff members may be aware of how only their own area functions without understanding how it meshes with the entire library operation. Reviewing the Best Practices document helps them to see the library as an integrated operation with each department contributing to the quality of the whole organization.

4. Board education
Library board members are interested in the library and want to be supportive, but often they don’t possess much knowledge of the elements of a library’s operation and the way to determine the level of service that the library is providing and areas where improvement is needed. The Best Practices document will help them understand how a library functions, where the library is doing well and where they can offer support to you in improving library service.

5. Budget communications tool
The Best Practices document provides you and the board with an objective and effective tool to use in communicating with the local funding authority (Board of Selectmen, Town Council and/or Board of Finance).
Reasoning Behind the Benchmark Numbers

1. Benchmark numbers often vary depending on the size of the community being served. Therefore the benchmark numbers are provided based on population group.

2. The benchmark numbers are based on library service for a whole town or city, counting together statistics from all the independent public libraries that might be located in the town or city. These numbers are from the Public Library Statistical Profile. This approach reflects the principle that library service is ultimately the responsibility of the municipal government (even in towns with one or more association libraries) and the municipality is responsible for maintaining library service above benchmark numbers.

3. Benchmark numbers were chosen based on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 spread of existing numbers for the libraries in each population group.

   a) The Essential benchmark numbers used in this publication reflect the first clear break-point that occurred below the 25% mark (i.e., the lowest 25% of towns in each category) in each population group. Therefore, all of the breakpoints fall between 10% and 25%, with 75% to 90% of libraries scoring better than the benchmark number.

   b) The Enhanced benchmark numbers used in this publication reflect the first clear break-point that occurred below the 50% mark (i.e., about 50% of libraries scoring better than the benchmark number).

   c) The Exemplary benchmark numbers used in this publication reflect the first clear break-point that occurred below the 90% mark (i.e., about 10% of libraries scoring better than the benchmark number).
1. FACILITIES

The library’s facilities encompass the community needs for the safe, efficient use of the physical space, ease of access to the space and resources, including hours available, and the extension of access through a sustainable technology infrastructure.

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1.1. Facilities: Physical Space

Library space meets the needs of the current service population while maintaining flexibility to meet the future needs of the community.

**BENCHMARK:** Library space is designed to support the current and future needs of the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library provides adequate space to accommodate current community and technology needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Space is provided or can be modified to meet the needs of the different groups the library serves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Space is available for members of the community to meet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ A public restroom is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library assesses space needs as part of a community needs assessment process every three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library meets the Essential Square Foot per Capita benchmark for its population size.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benchmark: "Essential"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Square Feet Per Capita (See note at the end of this section)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Meets Essential level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Provides open, flexible space designed to accommodate current and future community and technology needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Continually evaluates its space and implements flexible space design features to meet the needs of unique user groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Takes advantage of community spaces to enhance the library experience and expand programming opportunities beyond the walls of the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Conducts an annual Community Needs Assessment to ensure that needs for flexible space are identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Meets the Enhanced Square Foot per Capita benchmark for its population size.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benchmark: "Enhanced"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Square Feet Per Capita (See note at the end of this section)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
  - The library:
    - Continually assesses its needs for flexible space and expedites the implementation of changes within its reach.
    - Engages the services of a design consultant to evaluate and plan for flexible space needs.
    - Develops a redesign/construction plan that meets and/or exceeds the Connecticut State Library’s Library Space Planning Guideline.
  - Meets the Exemplary Square Foot per Capita benchmark for its population size.

Benchmark: "Exemplary"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Square Feet Per Capita</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See note at the end of this section)

Note regarding library square footage:
The difference between the square footage in this Best Practices document and the square footage in the Library Space Planning document is intentional. The Best Practices square footage is based on the current square footage of the library, whereas the Library Space Planning square footage is based on future square footage needs of the library.
1.2. Facilities: Facility Plan and Energy Efficiency

Library facilities are maintained to ensure cleanliness and safety. A well-maintained building provides a pleasant environment for the community and staff. A regular maintenance schedule provides a clean, safe place for library activities.

**BENCHMARK:** The library meets facilities maintenance standards to ensure a clean and safe interior and exterior for community and staff.

**Essential**
- The library assigns staff to supervise facilities maintenance.
- The library maintains a current list of building maintenance/repair vendors.
- In cases where the municipality provides building maintenance, the library and municipality cooperate to ensure attention to building issues.
- The library establishes a maintenance schedule for daily, weekly and yearly cleaning priorities.
  - A daily schedule includes cleaning of public spaces.
  - A weekly schedule includes cleaning of high traffic areas with special attention to children’s spaces, public computers, meeting rooms, seating and tables.
  - An annual schedule includes, but is not be limited to, carpet cleaning, window cleaning and sanitizing public computers and children’s furniture and equipment.
- A walkthrough of the library is conducted on a weekly basis to identify potential building issues, lighting to be replaced and other potential hazards.
- The library interior is painted when funds are available.
- The library engages staff in the overall awareness of building maintenance issues and creates a reporting system for those issues.
- Lighting levels are in compliance with standards issued by the [Illuminating Engineering Society of North America](https://www.iesna.org).

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The building and its furnishings are maintained pursuant to a specific budgetary line item derived from a written strategic plan for ordinary and capital maintenance.
  - The library:
  - Conducts an annual energy audit with the assistance of an outside consultant or municipal buildings manager.
  - Actively seeks energy efficiency grants offered by local, state or federal agencies for solar energy-efficient lighting.
  - Uses non-toxic natural cleaning materials for maintenance of facilities.
  - Conducts inspections of its facilities twice weekly.
Employs a person or service regularly assigned and accountable to the library that is responsible for routine inspections of facilities for issues needing attention. This person or service makes necessary arrangements for routine interior and exterior maintenance.

The building interior is painted every three to five years.

