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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff, and Trustees



Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

About the Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff, and Trustees

The Montana State Library Commission established the Montana Library Certification Program in 1990 as a completely voluntary program. The goals of the original certification program were to:

- Improve library services throughout the state
- Motivate librarians, staff, and trustees to acquire, maintain and develop their skills through continuing education
- Recognize individuals who update their knowledge and skills on a continuing basis in order to provide better library services to their patrons
- Improve the public image of librarians and libraries
- Provide guidelines for governing boards to use to select and retain personnel

The certification program was updated in 1997 and certification became a requirement for directors of the state's smaller public libraries. The certification requirements remained unchanged from the original 1990 program.

The certification program reflects continual changes in the skills and knowledge needed by librarians to serve their communities, so regular reviews of the original program are done. Beginning in 2006, Montana State Library staff participated in the development of a regional certification program with the Western Council of State Libraries. Initially, it was planned that the Western Council certification would replace the state program, but when the new program officially launched in 2008, the requirements and costs were prohibitive for many Montanans. As a result, the State Library

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decided to update the Montana Library Certification Program rather than replace it with the Western Council program.

To this end, the Montana program underwent an update in 2009. State Library staff and an 11-member Focus Group of volunteer librarians, library support staff, and trustees worked together on the update.

The Focus Group met in February 2009 to develop initial update requirements for certification. These recommendations were announced, and librarians, staff, and board members provided input through an online survey, at the annual library conference, and on the statewide listserv. The data received was compiled and considered by the Focus Group in June and changes were made to the certification requirements in response to this input.

The Focus Group's revised recommendations were presented and discussed at the State Library Commission's August 2009 meeting. Following the meeting, the recommendations were posted on the statewide library listserv so that additional comments could be received and shared with the Commission. The revised recommendations were approved by the Commission in October 2009. The updated program was launched in January 2010. The title was changed to the Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees to clarify that the program certifies not the library, but the people who work for the library and serve the community.

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Goals of the Certification Program

Montana State Library established six goals for the certification program:

Promote continuing education and its impact for quality library services

Bring the Montana Library Certification Program into line with more recent competencies and certification programs such as Western Council and ALA

Improve recognition for librarians who participate and libraries that encourage staff to continue learning by:

1. Improving how certified librarians are recognized
2. Differentiating between minimum and extraordinary efforts
3. Making the program certificate a useful tool for hiring and promotion
 - Develop a track for public library directors that:
 1. Requires continuing education for all public library directors
 2. Is more meaningful for what they need to know

Develop a voluntary track for trustees and/or library boards

Clarify ambiguous sections of the program

In addition to the original goals, two others were added by the Focus Group during the update process:

Develop a new tracking system that replaces continuing education (CE) forms requiring presenter signatures.

Ask library administrators to be more involved with continuing education needs of staff and with verifying participation in training activities to achieve certification.

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A Quick Look at the 2009 Program Changes

Here's a list of the changes made to the certification program as a result of the 2009 update. Details about each of these changes are included in other sections of the program manual.

- Certification reflects participation in continuing education activities (certification levels based on education/experience are discontinued).
- 3 certification tracks are now available: Administrator, Staff and Trustee.
- All public library directors are required to be certified in the Library Administrator Track, including those with MLIS degrees.
- A voluntary certification track requiring 15 credits earned in 4 years is available for trustees.
- 60 CE credits are required for certification in the Administrator and Staff tracks (increased from 40).
- CE credits must be earned within a 4-year period (decreased from 5 years).
- A minimum of 10 credits are needed in each category (increased from 5 credits).
- Certificates are valid for 4 years (decreased from 5 years).
- There is no longer an "other" continuing education category.
- Specializations are available reflecting extra CE credits earned.
- There is no enrollment process. Participants will apply for certification whenever they meet the requirements.
- There are no CE forms requiring signatures.
- There is no prior approval required from the Montana State Library for CE activities.

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- Library directors will assist staff with CE planning and tracking CE activities.
- Library directors and Boards will verify staff participation in CE activities when applying for certification.
- There is an electronic form for tracking CE activities.
- There is an electronic application form.
- The program manual is in electronic format.
- There is no fee for certification (\$10 fee discontinued).
- The program is now the Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees.

