

North Dakota State Library

**Standards
For
Public Libraries**

Introduction

The North Dakota State Library and the North Dakota Library Coordinating Council (NDLCC), recognizes the need for the development and regular review of library standards. Such standards provide assurance of a continuing effort to provide quality and meaningful library services to the citizens of North Dakota. This document represents an effort to establish a baseline of standards for public libraries.

The NDLCC created a task force in June of 2011 to create standards. The *Standards for Public Libraries* were originally adopted in June 2013. The standards were further revised, and the final version was adopted in May 2014 and implemented on July 1, 2017.

In 2017 and 2018, public library compliance with the standards was exceptionally low. A task force was formed in late 2018 with the goal of creating new *Standards for Public Libraries* that would be attainable and aspirational for libraries of all sizes. On May 29, 2019, the NDLCC approved the final version to be implemented on July 1, 2019.

The standards in this document follow a three-level system that is common amongst other public library standards across the country. The levels (Developing, Excelling, and Future-Focused) gradually increase in expectations. All public libraries are held to the same standards regardless of funding, size, or service population.

The standards at each level are uniquely identified with a letter and number. The Developing standards are labeled D1–D25, Excelling standards are E1–E23, and Future-Focused standards are F1–F23.

The document includes a reference column containing additional information and/or links to resources. Most of the standards have a correlating item in the reference column. This is followed by “Yes” and “No” columns which can be used by libraries as a compliance checklist.

The standards set forth in the following document are the primary qualifications for any North Dakota public library to be eligible to participate in the Library Vision grant program. Public libraries must be in compliance with all of the standards at the Developing level in order to be eligible to apply for competitive Library Vision grants. Libraries that reach the Excelling or Future-Focused levels will be recognized and rewarded with a certificate or plaque respectively.

For a library to be considered Excelling, it must meet all of the standards at both the Developing and Excelling levels. In order for a library to be Future-Focused, it must meet all of the standards in the Developing, Excelling, and Future-Focused levels.

Developing

	Standard:	Reference:	Yes	No
D1	Library building meets ADA Accessibility Guidelines.	https://bit.ly/3ai28km		
D2	Library has an identifying sign outside of the building.			
D3	Library has the hours it is open posted on the entrance.			
D4	Library has a secure, after-hours book return.	https://bit.ly/37hYodE		
D5	Library has a telephone.	<i>Note: This cannot be a personal phone number.</i>		
D6	Library has an active email address that is checked on a regular basis.	<i>Note: This cannot be a personal email account due to North Dakota open records laws.</i>		
D7	Library provides public use internet and Wi-Fi.			
D8	Library maintains a website that notes location, hours, contact information, and services.	https://bit.ly/3fTJ9vz <i>Note: A Facebook page does not count as a website.</i>		
D9	Library website provides access to North Dakota State Library online library resources.	http://bit.ly/2Qy3psX		
D10	Library is legally established in accordance with NDCC §40-38-01.	http://bit.ly/2JmuM2A		
D11	Newly hired library director attends a new director orientation conducted by NDSL staff (if applicable).	https://bit.ly/3m9luZ3		
D12	Library files annual report with NDSL by the deadline.	https://bit.ly/2JIEZjw		
D13	Library develops and distributes an annual report of services to local government in accordance with NDCC §40-38-09.	http://bit.ly/2RsMCUj		
D14	Library Board of Trustees meets at least quarterly.			
D15	Library Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public with notice to the general public of the	https://bit.ly/36bfSsW		

	availability of minutes of said meetings in accordance with North Dakota's open records and meeting laws.			
D16	New trustees receive a formal orientation by the library director (if applicable).	https://bit.ly/2VbMfkY		
D17	Library board has adopted circulation policies, such as loan periods, overdues, and fines (if applicable).	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
D18	Library board has adopted collection development policies, such as intellectual freedom, gifts and donations, and weeding.	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
D19	Library board has adopted computer use policies including an internet access policy.	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
D20	Library board has adopted a patron confidentiality policy.	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
D21	All library policies are reviewed and, if necessary, updated every 3 years.			
D22	Library has a 3–5 year strategic plan on file at NDSL.	https://bit.ly/3kDq5oe		
D23	Library performs regular, ongoing weeding of the collection using the CREW method.	CREW Manual: http://bit.ly/2Trq7zW Weeding Resources: https://bit.ly/39nrA5t		
D24	Library offers Interlibrary Loan services to patrons.			
D25	Library has a children's Summer Reading Program.	http://bit.ly/2Cj6lkC		

Excelling

All of the standards in the Developing level plus the following:

	Standard:	Reference:	Yes	No
E1	Library has an automated circulation system and integrated library system (ILS).	https://bit.ly/2JirSQx		
E2	Library has an online public access catalog (OPAC).	https://bit.ly/2JirSQx		
E3	Library has enough public access computers so patrons have access to a computer with a wait time of 30 minutes or less under normal conditions.			
E4	Library promotes services and programs on at least one social media platform.	https://bit.ly/39lcrBP		
E5	Maintenance of Effort: local tax revenues provide at least 50% of the regular operating budget for the library.			
E6	Library has a paid director with either a BA/BS or at least 3 years of library administration experience.	<i>Note: "Library administration experience" is defined as having served as a library director or assistant director.</i>		
E7	Library Board of Trustees meets at least 8 times per year.			
E8	All library staff are provided with a written job description and responsibilities.	https://bit.ly/2JidIPx		
E9	Library director is a member of the North Dakota Library Association (NDLA).	https://ndla.info/join-us		
E10	Library director or another staff member attends the NDLA conference once every 2 years.	https://ndla.info/		
E11	Library director participates in one or more continuing education opportunities each year, such as library-related workshops, conferences, webinars, etc.	https://bit.ly/2JkeU4u		