**Exemplary**

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library actively seeks renovations/new building design to incorporate LEED energy efficiency design.
- The library incorporates use of natural light in building redesign or renovation.
- The building has an HVAC system that maintains an average temperature varying by no more than five degrees within the building or day to day (unless different temperatures are needed for programs and/or collections).
- The library maintains relative humidity levels at 50 - 60% year-round.
- Library furnishings are refreshed and/or replaced every 10 years or more frequently if necessary.

The library provides safe and convenient access for patrons to use and engage in library services. The library develops emergency preparedness plans for use in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

**BENCHMARK:** The library provides safe, convenient and easy access to library services.

**Essential**
- The library:
  - Provides a well-lighted exterior with signage that clearly identifies the building from the street.
  - Provides a safe, well-lighted parking area located near or adjacent to the facility.
  - Meets current local, state and federal safety and fire codes.
  - Is accessible to all members of the community, conforming to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
  - Conducts a risk assessment on an annual basis to identify and remediate potential hazards including building design flaws.
  - Conducts periodic emergency preparedness drills during hours when it is open.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- On a quarterly basis the library conducts a risk assessment to identify and remediate potential hazards including building design flaws.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library exceeds ADA standards such that both library services and the building are fully accessible.
- The library implements universal design principles to meet the needs of its community.
- Data from the library's risk assessment is incorporated into a building redesign or renovation with the understanding that “the library as a refuge” is a critical role it can play in the community.
- The library has installed and maintains a permanently wired generator system for emergency use.

☑
The library maintains a standing Emergency Preparedness Committee to review its emergency/evacuation plan and conducts appropriate training to implement the plan.

The library assigns a liaison to the municipal emergency committee and/or public safety departments.
1.4. Facilities: Access

The library offers the community a compelling invitation to explore, gather and engage and ensures equitable access to resources.

**BENCHMARK**: Library facilities provide convenient, safe and easy access to library services.

1.4.1. Facilities: Access: Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The library:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Provides a convenient method to return materials 24 hours a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Establishes a service target for hours open including morning, afternoon, evening and weekend hours based on community needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Maintains minimum fixed hours of service according to its population:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark: &quot;Essential&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours Open in a Typical Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hours are posted prominently in the building, on the website and in printed information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ To ensure the safety and security of the of the building, staff and patrons, the library has a minimum of two paid staff members on the main floor or service area plus one staff member on each additional floor or public service area during all hours the library is open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The public access catalog, website and virtual resources are available at all times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Telephone service provides access to library staff during hours when the library is open.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Meets Essential level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The library continually assesses its community needs to ensure that ease of access, hours and staffing levels are above the minimum requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The library meets the Enhanced benchmark for hours open in a typical week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark: &quot;Enhanced&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours Open in a Typical Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- Patrons have access to voice mail when they call the library after hours.
- Patrons have virtual access to library staff during hours when the library is open.
- The library provides other community service points beyond the walls of its building.
- The library meets the Exemplary benchmark for hours open in a typical week.

Benchmark: "Exemplary"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours Open in a Typical Week</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.2. Facilities: Access: Parking

Essential

- The library offers sufficient well-lighted parking located near or adjacent to the facility. Sufficient parking is defined as meeting local codes and providing an adequate number of ADA-compliant parking spaces.

Enhanced

- Meets Essential level.
- The library has additional parking to accommodate staff and those using meeting rooms and attending programs. This means one parking space for each staff member scheduled per shift plus one-half the number of adult seats in the building.
- The library continually assesses parking needs based on current usage.

Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library has employee parking near the employee entrance sufficient for normal staffing needs.

1.4.3. Facilities: Access: Signage

Essential

- The library provides signage clearly identifying the library visible at all times from the street.
- Hours of library service are posted at each entrance to the building.
- Interior signage is current and accurately identifies areas of the collection and service points where patrons can receive assistance.
- Signage meets ADA requirements.

Enhanced

- Meets Essential level.
- The municipality has current and accurate signage to direct people to the library.
1.5. Facilities: Technology Infrastructure

An up-to-date, stable technology infrastructure is vital for providing equitable access to resources and ensuring inclusive community participation.

**BENCHMARK:** Library facilities support the implementation of changing technologies to assure that community members experience robust, secure and sustainable technology services.

- **Exemplary**
  - Meets Enhanced level.
  - "Virtual" signage on the library, town and school websites provides the location of and directions to the library.

- **Essential**
  - The library:
    - Provides and sustains a technology infrastructure to support and integrate with statewide, regional and other resource-sharing services, initiatives and consortia.
    - Provides, sustains and refreshes its technology infrastructure for appropriate support of library operations and services.
    - Offers a sufficient number of computers or devices such that patrons need not wait more than one hour to access a computer.
    - Offers a sufficient number of computers or devices such that patrons are offered at least one hour of uninterrupted computer use.
    - Meets the Essential benchmark for number of computers per 1,000 population.

  **Benchmark: "Essential"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers Per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Enhanced**
  - Meets Essential level.
  - Based on current industry standards, the library has sufficient devices and bandwidth to build, stimulate and accommodate user demand.
  - The library offers a sufficient number of computers or devices such that patrons do not have to wait to access a computer.
  - The library offers a sufficient number of computers or devices such that patrons are offered at least two hours of uninterrupted computer use.
  - The library meets the Enhanced benchmark for number of computers per 1,000 population.
Benchmark: "Enhanced"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers Per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exemplary**

- [ ] Meets Enhanced level.
  - The library:
- [ ] Considers new technologies for connectivity and telecommunications when planning new or remodeled facilities.
- [ ] Offers a sufficient number of computers or devices such that patrons are offered uninterrupted computer use with no time limits.
- [ ] Meets the Exemplary benchmark for number of computers per 1,000 population.