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Library Competencies

The American Library Association and the Western Council of State Libraries have both established competencies for librarians and library support staff who are interested in pursuing continuing education and certification. These competencies are designed to help individuals working in libraries understand what they should know or be able to do after achieving certification. After careful review, the Montana State Library determined that the already established competencies provided an effective framework for the state's library certification program.

To review these competencies, please see the following websites:

NOTE: The Western Council of State Libraries determined Library Practitioner Core Competencies and established the Library Practitioner Certificate Program designed for an "individual who is a library director or manager and has no library science degree." The Library Practitioner Certificate Program was discontinued in 2009, though the competencies are still in place. ADDENDUM (2014): There is no longer a link to the Western Council competencies as they no longer display the list these were originally based upon.

[American Library Association's Library Support Staff Certification](#)

Trustees are encouraged to review the competencies listed under the [Voluntary Trustee Certification Track](#) section of this manual. Competencies for trustees were developed by Montana State Library staff in order to assist trustees in finding relevant continuing education opportunities.

ADDENDUM (2014): WebJunction maintains a comprehensive index of library competencies which librarians may find helpful.

[WebJunction Competencies](#)

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Responsibilities of MSL, Library Directors, and Boards

Role Of Montana State Library

In some ways, the role of Montana State Library in the certification program has changed with the 2009 update. The updated program requires less paperwork and continuing education activities are verified locally. This means that the State Library will no longer issue CE forms to verify attendance. Tracking of CE activities with the goal of achieving certification will be done by individuals participating in the certification program. The State Library will provide an online [Certification Continuing Education List](#) for major events sponsored by MLA and MSL. Program participants will be able to select which trainings were attended and transfer those selections to their individual tracking form. See the [Keeping Track Of Continuing Education Credits](#) section of the manual for more information about this form. Verification that an individual has met the certification requirements will be provided by library administrators for their staff members.

Montana State Library will continue to be active in assisting libraries and librarians with meeting continuing education needs and achieving certification. MSL staff will continue to provide assistance with determining the credits and CE category of training offered for Montana librarians. Certification applications will continue to be submitted to State Library staff and certificates will continue to be issued by the agency.

In addition, Montana State Library is charged with:

- Promoting the value of CE to library administrators, staff, support staff, and funders.
- Encouraging boards to support CE for library staff and to consider special recognition for achieving certification.

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- Developing and providing quality training in all formats.
- Keeping Montana librarians informed of CE opportunities.
- Increasing recognition for individuals who earn certification.
- Encouraging boards to use certification as a hiring and promotion tool.
- Implementing electronic certification manual, forms, and tracking capabilities.
- Clarifying program features and requirements.
- Enlisting library directors to assist with tracking and verifying CE credits for staff.
- Providing a list of major continuing education events for certification participants to use to track CE credits.

One important goal of the update process is that greater recognition will be given to individuals who achieve certification. The State Library will do this at various levels including letters to library administrators, press releases to local newspapers, announcements at library meetings and conferences, and other methods of featuring those who have reached this accomplishment. Individuals will be able to direct the State Library's recognition efforts by indicating on the certification application form the level of recognition they prefer.

MSL staff will be available to provide information about continuing education and the certification program.

Role Of Library Directors

Librarianship is an ever-changing field and individuals who work in libraries, no matter the job, need to continually advance their skills, knowledge, and abilities in order to successfully serve the community. Continuing education for library staff is primarily the responsibility of the library director. The

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director can assess both the training needs of staff members and the library's resources available for staff to participate in CE activities.

The role of the library director in the certification program is expanded to an oversight role and in that way provides local direction that reflects specific needs and resources. The library director is asked to take on the following roles:

Support continuing education for all staff and encourage participation in training events

- Include planning for training in scheduling and budgeting
- Promote staff CE with library board or administrative body to get support
- Approve participation in CE activities that are both library-specific and relevant to staff needs
- Use the Continuing Education Credits: What Counts, What Doesn't? Section of the certification manual to help determine the relevance of training
- Contact the State Library for assistance in approving CE events or in selecting appropriate credits or continuing education categories
- Assist staff in locating appropriate training events
- Verify staff participation in training that qualifies for library certification
- Help staff track CE credits with the goal of achieving certification
- Give special recognition to staff who achieve certification
- Remind staff when it is time to certify again

At the time a staff member meets the requirements and applies for certification, the director will sign the continuing education tracking form. The director's signature verifies that the individual has successfully

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completed all of the training activities listed on the form and that the training meets the library's needs.