E12	The library board conducts an annual performance review of the director.	https://bit.ly/2JISDDi		
E13	Each staff member receives an annual performance review by their direct supervisor or the library director (if applicable).	https://bit.ly/3q92hdq		
E14	Library board has adopted facility use policies, such as accessibility, displays, and meeting room use.	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
E15	Library board has adopted public safety policies, such as unattended children and vulnerable adults, inappropriate behavior, and patron-focused emergency guidelines.	https://bit.ly/36d7ads		
E16	Policies are available on the library's website.			
E17	Library is supported by a Library Foundation or has a Friends of the Library group.	https://bit.ly/2JeOvFE <i>Note: A 501(c)(3) status is not required.</i>		
E18	Library is open until 7pm at least one evening during the week.			
E19	Library provides local newspapers.			
E20	Library offers a minimum of 24 children's programs per year.	https://bit.ly/36f3nMV		
E21	Library offers a minimum of 4 teen programs per year.	https://bit.ly/3fFz8Sv		
E22	Library offers a minimum of 8 adult programs per year.	https://bit.ly/2KMic1f		
E23	Library offers at least one STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) program per year, such as through an Hour of Code, LEGO building contest, slime science, etc.	STEAM: https://bit.ly/3mgF3j9 Coding: https://bit.ly/3fzJLR		

Future-Focused

All of the standards in the Developing and Excelling levels plus the following:

	Standard:	Reference:	Yes	No
F1	Library has a public meeting room.			
F2	Library is open a minimum of 4 hours on the weekend.			
F3	Library promotes services and programs on at least two social media platforms.	https://bit.ly/39lcrBP		
F4	Maintenance of Effort: local funding for regular operating budget matches or exceeds prior year's.			
F5	Library has a paid director with an MLS or equivalent from an ALA-accredited institution; or, if library's legal service area is 5,000 or less, library has a paid director with a BA/BS and at least 3 years of library administration experience.	https://bit.ly/3r8gRon <i>Note: "Library administration experience" is defined as having served as a library director or assistant director.</i>		
F6	Library Board of Trustees meets monthly.			
F7	Library director is a member of a national or regional library organization, such as ALA, MPLA, ARSL, etc.			
F8	Library director attends one national or regional professional library conference every 3 years, such as ALA, MPLA, ARSL, etc.			
F9	Library director or board president attends at least one regular business meeting of their city/county commission every quarter.			
F10	Library director or board president is a member of a community organization, such as Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Elks Club, Eagles Club, Rotary, school board, 4H, etc.	https://bit.ly/3nRaZhJ		

F11	All full-time library staff, including the director, assistant director, and those who work in cataloging, public services, reference, or programming, participate in two continuing education opportunities each year, such as library-related workshops, conferences, webinars, etc.	https://bit.ly/2JkeU4u		
F12	All part-time library staff who work in cataloging, public services, reference, or programming participate in one continuing education opportunity each year, such as library-related workshops, conferences, webinars, etc.	https://bit.ly/2JkeU4u		
F13	Library has a 3–5 year technology plan.	https://bit.ly/3OThmfW		
F14	Library has a disaster plan that is reviewed and, if necessary, updated every 3 years.	https://bit.ly/3OVOhA8		
F15	Library board and director conduct a space needs assessment every 3–5 years and make a report of findings to primary funding entity.	https://bit.ly/3s9Eug1		
F16	Library is supported by a Library Foundation or Friends of the Library group with a 501(c)(3) status, or has a fund with a local community foundation (such as the North Dakota Community Foundation).	Friends of the Library/ Foundation: https://bit.ly/2JeOvFE 501(c)(3) Status: https://bit.ly/36brDj2 NDCF: https://ndcf.net/		
F17	Library’s annual budget allocates funds for public relations activities, such as promoting social media posts, promotional videos, etc.			
F18	Library incorporates a unique, recognizable logo on all publications, promotional materials, and its website.			
F19	Library offers a minimum of 48 children’s programs per year.	https://bit.ly/36f3nMV		
F20	Library offers a minimum of 8 teen programs per year.	https://bit.ly/3fFz8Sv		
F21	Library offers a minimum of 16 adult programs per year.	https://bit.ly/2KMic1f		

F22	Library offers coding and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) programming throughout the year in the form of a coding club, LEGO club, Girls Who Code club, or other ongoing program.	STEAM: https://bit.ly/3mgF3i9 Coding: https://bit.ly/3lfzJLR		
F23	Library provides community outreach programs, such as bookmobile programming, home delivery services, and partnerships with local schools, clubs, and assisted living facilities.	https://bit.ly/3nRaZhJ		

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This document is reviewed and updated by NDSL staff as needed to update links and make other minor changes. Substantial changes are submitted to the NDLC for review and revision.

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North Dakota State Library
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Lakota City Library
North Dakota State Library
Morton Mandan Public Library
James River Valley Library System
Garrison Public Library
West Fargo Public Library
Valley City Barnes County Public Library
Grand Forks Public Library

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