Benchmark: "Exemplary"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computers Per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.6. Facilities: Internet Connectivity

Constant changes in access to resources and information demand that libraries be in the forefront for appropriate connectivity. This requires ongoing evaluation of connectivity issues.

**BENCHMARK:** The library provides a dedicated Internet connection that supports simultaneous use by all computer workstations while running intensive broadband applications.

- **Essential**
  - The library provides patrons and staff with wired and 24-hour wireless connectivity that meets current industry standards.
  - The library adopts current industry standards for physical and wireless networking.

- **Enhanced**
  - Meets **Essential** level.
  - The library assesses network infrastructure annually or as part of its technology planning process.

- **Exemplary**
  - Meets **Enhanced** level.
  - The library ensures high-speed connectivity by implementing the highest and most robust bandwidth necessary to meet community needs.
1.7. Facilities: Food

The library is attentive to the health and safety of staff and patrons and to protection of the collection, technology, and building when food and beverages are consumed on library premises.

**BENCHMARK:** The library complies with local and state health and safety standards (e.g., food handlers’ certification) and applicable legal regulations.
1.8. Facilities: Resources


Heritage Preservation, Working with Emergency Responders poster.


Northeast Kansas Library System (NEKLS), Maintenance Checklist for Public Libraries.
2. **FINANCE**

Finances are a vital factor in the successful operation of any public library. A public library is a public responsibility and is appropriately supported by local tax funds. Many public libraries in Connecticut are wholly supported by the municipality, some partially so. Many public libraries augment funds provided by the town with those derived from endowments, state and federal grants, gifts, bequests and special fund-raising activities. Whatever the type of funding, it is the responsibility of local government and the library board to see to it that the library receives financial support adequate to the townspeople’s needs.

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2.1. Finance: Funding

**BENCHMARK:** The library has sufficient annual operating income to meet community needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The library is supported by local tax funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library director and library board prepare an annual budget that accurately reflects the needs of the library and the community it serves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library budget is presented to the funding authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library board and the director actively seek support for the budget by communicating to the public and to government officials the services, policies and financial needs of the library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library’s annual operating income is sufficient to implement a plan of service based on community need and the Essential level of the Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library meets the <strong>Essential</strong> benchmarks for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenditures per Capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditures per Capita <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Commitment Index <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Benchmark: "Essential"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
<th>Statewide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenditures Per Capita <em>(includes library materials, wages &amp; salaries, benefits, ILS, CE, programs, other expenditures)</em></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$48.00</td>
<td>$48.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditure Per Capita <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Commitment Index <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Meets <strong>Essential</strong> level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library fosters community financial support through Friends of the Library groups (where applicable), foundations and other organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library pursues partnerships and grants that align with its mission and strategic plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library has an established donations and gifts program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The library has a long-range capital plan which is reviewed by its governing body on an annual basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The library board annually reviews the endowment portfolio and investment allocations.

The library's annual operating income is sufficient to implement a plan of service based on community need and the Enhanced level of the *Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries*.

The library meets the Enhanced benchmarks for:
- Operating Expenditures per Capita
- Library Materials Expenditures per Capita *(See definition in Glossary.)*
- Community Commitment Index *(See definition in Glossary.)*

**BENCHMARK "ENHANCED"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
<th>Statewide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenditures Per Capita</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$65.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditure Per Capita <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Commitment Index <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exemplary**

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library has a development plan which is reviewed by its governing body on an annual basis.
- The library has an endowment fund or foundation to meet future goals.
- The library's annual operating income is sufficient to implement a plan of service based on community need and the Exemplary level of the *Best Practices in Connecticut Public Libraries*.

The library meets the Exemplary benchmarks for:
- Operating Expenditures per Capita
- Library Materials Expenditures per Capita *(See definition in Glossary.)*
- Community Commitment Index *(See definition in Glossary.)*

**BENCHMARK "EXEMPLARY"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
<th>Statewide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenditures Per Capita</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$85.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditure Per Capita <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$6.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Commitment Index <em>(See definition in Glossary.)</em></td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Benchmark:** The library is accountable for its judicious use of funds and is in compliance with required fiscal procedures.

**Essential**
- The library uses professionally accepted bookkeeping practices.
- The library complies with local, state and federal fiscal regulations.
- The library's expenditures receive an annual audit or financial review by one or more auditors or CPAs independent of the library board.
- The library is adequately insured against property, casualty and liability loss (including liability coverage for members of the library board).
- The library submits the [Public Library Annual Statistical Report and Application for State Aid](#) to qualify for state funds.
- The library has current policies and procedures regarding payroll, check signing authority, expense reimbursement, cash management, whistleblower, conflicts of interest and document retention.
**BENCHMARK:** Libraries that are contracted to provide service for another municipality that does not have a library can charge a fee that allows proper provision of service for both residents and non-residents. [See Appendix A for more information.]

- Not Applicable

**Essential**
- The library charges a minimum of .3% of the other municipality’s total revenues to provide library service for that municipality.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library charges a minimum of .5% of the other municipality’s total revenues to provide library service for that municipality.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library charges a minimum of 1.0% of the other municipality’s total revenues to provide library service for that municipality.
2.2. Finance: Resources


General Statutes of Connecticut, *Sec. 11-30, Contracts for library service.*

General Statutes of Connecticut, *Sec. 21a-190c, Annual financial reports for charitable organizations.*


See the Expenditures table of the most recent *Connecticut Public Library Statistical Profile.*
3. GOVERNANCE

Public libraries in Connecticut may be municipal government departments or associations. The library governing authority adopts and provides oversight of budgets, supervises the library director, adopts policy and sets direction. This entity can be the library governing board or the local municipal authority.

There are two types of library boards: governing or advisory. A library advisory board advocates for the library and represents the community by advising the library director and the library governing authority. Trustees of governing library boards are public officers and are legally responsible for the governance of the library and conducting its operations in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

Library directors and staff use sound library administration and management practices to apply the policies and statutory obligations of the governing body to the daily operations of the library.