If a director leaves a library, staff CE accomplishments up to that time can be verified by using the [Montana Certification Program For Library Directors, Staff And Trustees - Interim Verification Form](#). The form can also be used if a staff member leaves the library and wants to continue working toward certification. In this case, the form can be issued and signed by the director. The Interim Verification Form guarantees that the CE credits earned by staff will qualify for certification, even though the individual has a new director or a new position.

Certification is required for all public library directors. The role of planning for and verifying CE activities for these directors is filled by the library's Board of Trustees. For other library directors who elect to participate in the certification program, this can be done by the body or individual responsible for the library director position. This could be a school principal or district superintendent, an academic dean, or a corporate officer.

Montana State Library staff will continue to assist both directors and all certification program participants with the certification process.

Role of the Library Board

Librarianship is an ever-changing field and individuals who work in libraries, no matter the job, need to continually advance their skills, knowledge, and abilities in order to successfully serve the community. Continuing education (CE) for library staff is primarily the responsibility of the library director who can assess both the training needs of staff members and the library's resources available for staff to participate in CE activities. The Board's

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support for continuing education is important for staff development and ultimately for maintaining high-quality services for the library's patrons.

Continuing education is equally important for library trustees who face complex administrative, fiscal, and legal issues while providing direction for the library. Opportunities for trustees to participate in continuing education have increased and there is now a special voluntary certification track for trustees.

In 2010, the Public Library Standards will be modified to require that all public library directors be certified in the Library Administrator Track. The Board has responsibility for verifying that the library meets all standards each year and is therefore eligible to receive state funding. With the update in the certification program, the role of planning for and verifying CE activities for the director is filled by the Board. At the time the library director meets the requirements and applies for certification, the Board chair will sign the application form. The Board chair's signature verifies that the director has successfully completed all of the training activities listed on the tracking form and that the training qualified for library certification.

If a director leaves a library, his/her CE accomplishments up to that time can be verified by using the [Montana Certification Program For Library Directors, Staff And Trustees - Interim Verification Form](#). This form can be signed by the Board chair. It guarantees that the CE credits earned by the director can be used for certification, even though the individual has a new position.

The role of the Board in the certification program is to:

- Support continuing education for all staff and encourage participation in training events
- Include training in scheduling and budgeting

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- Approve participation in CE activities that are library-specific and relevant to staff needs
- Verify the director's participation in training that qualifies for library certification
- Ensure that the director is certified so the library meets the state standards
- Give special recognition to staff who achieve certification
- Encourage Board members to participate in CE activities and to become certified
- Trustees in the voluntary Trustee Track
- Consider using certification as a hiring and promotion tool

Montana State Library staff will continue to assist Boards, directors, and all certification program participants with the certification process.

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Becoming Certified

Who Should Become Certified?

As our world changes all of us need to acquire and learn new skills that will help us move forward personally and professionally. Libraries are often seen as lifelong learning centers that encourage, support, and foster continued learning amongst community members. Library directors, staff, and trustees who also embrace learning are a part of this robust community. Taking continuing education courses is an important part of remaining skilled in the library profession. Certification is a way to receive recognition for individual commitment to continuing education and lifelong learning.

The Montana State Library Commission encourages library directors, staff, trustees, and support staff to participate in continuing education activities and to become certified. This leads to better service for the community and to an increase in skills or knowledge that benefits the library, the community, and the individual taking continuing education courses. Members of Friends and Foundations interested in certification are encouraged to explore the Trustee Track.

Certification is mandatory for:

- All public library directors

Certification is voluntary for:

- Library staff
- Trustees
- Others interested in libraries and wanting to pursue continuing education

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Public Library Directors Must Be Certified

Certification is mandatory for all public library directors (including those with MLS/MLIS degrees) in order for the library to receive state funding.

Directors must complete the Library Administrator Track which involves the following:

- 60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period
- Minimum of 20 credits earned in the Library Administration CE category
- Minimum of 10 credits in each of the other CE categories: Collection Management and Technical Services, Library Services to the Public, and Technology
- Balance of credits are electives

Directors with an MLS/MLIS degree earned within the last 4 years can apply for certification immediately. Those who have an older degree and are not already certified have until December 31, 2013 to fulfill the Library Administrator Track requirements.

