

Jefferson County Library Service Guidelines

To ensure all Jefferson County residents receive quality public library service, the Jefferson County Library Board seeks to support and strengthen established municipal libraries. To that end, the following guidelines have been adopted.

Chapter 43.11 (d) and Chapter 43.64 (2m) of the Wisconsin State Statutes allows counties to set standards for public libraries. However, the Jefferson County library board seeks to encourage rather than penalize. Therefore, the following are set forth as minimum guidelines and not legally required standards. It should be noted that the state of Wisconsin has published library standards. Please consult: Wisconsin Public Library Standards (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction) at <https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/planning-evaluation> for further information.

The Jefferson County Library Board seeks to do its part to encourage excellence in public library service within our county. Excellence is not a mere dream. Despite the multifaceted character of the nation's public libraries and diverse communities they serve, excellence is achieved daily. Three principles are worth noting:

--Excellence must be defined locally - it results when library services match community needs, interests, and priorities

--Excellence is possible for both small and large libraries - it rests more on commitment than on unlimited resources

--Excellence is a moving target - even when achieved, excellence must continually be maintained

Each community must do the work to set its own standards for excellence in public library service. An annual review of these guidelines can be a step in a continuous process of self-evaluation and planning that leads toward excellence.

All county libraries should:

- Provide free, equal, and easy public access to all library services to county residents.
- Be in compliance with all requirements for library system membership and participate in system activities.
- Be governed by Boards of Trustees which represent their communities and are responsible for ensuring that library services meet community needs.
- Provide an orientation and/or manual for new library board trustees.
- Encourage trustees to take part in continuing education and enrichment programs.

- Have long range plans that articulate their mission and plans for achieving results.
- Adopt and maintain policies that guide operations.
- Draw support from their communities and spend public funds responsibly. It should be noted that the public library must be supported by funds from local government on a permanent basis; special grants and donations supplement, but do not supplant, the responsibility of the local funding authority to support the library.
- Provide accurate accounting of budget and expenditures.
- Encourage gifts and bequests to augment the primary funding sources.
- Cooperate with other libraries and community agencies to broaden their services and engage partners.
- Have trained staff and properly certified library directors responsible for their overall operation.
- Provide collections which are important community resources.
- Provide a clean, safe, and an ADA accessible facility.
- Provide patron access to the Internet, governed by locally determined policy.
- Maintain a website that provides access to the library's catalog, an up-to-date calendar, subscription databases such as BadgerLink, e-content, and the library board agendas and minutes.
- Offer services and programs for all ages that are appropriate to the mission of the library.
- Encourage volunteers, Friends, and/or other support groups to work for the library to broaden library services and increase community involvement.
- Conduct an annual review of the library director.
- Annually assess their library's performance against the guidelines.

Adopted by the Jefferson County Library Board on December 3, 2024