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3.1. Governance

**BENCHMARK:** The library is established and operated in accordance with relevant state and federal laws and local ordinances.

**Essential**
- The library has a mission statement.
- The board complies with *Freedom of Information (FOI)* requirements.
- The library operates under a document (e.g., town charter or ordinance) that legally established the existence of the library and the powers of the governing authority.
- The library advisory/governing board is authorized by a governmental authority with approved responsibilities and powers.
- A non-municipal (association) library has a memo of agreement with the town/city delineating the responsibilities of each.
- There is a job description detailing the responsibilities of board members.
- The library board has a written and approved set of bylaws for its operation.
- The members of a municipal library board reside in the community that the library serves. The members of an association library board are representatives of the community it serves.
- The board holds meetings no less than four times a year.
- The minutes of all board meetings are distributed to the staff.
- The minutes of all board meetings are available to the public in compliance with FOI requirements.
- The board receives financial, narrative and statistical reports for review at each meeting.
- The board conducts an orientation program for each new board member.
- The board of an association library maintains Directors and Operators liability insurance for all board members.
- The board prepares a written performance evaluation of the library director every year.
- The library director attends all board meetings.
- The library director is an ad hoc member of all board committees.
- There is a board handbook for each member providing essential information.
- The board has a code of ethics policy.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The bylaws are reviewed at least every three years.
- The governing body has the authority for hiring, evaluating and firing the library director.
- The board provides annual training and/or continuing education for all board members.
Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The bylaws include specific terms and term limits for board members.
- The board conducts an annual self-assessment.
3.2. Governance: Library Director

**BENCHMARK:** The library is appropriately managed to ensure the development and delivery of services that best meet community needs.

**Essential**

The library director:
- □ Has an MLS from an ALA approved institution. (Libraries with populations of under 5,000 may substitute a library director with substantive and demonstrable training in library science to meet this level.)
- □ Is given a job description detailing his/her responsibilities.
- □ Has the responsibility for creating job descriptions, hiring, evaluating and firing staff.
- □ Provides appropriate administrative reports for review at each board meeting.
- □ Keeps the board informed on a regular basis of regional, state and national library issues.
- □ Engages in the community.

**Enhanced**

- □ Meets Essential level.
- □ There is a full-time (35 hours per week) library director responsible for the daily management of all library operations.
- □ There is a document stating the relationship between the board/governing authority and the library director.
- □ The library director engages in professional development.
- □ The library director actively participates in community organizations.

**Exemplary**

- □ Meets Enhanced level.
- □ The library director participates in regional, state and national library organizations and initiatives.
3.3. Governance: Planning

**BENCHMARK:** The library has a current and comprehensive strategic plan.

**Essential**
- The library has a current strategic plan.
- The strategic plan is readily available to the public.
- The library director facilitates data collection and analysis as the basis of the plan.
- Working with the library board, the library director develops the plan with participation from library staff, stakeholders and community members.
- The library director implements the plan with staff, stakeholders and community members and reports on progress to the board.
- The library has a technology plan prepared by the director and the staff and approved by the board.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library has a current strategic plan which is reviewed at least annually.
- The technology plan is reviewed and revised annually.
- The library has an emergency preparedness plan coordinated with the town’s plan.
- The library board and library director prepare a long-range capital plan.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library board and library director prepare a long-range financial plan.
- A new strategic plan is developed every three to five years.
3.4. Governance: Policies

**BENCHMARK:** The library administration employs acceptable policies in its daily operations.

**Essential**
- The library has a set of policies proposed by the director and approved by the board that is readily available to the staff and the public.
- Each policy is reviewed by the library board at least every three years or more often if needed to reflect changing local needs or state or federal laws.
- The policies are implemented by the library director.
- The library has policies on:
  - American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights
  - Challenged Materials
  - Circulation
  - Code of Conduct
  - Collection Development (including de-selection—i.e., weeding)
  - Confidentiality
  - Customer Service
  - Financial Development, Foundations, Investment and Endowments
  - Freedom to Read and Freedom to View
  - Gifts, Memorials and Sponsorships
  - Internet/Public Access Computers
  - Meeting Rooms, Displays and Exhibits
  - Personnel (if not covered by town policies)
  - Volunteers
  - Website
- These policies are coordinated with other relevant agencies.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The Library has policies on:
  - 3-D Printer Use (if applicable)
  - Access
  - Bulletin Board and Handouts
  - Conflict of Interest
  - Cooperation with Other Libraries
  - Equipment Use
  - Interlibrary Loan
  - Programs
  - Resident and Non-resident Use of Library
  - Staff Development
  - Technology Use
  - Unattended Child (coordinated with police)
Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library has policies on:
  - Proctoring
  - Public Comment at Board Meetings
  - Tutoring

3.5. Governance: Funding

**BENCHMARK:** The library is accountable for its judicious use of funds and is in compliance with required fiscal procedures.

Essential

- The library is in compliance with required fiscal procedures.
- The administration prepares an annual budget proposal that accurately reflects the needs of the library and the community it serves.
- The budget is reviewed and approved by the library board.
- The budget is presented to the funding authority.
- The library board advocates for the budget with the funding authority.
- The library submits required statistics to qualify for state funds.
- The library has an established donations and gifts program.
- The library has current policies and procedures regarding payroll, check signing authority, expense reimbursement, cash management, whistleblower, conflicts of interest and document retention.

Enhanced

- Meets Essential level.
- The library fosters community financial support through Friends of the Library groups, foundations and other organizations.
- The library pursues partnerships and grants that align with its mission and goals.

Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library has an endowment fund or foundation to meet future goals.
3.6. Governance: Assessment

*BENCHMARK:* The library collects and analyzes appropriate data to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of programs and services.