Certificates are valid for 4 years. All public library directors must continue to participate in continuing education activities and apply for certification every 4 years to remain certified.

Newly hired directors will have 4 years to earn a certificate. The State Library will send the director and board a letter with information about the certification program and the date the requirement must be met.

Requirements for Certification Tracks and Specializations

Three certification tracks are available so participants can pursue continuing education that is more relevant to their particular needs.

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The three tracks and the requirements for achieving certification in each track are given below:

1. Library Administrator Track (required for all public library directors)

- 60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
- Minimum of 20 credits in the Library Administration CE category
- Minimum of 10 credits in each of the other 3 CE categories (Library Services to the Public, Collection Management and Technical Services, and Technology)
- Balance of credits are electives

2. Library Staff Track

- 60 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
- Minimum of 10 credits in each of the 4 CE categories (Library Administration, Library Services to the Public, Collection Management and Technical Services, and Technology)
- Balance of credits are electives

3. Trustee Track

- 15 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:
- Minimum of 10 credits in the Library Administration CE category
- Balance of credits are electives and can be earned in any CE category (Library Services to the Public, Collection Management and Technical Services, and Technology)

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Specializations

There are also certification specializations available that make it possible for participants to be recognized for continuing education in a given category that is above and beyond the basic certification requirement. Participants can earn a specialization in Collection Management and Technical Services, Library Services to the Public, and/or Technology by accumulating a minimum of 20 credits (10 credits for trustees) in that category. Because there is a Library Administrator Track, there is not a specialization in the Library Administration continuing education category. Individuals interested in Library Administration as a specialization are encouraged to pursue the Library Administrator Track.

NOTE: One contact hour of qualified training equals one continuing education credit. See the [Certification And College Coursework- Including MLS/MLIS Degrees](#) section of this manual for information about using college credits for certification.

Voluntary Trustee Certification Track

Library trustees must always be aware of the issues, opportunities and challenges facing public libraries. Providing high quality service to patrons is the way to assure Montana's public libraries remain successful. The Montana library community needs well-educated trustees to sustain this success. The skills developed through voluntary certification allow trustees to fulfill their responsibilities to their library and its patrons.

Program Requirements

- 15 continuing education credits earned in a 4-year period which includes:

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- Minimum of 10 credits in the Library Administration continuing education category
- Balance of credits are electives
- Verification of continuing education credits by the Board chair (NOTE: The Board chair's continuing education credits can be verified by another member of the library Board.)
- Trustees can earn a specialization in Collection Management and Technical Services, Library Services to the Public, or Technology by accumulating a minimum of 10 credits in that category.

How much does it cost?

- There is no fee for certification; however, there are costs in terms of time and possible travel expenses.

Why should I get certified?

- Improve your library
- Increase board involvement
- Increases board member effectiveness
- Contributes to a professional team atmosphere for the board

What are the competencies for the trustee certification program?

- Knowledge of applicable laws, current library trends and services
- Conduct and contribute to effective board meetings
- Build effective relationships with the director, local government officials, and community members.
- Encourage and promote active use of the library
- Recruit, hire, and evaluate the library director
- Develop policies that will result in the effective operation of the library

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- Adopt a budget that meets the current and planned operational needs of the library
- Assess library building needs and attempt to create and/or maintain a physical building that is user friendly and accessible
- Develop and evaluate short- and long-term plans for the library
- Develop and maintain partnerships with other organizations, agencies, and institutions including Friends and Foundations
- Information about how to earn CE, applying for certification and other certification topics is found in other sections of this manual

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Earning Continuing Education Credits

Continuing Education Credits: What Counts, What Doesn't?

Library-specific training provided by library or library-related organizations that is presented in a structured learning situation is eligible for continuing education credits.

Useful/valuable training is:

- Focused on learning and the learner. A valuable session imparts knowledge or skills that can be used to improve library services. The session will incorporate a variety of exercises and teaching styles that address the needs of different types of learners.
- Engaging. The student is interested and excited about the material and wants to learn more about the topic.
- Mentally stimulating. The student is challenged to learn a new skill or a different way of thinking.
- Relevant. The student is learning a topic or skill that will be useful professionally.

Criteria for what counts:

- Is it training that is presented in a structured learning situation?
- Is it library specific?
- How does it help you do your job better?
- Does it address one or more of the competencies that you need to know to do your job?