**Essential**
- The library:
  - Includes data collection and analysis as a key component of planning.
  - Reports annually to the board and the public on the impact of library services on the community.
  - Completes and submits the [Annual Statistical Report](#) to the State Library.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library uses a variety of data collection techniques to demonstrate impact and outcomes of programs and services.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library uses the data it collects to support marketing and advocacy efforts.
3.7. Governance: Advocacy, Public and Community Relations

**BENCHMARK**: The library implements a comprehensive advocacy and public relations program as part of its strategic plan.

**Essential**
- Information on library services is readily available to the public.
- The library board promotes the library to the community as outlined in the strategic plan.
- The library director or appointed designee is responsible for media relations.
- The library provides a process for users to communicate concerns and suggestions.
- The library responds to comments and suggestions when contact information is provided.
- The library provides information to the public to keep them informed of its financial needs.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library partners with community groups for their mutual benefit.
- The library develops communication channels with schools for their mutual benefit.
- There is a library presence at significant town events.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library regularly holds focus groups with members of the public on library issues.
- The library has a marketing plan that reflects community needs and interests as part of its strategic plan.
3.8. Governance: Friends of the Library (where applicable)

**BENCHMARK:** The library encourages active community support through Friends of the Library groups and/or library foundations.

**Essential**
- The library has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Friends of the Library. This group needs to abide by state and federal regulations in order to be the library’s official Friends organization.
- The library director or appointed designee serves as liaison to the Friends to ensure that the Friends have needed information regarding the library.
- The library provides information to the Friends about state and national Friends groups.
- A member of the library board serves as an ex officio representative to the Friends board.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- A member of the Friends is appointed to serve as a liaison to the library board.
- The library involves the Friends as stakeholders in strategic planning and fund-raising activities.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
3.9. Governance: Volunteers (where applicable)

**BENCHMARK:** Library policy encourages the use of volunteers as appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library has written policies regarding volunteers and those performing community service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ There is a handbook for volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ There is a training or orientation program for volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Meets Essential level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The contribution of volunteers’ work is formally recognized at least annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Volunteer activity supplements but does not replace paid staff work activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Meets Enhanced level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library has a volunteer coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ The library evaluates volunteers annually.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.10. Governance: Resources


American Library Association (ALA). *Model Memorandum of Understanding*.

Association of Connecticut Library Boards.

Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations.


Friends of Connecticut Libraries.


Sample Connecticut Library Policies.


# 4. RESOURCES & SERVICES

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4.1. Resources & Services: Library Collections and Resources

**BENCHMARK:** Library collections meet the needs and diverse interests of the community and ensure equal access for persons of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

**Essential**

The library:

- Adopts the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights ([http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill)).
- Develops a collection management policy and reviews it on a regular basis.
- Maintains a collection that reflects the needs and interests of the community as determined by the community needs assessment. (See FACILITIES for community needs assessment.)
- Evaluates collections on an ongoing basis for retention, replacement and withdrawal.
- Provides access to materials in all formats and languages necessary to serve the needs of the community.
- Provides assistive technology to ensure access for all persons.
- Provides access to materials that represent a wide range of viewpoints.
- Catalogs collections according to currently accepted cataloging and classification practices to facilitate access and resource sharing.
- Uses an Integrated Library System (ILS) to support the management and development of the collection.
- Displays holdings in a statewide catalog.
- Establishes ongoing methods for the public to provide input on library resources.
- Meets **Essential** benchmarks for:
  - Physical collection turnover. (See "Collection turnover" in Glossary.)
  - Library materials expenditure per capita. (See definition in Glossary.) (All types of materials, including physical and digital items)

**BENCHMARK "ESSENTIAL"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Collection Turnover</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(See Collection turnover in Glossary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditures Per Capita</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All types of materials, including physical and digital items) (See definition in Glossary.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enhanced

- Meets Essential level.
- The library:
  - Collects and reports statistics related to the availability and use of resources.
  - Retains, preserves and/or provides access to material with local historical content.
  - The library provides support for fast and easy access to digital resources.
- Meets Enhanced benchmarks for:
  - Physical collection turnover. (See “Collection turnover” in Glossary.)
  - Library materials expenditure per capita. (See definition in Glossary.) (All types of materials, including physical and digital items)

BENCHMARK "Enhanced"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Collection Turnover</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>(See Collection turnover in Glossary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditures Per Capita</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All types of materials, including physical and digital items) (See definition in Glossary.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exemplary

- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library provides current technology, such as e-publishing, for the creation of original digital content to be considered for addition to the library collection.
- Meets Exemplary benchmarks for:
  - Physical collection turnover. (See “Collection turnover” in Glossary.)
  - Library materials expenditure per capita. (See definition in Glossary.) (All types of materials, including physical and digital items)

BENCHMARK "Exemplary"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Collection Turnover</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>(See Collection turnover in Glossary)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials Expenditures Per Capita</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>$6.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>(All types of materials, including physical and digital items) (Definition in Glossary.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2. Resources & Services: Services

**BENCHMARK:** The library provides free, basic services to everyone.

**Essential**
- The library:
  - Provides **free basic services**, but this does not prohibit it from providing some services (such as photocopying) on a cost-recovery basis.
  - Provides information services to persons of all ages, abilities and levels of literacy. Services include but are not limited to reference, readers' advisory and assistance with access to electronic information.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library provides remote information services via telephone, e-mail or other means.
- The library provides staff with educational opportunities internally to provide services more effectively.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library provides staff with educational opportunities externally (for example sends staff to continuing education opportunities outside the library) to provide services more effectively.

**BENCHMARK:** The library develops mutually beneficial community partnerships to improve service opportunities.

**Essential**
- The library collaborates with community organizations, governmental agencies, schools and other educational or cultural organizations to develop services and programs.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library establishes cooperative agreements with other local agencies for shared services. Examples include partnering with **AARP** to provide tax assistance, with a correctional facility to provide library materials to inmates or with **StoryCorps** to preserve local history.
- Library staff are trained to make appropriate referrals to outside agencies.
4.3. **Resources & Services: Programs**

**BENCHMARK:** The library provides free programs that reflect the diverse needs and interests of the community.

**Essential**
- Offers programs that reflect the diverse needs and interests of the community.
- Offers programs that increase awareness of its resources and services.
- Provides a neutral public forum for the debate of issues.
- Provides programs in physically accessible locations with assistive technology to ensure equal access for all persons.
- Offers programs at times and days of the week that best meet community needs.
- Evaluates and reviews programs on a regular basis.
- Establishes ongoing methods for the public to provide input on library programs.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- Meeting space is provided for community organizations.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- Programs are available online via podcasting or other technologies.
4.4. **Resources & Services: External Communications**

**BENCHMARK:** The library promotes the availability of resources and services through media and Internet sources.

**Essential**
- The library has an up-to-date, easy-to-find web page or Facebook page that includes the library's location, mailing address, phone number, hours of operation, holiday closings, list of administrative staff and department heads with contact information, list of board members, catalog access, access to statewide databases and list of upcoming events.
- The library director has an e-mail account for her/his exclusive use.
- All full-time and administrative staff have their own or departmental e-mail addresses.
- The library provides the option for all staff to have their own e-mail addresses.
- All e-mail messages initiated from the library include a formal signature that includes the sender's full name, e-mail address and other contact information.
- The library issues a monthly calendar of events.
- The library appoints a spokesperson who is authorized to speak to media on the library's behalf.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library has its own website and URL separate from the municipality's site.
- Library staff have editing and administrative privileges over the website.
- The library director designates a specific staff member or members who are responsible for updating and maintaining the web page.
- The library's website also includes information about downloadable books and audiobooks.
- All staff have their own e-mail addresses and e-mail signatures.
- The library issues a regular newsletter and calendar of upcoming events.
- The library issues press releases on newsworthy events and changes at the library and distributes them to the library community as well as to the local community.
- The library uses social media accounts to promote library news and programs.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library's website includes information about and digital images from the local history collection.
- The library's website includes an event calendar with self-registration capabilities.
- The library issues a regular newsletter and calendar of upcoming events by e-mail.

☑
4.5. **Resources & Services: Circulation**

**BENCHMARK:** The library maintains accurate circulation records.

**Essential**
- Circulation desk staff, a self-check machine or a combination of these two can perform the following actions:
  - Check out materials
  - Accept payment of fines
  - Accept payment for damaged or lost materials
  - Issue a library card
  - Give the status of patron reserve requests
  - Give the status of patron accounts (fines, overdues, etc.)
- The library participates in the **borrowIT CT** (formerly Connecticard) program and abides by its regulations (**General Statutes of Connecticut, Sec. 11-31a to 11-31c; Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Sec. 11-31c-1 to 11-31c-5**).

**Enhanced**
- Meets **Essential** level.
- The library enables remote payment of fines.
- The library participates in resource-sharing through the statewide database.

**BENCHMARK:** The library preserves the confidentiality of patron records and safeguards its patrons’ privacy.

**Essential**
- The library abides by state and federal statutes regarding confidentiality of library records (**General Statutes of Connecticut, Sec. 11-25**).
- The library follows the **Connecticut State Library Records Retention Schedule**.
- The library develops and updates a privacy policy protecting patrons’ personally identifiable information.
- Public computers are programmed to delete the browsing history of a patron’s Internet session once the session is ended.

**Enhanced**
- Meets **Essential** level.
- By examining how information about library users and staff is collected, stored, shared, used and destroyed, the library conducts an annual privacy audit to ensure that information processing procedures meet privacy requirements.

**Exemplary**
- Meets **Enhanced** level.
4.6. Resources & Services: Resources

American Library Association (ALA), Library Bill of Rights.

ALA, Resolution on the Retention of Library Usage Records.

ALA, Guidelines for Developing a Library Privacy Policy.

borrowIT CT (formerly Connecticard) program: General Statutes of Connecticut, Sec. 11-31a to 11-31c; Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Sec. 11-31c-1 to 11-31c-5.


General Statutes of Connecticut, Sec. 11-24b. State grants to principal public libraries; incentive grants.

Virginia library standards, Providing free, basic services does not prohibit cost-recovery.
5. STAFF

The success of virtually every program and service of the library depends upon having a skilled, motivated staff. In order to recruit and retain such a work force, the library must seek out the most qualified candidates, offer competitive salaries and benefits, support ongoing training and professional development opportunities and provide a work environment that ensures equitable treatment for all staff.

Table of Contents for Staff

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5.3. Staff: Personnel Policies & Compensation ......................................................................... 53
5.4. Staff: Staff Safety ............................................................................................................... 54
5.5. Staff: Professional Development ......................................................................................... 55
5.6. Staff: Resources ................................................................................................................... 56
5.1. Staff: Library Director

**BENCHMARK:** The library has a director who provides leadership, encouragement and clear communication and supports staff professional development.

### Essential

The director:
- Has an MLS from an ALA approved institution. (Libraries with populations of under 5,000 may substitute a library director with substantive and demonstrable training in library science to meet this level.)
- Ensures that library staff are trained to provide services that support the strategic plan.
- Uses written job descriptions both to hire and to conduct annual performance evaluations.

### Enhanced

The director:
- Meets Essential level.
  - Creates a written plan for recognizing outstanding effort and achievement by library staff.
  - Provides written operational expectations for each position.
  - Implements a written professional development plan for staff that will support the strategic plan.