There are many ways and opportunities to learn, but in general eligible training is not:

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- Meetings
- Archived webinars that are older than 1 year
- Courses that are not relevant to the library such as safe driving or other safety training
- Yoga
- Software training for products that are not library-specific
- CPR/first aid
- Job/employee orientations
- Author talks
- Vendor demonstrations

Examples of training venues that would be eligible for continuing education credit are:

- Montana Library Association conferences and retreats.
- Online courses from library support services providers such as OCLC, WebJunction, BCR
- Online and in person courses provided by Montana State Library
- Regional, national, and international library association conferences, retreats, and workshops
- Staff training days presented at your library

How To Earn Continuing Education Credits

Work with your supervisor to determine what trainings might be most helpful to you.

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Locate/identify relevant training opportunities such as the MLA conference, online courses, etc.

Check the [Montana Library Events Calendar](#)

Subscribe to [Wired-MT](#) for information about workshops and online classes that are available

Network with regional librarians or your local government officials to learn about area trainings that may be relevant to your training needs

See the [Training and Learning Opportunities](#) section of this manual

Attend training.

Record attendance on the electronic tracking form provided by the Montana State Library. This can be done in two ways:

Major continuing education activities such as those sponsored by MLA or MSL will be listed for a limited time on the [Certification Continuing Education List](#) by State Library staff and include all of the information needed for your CE tracking form -- Event/Sponsor, Date, Workshop/Training Title, Trainer/Presenter, Number of Credits, and CE Category. Following the event, you can access this list and then copy and paste the information onto your personal tracking form for CE events you attended.

For other continuing education activities such as webinars or library staff days, you will add these events directly to your tracking form if approved by your supervisor. The information required will be the Event/Sponsor, Date, Workshop/Training Title, Trainer/Presenter, Number of Credits, and CE Category. Your supervisor will help with the number of credits and CE category. If uncertain of category, please contact the State Library for

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assistance. NOTE: When adding CE activities to the tracking form, only .5 is accepted for partial credits earned; no other partial credits are accepted.

Be sure to select trainings in each continuing education category.

Earn continuing education credits in a 4-year period to meet certification requirements.

Training And Learning Opportunities

Training is available at:

- Montana Library Association conferences and retreats
- Federation meetings
- Online and in person events sponsored by the Montana State Library
- Online classes provided by library support services providers such as BCR, OCLC, WebJunction
- Online and in person events sponsored by regional, national, or international library associations
- Staff training days offered at your library
- Online and in person events sponsored by local government officials that are relevant to the library
- Additional opportunities are listed at Montana State Library's [Library Learning](#) web site.

Which Continuing Education Category Is Right?

Montana State Library staff will continue to assist in determining the appropriate continuing education category for approved training events. Below is a sample of some common training topics and the continuing education category assigned in the certification program.

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Certification program participants may find these charts helpful in assigning CE categories to events attended. Your supervisor will help with the number of credits and CE category. If uncertain of the category, please contact the State Library for assistance.

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Library Administration	Library Services to the Public
Library law Library policies Friends and Foundations Budgeting and finance Policy development Long range planning Human resources Board and staff development Interpersonal relationships Time management Marketing Assessing community needs Grant writing Fundraising	Early literacy programs Programming for the community Customer service Book clubs Developing research skills Information services Outreach activities ILL Book challenges Censorship Copyright
Collection Management and Technical Services	Technology
Materials selection and processing Collection development and policies Organizing the collection Caring for the collection Book repair Cataloging materials Maintaining the library catalog MARC, Dublin Core, FRBR standards Selecting/managing electronic resources Selecting/evaluating subject specialties for the library collection	Using or creating databases Using OCLC tools Computer repair and/or troubleshooting Computer networking Library-related software Digitization projects Library automation Building/maintaining a library web page Technology plans Trends in library technology

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For College Coursework– Including MLS/MLIS Degrees

Library science college coursework completed during a 4-year certification period can be used for continuing education credits. Both undergraduate and graduate level library science courses can be converted into continuing education credits using the formula below:

1 semester credit course = 4 continuing education credits

2 semester credit course = 8 continuing education credits

3 semester credit course = 12 continuing education credits

1 quarter credit course = 2 continuing education credits

2 quarter credit course = 4 continuing education credits

3 quarter credit course = 6 continuing education credits

To be eligible for CE credits college coursework must, for the most part, be library specific. Possible exceptions to this might be courses in public administration. Determination on assigning CE credits to coursework that is not library-specific will be made by library administrators on an individual basis as requested by staff who have completed college courses.

If an individual has recently completed a graduate degree in library science, the degree can be used to meet certification requirements. To be used for certification, the degree must have been awarded within the 4 years prior to the time the individual applies for certification. In the interest of protecting the privacy of certification applicants, the Montana State Library no longer accepts copies of college transcripts. In lieu of transcripts, applicants should submit as part of their application an official acknowledgement of degree completion from the appropriate collection official of the granting academic institution. Appropriate college officials include a representative of the

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Registrar's or Bursar's Office or the Dean or Assistant Dean of the relevant graduate program. A statement from the college official may take the form of an official document used by the institution and/or an email from the school's email system to the CE Coordinator at the MT State Library. The acknowledgement should indicate the name of the applicant, the name of the degree and the month and date that it was conferred. **Do not include personal information such as student ID#, Social Security #s or birthdates.**

For Serving as Site Supervisor for Library School Practicum Students

For Serving as the Site Supervisor for Library School Practicum Students

Librarians are encouraged to support learners attending library school by accepting internships when possible. Some programs of study for librarianship require a practicum experience, and for those seeking post-graduate credentials while working/living here in Montana, it can be challenging to find a site. Furthermore, librarians gain significant insights in providing supervision to students in library school while also contributing to field by supporting practicum programs. The process of supervising an intern in your library is recognized for credit when the practicum meets all the following requirements:

- The practicum is structured within a specific time frame with objectives and responsibilities for both the practicum student and the supervisor and the practicum is under the direction of faculty of a program of library science at an accredited university The practicum is a minimum of 20 hours of student work
- Normally, the designated site supervisor may claim credit for the practicum as the primary supervisor of the student; if the supervising plan for the practicum involves the student working under more than one person

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at the library, or more than one library site, then the credits may be divided, provided each supervising period is at least 10 hours of student work time

- The site supervisor fulfills all requirements of the college and retains documentation that all requirements have been fulfilled
- Librarians may claim credit for more than one practicum, but not if they supervise more than one practicum student for the same academic time period. For example, if a site supervisor takes on a student one year, and a different student the next year, they may claim credit for both supervision periods. If they supervise two students during the same semester, though, they may only claim credit for one.

Site supervision is applied to the library administration category with credits earned according to the following formula:

Practicum hours*: CE credits:

10	3
20	7
30	10
40	14
60	20

*Practicum hours refers to the total number of hours that the student spends working at the site library

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

For Continuing Education Credits for Presenting Workshops

Participants in the certification program are eligible for continuing education credits for workshops that they develop and present for librarians or trustees on library-related topics. The formula for CE credits is the length of the workshop times two.

Example: A 4-hour workshop about library law will be 4 CE credits for attendees and will be 8 CE credits for the presenter (4 hours x 2).

Credits can only be earned once unless substantial changes are made to the presentation. Presenters can only receive credit twice per training topic in a 4-year certification period.

If you are preparing a training session for librarians or trustees, your supervisor will help with the number of credits and CE category. If uncertain of the category, please contact the State Library for assistance.

Keeping Track of Continuing Education Credits

With the new certification system, library staff, administrators, trustees, and others are responsible for tracking their continuing education credits. In the past participants in the certification program would ask presenters to sign a form and then mail the forms and an application to the Montana State Library.

To respond to the request for less paperwork, the State Library will no longer require CE forms with verifying signatures. Instead, participants will track their continuing education activities electronically on a form provided by the State Library. When applying for certification, both the applicant and supervisor will verify that the list of continuing education activities is accurate. The supervisor for staff is the library director or department head; for library directors, the Board chair, school principal/superintendent,

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corporate administrator, or other individual responsible for the library; for trustees, the Board chair; and for Board chairs, another member of the library Board.

The following steps describe the process for keeping track of CE credits.

Work with your supervisor to select relevant training.

After attending a continuing education event, add that event to your CE tracking form. This can be done in two ways:

Major continuing education activities such as those sponsored by MLA or MSL will be listed for a limited time on the [Certification Continuing Education List](#) by State Library staff and include all of the information needed for your CE tracking.