### Exemplary

The director provides resources and technology tools in support of professional development of library staff.
5.2. Staff: Library Staff

**BENCHMARK:** A sufficient number of qualified and well-trained staff is available during all library service hours.

**Essential**
- The library is staffed with an appropriate number of MLS librarians and other trained individuals who provide specialized services and support technology use.
- Staff receive orientation training upon employment with the library that includes training on *Connecticut state statutes pertaining to libraries*, the library mission statement and values of the library.
- Staff are trained in all policies and procedures required by their positions.
- To ensure the safety and security of the of the building, staff and patrons, the library has a minimum of two paid staff members on the main floor or service area plus one staff member on each additional floor or public service area during all hours the library is open.
- Staff are provided with the necessary tools and technology to provide service.
- Staff are trained on all technology used to provide services to patrons.
- The library meets the **Essential** benchmarks for:
  - FTE staff per 1,000
  - FTE MLS staff per 1,000

**BENCHMARK “ESSENTIAL”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
<th>17,000 to 25,000</th>
<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTE Staff Per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTE MLS Staff Per 1,000 Population</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Enhanced**
- Meets **Essential** level.
- The library is staffed with an appropriate number of MLS librarians and other trained individuals who provide specialized services and support technology use.
- The library employs MLS librarians to oversee programs and services for children, teens and adults.
- The library employs a qualified staff member to coordinate public relations activities for the library.
- Sufficient personnel with expertise in information technology are available to assess, develop/design, administer and maintain library technologies.
- Staff receive training in sensitivity issues including diversity and ability awareness and working with patrons from diverse cultural backgrounds and limited ability to speak English.
- To ensure the safety and security of the of the building, staff and patrons, the library has a minimum of two paid staff members on the main floor or service area plus two staff members on each additional floor or public service area.
during all hours the library is open.

- At least one MLS staff member is on duty during all hours when the library is open.
- The library meets the **Enhanced** benchmarks for:
  - FTE staff per 1,000
  - FTE MLS staff per 1,000

### BENCHMARK “ENHANCED”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
<th>10,000 to 17,000</th>
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<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
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<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTE MLS Staff Per 1,000 Population</td>
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<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exemplary

- Meets **Enhanced** level.
- The library employs a qualified staff member to coordinate development and fund-raising and explore opportunities for grants.
- The library is staffed with an appropriate number of MLS librarians and other trained individuals who provide specialized services and support use of technology.

### BENCHMARK “EXEMPLARY”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Groups, Towns/Cities</th>
<th>Up to 5,000</th>
<th>5,000 to 10,000</th>
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<th>25,000 to 50,000</th>
<th>Over 50,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTE Staff Per 1,000 Population</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.75</td>
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<td>0.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTE MLS Staff Per 1,000 Population</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3. Staff: Personnel Policies & Compensation

**BENCHMARK:** To ensure a productive, engaging workplace with equitable treatment and compensation for all staff, an approved personnel policy is available to all staff members.

- **Essential**
  - The library provides a written personnel policy with detailed descriptions of job classifications, duties and compensation.
  - Entry-level staff salaries meet current [Connecticut Library Association minimum standards](https://www.claroct.org/standard).  
  - Library staff receive benefits comparable to those of municipal staff.
  - All staff have annual performance reviews.

- **Enhanced**
  - Meets Essential level.
  - Entry-level staff salaries exceed current Connecticut Library Association minimum standards.

- **Exemplary**
  - Meets Enhanced level.
  - Salary, benefits and hours are comparable to other positions in the community that require similar education and responsibilities.
5.4. Staff: Staff Safety

**Benchmark:** The library maintains a safe work environment for the staff.

**Essential**
- Announcements can be heard in all areas of the library.
- The Emergency Preparedness plan is available in writing to all library staff and volunteers. (See Facilities – Safety/Security/Emergency Preparedness.)
- Library staff are trained on safety and emergency procedures.
- Library volunteers are trained on safety and emergency procedures.

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- The library has an Emergency Preparedness Committee which includes a member of the municipal public safety department.
- The library schedules at least annual training on emergency and safety procedures for library staff members and volunteers.

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
5.5. Staff: Professional Development

Benchmark: The library delivers valued programs and services through competent, well-trained staff who understand community needs and are committed to high-quality customer service. Staff have the necessary training to provide the best possible patron experience and ensure that patrons have access to all materials and services provided by the library.

**Essential**
- Staff are provided paid release time to attend professional development sessions.
- The library provides regular in-house opportunities for staff development.
- The library provides paid release time for staff to participate in professional organization activities and leadership.
- Staff have minimum professional development contact hours per year:
  - Professional staff (full- and part-time): 14 hours
  - Full-time paraprofessional staff: 8 hours
  - Part-time paraprofessional staff: 4 hours

**Enhanced**
- Meets Essential level.
- Each employee has an individual plan for professional development.
- The library pays staff members’ professional development fees.
- The library offers at least a partial tuition reimbursement for staff pursuing bachelor’s or master’s degrees in library science or Library Technical Assistant certificates.
- The library pays professional organization membership fees for the chief library administrator.
- Staff have minimum professional development contact hours per year:
  - Professional staff (full- and part-time): 21 hours
  - Full-time paraprofessional staff: 12 hours
  - Part-time paraprofessional staff: 8 hours

**Exemplary**
- Meets Enhanced level.
- The library pays all costs for staff professional development activities.
- The library offers paid release time for staff pursuing bachelor’s or master’s degrees in library science or Library Technical Assistant certificates.
- The library pays professional organization membership fees for professional full-time staff.
5.6. Staff: Resources

Professional Organizations and Membership Information

- American Library Association (ALA) | Personal Membership
- Connecticut Library Association (CLA) | Membership
- New England Library Association (NELA) | Membership
- Public Library Association (PLA) | Membership
Glossary

Audit: A detailed examination of accounting records and financial statements by an independent auditor – normally, a certified public accountant (CPA). The auditor will conduct an independent investigation to test the accuracy of the accounting records and the organization’s internal controls. At the conclusion of the audit, the auditor will issue a report in the form of a management letter stating whether, in the auditor’s professional judgment, the accounting records and year-end financial statements are free of material misstatement and are fairly presented based upon the application of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Ideally, auditors will provide an unqualified or “clean” opinion on the organization’s financial statements. Less expensive and less thorough alternatives to an audit are a financial review and a compilation. In Connecticut audits are required for charitable organizations (including association libraries) with revenues greater than $500,000. Non-profits with revenues below that level are not required by the state to complete an audit.