For other continuing education activities such as webinars or library staff days, you will add these events directly to your tracking form if approved by your supervisor. The information required will be the Event/Sponsor, Date, Workshop/Training Title, Trainer/Presenter, Number of Credits, and CE Category. Your supervisor will help with the number of credits and CE category. If uncertain of category, please contact the State Library for assistance. For events such as library conferences that offer multiple workshops, each session attended should be listed separately on the tracking form.

When you have the requisite number of credits, ask your supervisor to verify your participation in these CE activities by signing the certification application form.

What if my director or supervisor leaves? Or what if I change jobs?

Before the change takes place, ask your supervisor to help you complete an Interim Verification Form that you will submit when you apply for

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certification. This form will be attached to your CE tracking form listing training attended before the change in supervisor or position.

Continue earning CE credits in your new position or under your new supervisor. You will continue tracking CE (details above) listing training attended after the change and these continuing education activities will be verified by your new supervisor.

To apply for certification, submit the Interim Verification Form signed by your previous supervisor, the tracking form with CE activities, and the application form signed by your current supervisor.

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

Applying for Certification

Keeping Track of Continuing Education Credits

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To respond to the request for less paperwork, the State Library will no longer require CE forms with verifying signatures. Instead, participants will track their continuing education activities electronically on a form provided by the State Library. When applying for certification, both the applicant and supervisor will verify that the list of continuing education activities is accurate. The supervisor for staff is the library director or department head; for library directors, the Board chair, school principal/superintendent, corporate administrator, or other individual responsible for the library; for trustees, the Board chair; and for Board chairs, another member of the library Board.

The following steps describe the process for keeping track of CE credits.

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1. Major continuing education activities such as those sponsored by MLA or MSL will be listed for a limited time on the [Certification Continuing Education List](#) by State Library staff and include all of the information needed for your CE tracking.

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What if my director or supervisor leaves? Or what if I change jobs? Before the change takes place, ask your supervisor to help you complete an Interim Verification Form that you will submit when you apply for certification. This form will be attached to your CE tracking form listing training attended before the change in supervisor or position.

Continue earning CE credits in your new position or under your new supervisor. You will continue tracking CE (details above) listing training attended after the change and these continuing education activities will be verified by your new supervisor.

To apply for certification, submit the Interim Verification Form signed by your previous supervisor, the tracking form with CE activities, and the application form signed by your current supervisor.

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

How To Apply for Certification

When you have met the requirements for the certification track you selected - Administrator, Staff, or Trustee - you submit the materials listed below to Montana State Library:

Completed online [Submit My CE Certification Application Form On-line](#) providing:

Applicant's information

Certification track selected

Specializations achieved

Signature of applicant

Signature of supervisor verifying CE credits:

Staff supervisor is the director or department head

Director supervisor is the Board chair or administrator responsible for the library

Trustee supervisor is the Board chair

Board chair supervisor is another Board member

Indication of preferred recognition level

Completed tracking form of all successfully completed training providing:

Event/Sponsor

Date

Workshop/Training Title

Trainer/Presenter

Number of Credits

CE Category

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

Continuing education credits must be earned within the 4-year period prior to applying for certification. For events such as library conferences that offer multiple workshops, each session attended should be listed separately on the tracking form.

If you have recently (within the last 4 years) earned an MLS/MLIS degree and are applying for certification based on the degree award, please apply online and indicate a college official to verify the degree conferred and the date that it was conferred. [See details about how a graduate degree qualifies here.](#)

Continuing Education Contact

If you have questions about continuing education or the certification program, please contact:

Joann Flick

Montana State Library

(406)431-1081

Jflick@mt.gov

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Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff and Trustees

Forms

See following pages for the Application Form, Interim Verification Form, and MSL CE Certification – Press Release Template.

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Montana Certification Program For Library Directors, Staff And Trustees - Application Form

Please provide all of the information requested below and **submit the application form and your continuing education documentation** to the Montana Certification Program, PO Box 201800, Helena MT 59620-1800. For continuing education earned before January 1, 2010, you can send ce forms with presenter signatures verifying your attendance. For continuing education earned following January 1, 2010, you can submit your CE Tracking Form listing training events you attended; these credits are verified by your supervisor's signature on this application.