Collection turnover: Total annual circulation divided by total number of physical items held in the collection. Collection turnover does not include electronic and downloadable digital collections. Collection turnover is an important measure of the efficiency and relevance of a library’s physical collection.

On the surface it appears that this same turnover measure could be used to determine the efficiency and relevance of electronic collections such as e-books and downloadable audio. There are two drawbacks to this idea. First, though counting the circulation of electronic materials presents no problems, an accurate count of the number of items in a library’s electronic collections is often problematic. Most libraries are sharing their collections with a network of other libraries and some libraries are providing library users access to a vendor’s entire collection and then limiting users to a certain maximum number of loans per month. If a library is choosing titles specifically for their library users only, then an electronic collections turnover measure might be useful.

Second, unlike physical collections, electronic collections have no costs for storage and shelving. Therefore, though it is important to maintain an efficient physical collection, this is not so important for electronic collections. It is much more important to determine the cost efficiency of an electronic collection than to determine its turnover rate. Measuring the annual circulation of electronic collections divided by the annual amount of dollars spent on access to those collections would provide a better measure of electronic collection efficiency.

Community Commitment Index: The Community Commitment Index takes a library’s total operating expenditures and divides it by the municipality’s total revenues (i.e., all the money the municipality takes in to provide all municipal services, including schools,
etc.).

a) The operating expenditures show the level of resources, regardless of the source of that income, used to provide library services. It does not matter in this index if a municipality chooses to finance its library primarily from the municipal appropriation or from other sources like gifts, donations and endowments. This index does not value one type of income over another.

b) The municipal revenues provide a picture of the municipality’s available resources. A municipality’s resources may be limited or generous depending on a municipality’s available wealth.

c) The resulting index provides a percentage that shows whether a municipality is committing a fair portion of its resources to provide library service. A high percentage indicates that the municipality values its library as an essential part of the community since it has dedicated a higher portion of its resources to providing this service. Less wealthy municipalities can have a higher percentage than wealthier municipalities even when the actual dollar amount spent on the library is less.

Compilation: A procedure in which an accountant assembles an organization’s financial statements from financial data provided by the organization. The accountant does not subject the financial records to any audit or review and thus can express no opinion as to whether they comply with GAAP.

CPA: Certified Public Accountant.

Financial review: An examination of an organization's financial records, but much less thorough than a full audit. Unlike in an audit, the CPA does not express an opinion as to whether the financial statements are in accordance with GAAP. Instead, the accountant merely states whether he or she is aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in conformity with GAAP. A review costs about half as much as an audit.

GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles): The accepted standards used to prepare audited financial statements of both business and nonprofit organizations. GAAP is established by the nonprofit Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB).

Library Materials Expenditure: This is made up of:

- Print materials expenditures: for print materials: books, current serial subscriptions, government documents and any other print acquisitions.
- Electronic materials expenditures: for electronic (digital) materials, including e-books, audio and video downloadables, e-serials (including journals), government documents, databases (including locally mounted, full-text or not), electronic files, reference tools, scores, maps or pictures in electronic or digital format, including materials digitized by the library.
- Other materials expenditures: for other materials, such as microform, audio and video physical units, DVDs and materials in new formats.

Library Materials Expenditure Per Capita is calculated by dividing the Total Library
Materials Expenditure by the population served by the library.

**Management letter/report:** An audit by a CPA includes a study and evaluation of the accounting system that is conducted through interviews, questionnaires and testing of transactions. If the auditors have recommendations about how money is managed or how finances are recorded and reported, they may issue a *management letter* to the board that details any weaknesses and suggestions for improvements.

**Professional Development:** Learning in order to maintain professional qualifications, such as formal coursework, conferences, continuing education and informal learning opportunities.
Establishing Recommended Fee Levels for Contract Services

Amount charged will be based on a percentage of the Municipality’s “Total Revenues” (see the Town Report, under “Operating Results – General Fund”) in the most recent year reported in the most recent edition of Municipal Fiscal Indicators, published by March of each year by the Office of Policy and Management.

Levels for contract services:
Optimum level:  1% of a Municipality’s Total Revenues
Recommended level:  .5%
Minimum level:  .3%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Contracts with</th>
<th>Total Municipal Revenues</th>
<th>1.0%</th>
<th>0.5%</th>
<th>0.3%</th>
<th>Current Payment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town A</td>
<td>Library 1</td>
<td>$17,177,293</td>
<td>$171,773</td>
<td>$85,886</td>
<td>$51,532</td>
<td>$49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town B</td>
<td>Library 2</td>
<td>$7,665,514</td>
<td>$76,655</td>
<td>$38,328</td>
<td>$22,997</td>
<td>$7,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town C</td>
<td>Library 3</td>
<td>$13,571,166</td>
<td>$135,712</td>
<td>$67,856</td>
<td>$40,713</td>
<td>$17,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on FY2016

Reasoning:
- This formula is based on what we see as a very modest minimum for all towns, not just ones that are contracting out. There is no reason why towns without libraries should pay less for, and receive less of library services than, towns with libraries.
- This formula takes into account the wealth of a town. A town with fewer resources will pay less than a town with more.

Other current information:
- $9 per person in Town A – Library 1 – $46,640 or 13.8% of total operating income
- $3 per person in Town B – Library 2 – approx $8,000 – or 2.4% of operating income
- $4 per person in Town C – Library 3 - $17,500 – or 14.2% of operating income