Name _____

Street Address (home) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Library _____

Email address _____

NOTE: All continuing education credits must be earned within a 4-year period prior to applying for certification. Certificates are valid for four years.

A. There are 3 certification tracks available. Please indicate the track you are applying for:

- Administrator Track – required for public library directors
(minimum of 60 credits: 20 credits in Library Administration, 10 credits in each of the other CE categories)
- Staff Track
(minimum of 60 credits: 10 credits in each CE category)
- Trustee Track
(minimum of 15 credits: 10 credits in Library Administration)

B. Specializations are available to recognize individuals for earning continuing education credits in a given category above and beyond the basic certification requirement. Specializations can be earned in one or more CE categories by accumulating a minimum of 20 credits in that category. Because there is a Library Administrator Track, there is not a specialization in the Library Administration continuing education category. Individuals interested in Library Administration as a specialization are encouraged to pursue the Library Administrator Track.

If you are applying for a specialization, please indicate which specialization you have earned:

- Library Services to the Public
- Collection Management & Technical Services
- Technology
- None

C. Montana State Library is committed to increasing recognition for librarians, support staff and trustees who achieve certification. To meet this goal, all individuals achieving certification will be announced at the Montana Library Association annual conference. Please indicate below what other form(s) of recognition you would like us to do: (check all that apply)

Letter to your director

Letter to your Board

Letter to local government officials

Please tell us who would be appropriate: _____

Press release to your local newspaper

Please don't do any notification

D. Verification of participation in continuing education activities during the certification period is required. Please sign and date this form. A signature from your library director (for library staff applications) or library administrator (for library directors) is also required. The library administrator could be the Board chair, school principal or superintendent, or corporate executive.

I hereby certify that the list of continuing education activities attended and credits earned is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that misrepresentation of this data may result in denial or revocation of the certificate.

Applicant's Signature

Date

My signature verifies the applicant's participation in the continuing education events listed on the ce tracking form submitted with this application.

Supervisor Signature

Date

Supervisor Name (printed) and Title

Montana Certification Program For Library Directors, Staff And Trustees - Interim Verification Form

This form is for participants in the certification program to use when they or their supervisor changes jobs. The form verifies the continuing education credits earned prior to the time of the employment change. This form will be submitted when applying for certification.

I hereby certify that the attached list of continuing education activities attended and credits earned by:

_____ (Name)

to this date _____ is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that misrepresentation of this data may result in denial or revocation of the certificate.

Supervisor Signature

Date

Supervisor Name (printed) and Title

PRESS RELEASE

<<Today's date>>

For Release: Immediately

Contact: <<Library Director, Library Name, email & phone>>

<<Librarian's Name>> Earns Montana State Library Certification

(HELENA) --- The Montana State Library is pleased to announce that <<librarian's name>>, librarian at the <<library name>> Library in <<town>>, has received <<his/her>> certificate from the Montana State Library certification program for library directors, staff, and trustees. The goal of the Montana State Library's certification program is to ensure that Montana's library patrons receive the best possible library service.

<<Insert quote here from library director or trustee related to the value of professional development and the goals of continuing education at the local library. Here is suggested text - The <<library name>> actively promotes professional development for staff. This effort includes providing staff with travel support to attend training and encouraging staff to participant in online learning opportunities. This investment is pursuant to the public library standards set by the Montana State Library Commission.>>

"Library services are changing and today's librarians have to be knowledgeable in a wide range of areas – from human resources to online information delivery," said Jennie Stapp, Montana State Librarian. "Additionally, Montana librarians have to work extra hard to provide the best in modern library service in our rural state by making innovative use of technology and resource sharing. Our library certification program rewards the efforts of librarians like <<librarian's name>>, to keep their skills up to date."

To receive the Library Certification, <<librarian's name>>, earned more than 60 valid continuing education credits in a four-year period. Certification expires in four years, so librarians must continue to seek professional development to maintain their certification.

"Montana librarians are public servants and this certification program helps them to provide top-notch service to our state's citizens," said Stapp. "Whether a patron needs help looking for work, planning a trip, applying for college scholarships, or just finding a good book for the weekend, our librarians will help them find whatever they need to move forward with their lives."

Through its statewide programs, the Montana State Library empowers Montanans; enhances learning in families and communities; builds 21st Century skills; and provides opportunities for civic participation. For more information about the Montana State Library, visit msl.mt.gov.

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