Standards

for

Member Libraries

within

Alberta's
Regional Library Systems

Chinook Arch Regional Library System
Marigold Library System
Northern Lights Library System
Parkland Regional Library
Peace Library System
Shortgrass Library System
Yellowhead Regional Library

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Introduction

Standards may be defined as a degree or level of requirement, excellence or attainment that serve as a point of reference for comparison and evaluation. They are a framework for planning and achieving "best practice" and excellence in the management and provision of library services. At the same time, standards provide a baseline measure for providing an essential, or basic, level of service.

The focus of these standards is the resources that member libraries within regional library systems need in order to provide a full range of 21st century library services to their residents.

The partnership between systems and their member libraries is earmarked by decentralized delivery of library services supported by centralized provision from the system headquarters of technical, technological and consultative services, special collections and other services.

These standards:
- ensure equity in the level and delivery of library services for residents of Alberta's regional library systems
- are a point of reference for self-evaluation
- provide a rational framework for future development
- accommodate change in policy, technology and formats of materials
- encourage cooperation

These standards allow a library board to select a level—essential, enhanced or excellent—at which it will provide a particular service. Needs assessments and local conditions will help the board as it determines which services it will offer at which level. Headquarters staff and member library boards and staff work together to meet the selected level of service.
- Essential level provides basic library service
- Enhanced level builds on the essential service
- Excellent is the highest level of service

Process

The need for standards for member libraries within Alberta's regional library systems was identified by the system directors. The Assistant Director of Marigold Library System was asked to chair a committee to develop these standards. Each system appointed a member to the committee:

Karen Labuik, Assistant Director (chair)
        Marigold Library System

Barb Godkin, Librarian Consultant
        Chinook Arch Regional Library System

Kerry Anderson, Public Services Librarian
        Northern Lights Library System

Mary Jane Bilsland, Systems Librarian
        Parkland Regional Library

Linda Duplessis, Director
        Peace Library System

Julia Reinhart, Head Librarian, Brooks Public Library
        Shortgrass Library System

Kevin Dodds, Manager, Public Services
        Yellowhead Regional Library

Pat McNamee (ex officio), Consultant
        Alberta Community Development
        Libraries, Community and Voluntary
        Sector Services Branch

The committee met in February 2003 to develop its plan of action, in April to check progress and seek input from other committee members, and in September to accept the standards prior to presenting them to the system directors.

Working independently or in small groups and by email, the committee drew on its combined total of 151 years of experience in libraries in three provinces and on standards developed by other jurisdictions to craft a set of standards for member libraries within Alberta's regional library systems.

The process of developing standards becomes a continuous one. As standards are used, notes for future revisions are inevitable. As philosophies, policies and practices change, these standards must be reviewed and revised to reflect the changing social, political and economic environment.

Governance

Quality library service is dependant upon sound and resourceful leadership. In the province of Alberta there are four levels which play a leadership role in the development and sustainability of quality library service. These levels are:

- provincial government
- local municipal governments
- library system boards
- municipal library boards

The administrative arms of each level should look continually toward the future to ensure that needs are anticipated and that emerging methods are employed effectively. Each library should be administered with foresight and integrity. To accomplish this, standards for governance have been established for each level to follow and incorporate into the roles each level plays.

Libraries in all population levels should meet the definition of a public library as stated in *The Alberta Libraries Act.*

The Province Of Alberta

"The provincial role is: to support equitable access to library service; to maintain a governance structure; to provide funding assistance and to establish a province wide network for communications and sharing of library resources. *The Libraries Act* will position Alberta's libraries to take a lead role in the delivery of information in the age of connectivity."

- The Alberta Libraries Act Chapter L-11 2000: A Guide to the Legislation

Local Municipal Governments

Regardless of the population base, each local municipal government:

- establishes library board by bylaw
- appoints library board members in accordance with legislation
- may appoint up to two council members to the municipal library board
- approves municipal portion of library board's budget
- joins system, pays system levy and appoints one representative to library system board

Library System Boards

"The library system board, subject to any enactment that limits its authority and the agreement described in section 13, has full management and control of the library system and shall, in accordance with the regulations and in co-operation with other boards, organize, promote and maintain comprehensive and efficient library services."

- The Alberta Libraries Act Chapter L-11 2000: Guide to the Legislation

Regardless of population served, each system board:

- complies with legislation and is autonomous under *The Libraries Act**
- understands role of a governing board and provides board orientation and handbook
- takes leadership role by supporting and enhancing municipal library services
- fulfills role as a mechanism for resource sharing among members
- participates in The Alberta Library (TAL), Alberta Public Library Electronic Network (APLEN) and other consortia to enhance and expand services
- acts in cooperative and consultative capacity with member libraries

*denotes that within the legislative framework, each of the seven library systems and each municipal library within a system, has developed service, funding, and relationship models that respond to local conditions.

Municipal Library Boards

"The municipal board, subject to any enactment that limits its authority, has full management and control of the municipal library and shall, in accordance with the regulations, organize, promote and maintain comprehensive and efficient library services in the municipality and may co-operate with other boards and libraries in the provision of those services."

- The Alberta Libraries Act Chapter L-11 2000: Guide to the Legislation

Regardless of population served, a municipal board determines its level of performance.

Essential	**Enhanced** All of essential plus	**Excellent** All of enhanced plus
- meets 3 times a year - complies with legislation and is autonomous under *The Libraries Act** - participates in system services and consortia - cooperates with other municipal libraries and acts as part of an integrated network of libraries - creates and nurtures relationships with elected municipal officials - has policy, budget and trained staff to meet the standards for providing essential service - is a member of ALTA	- meets 6 to 8 times a year - cooperates fully with other municipal libraries and acts as part of an integrated network of libraries - has working relationship with elected officials - takes advantage of continuing education opportunities - has policy, budget and trained staff to meet the standards for providing enhanced levels of service	- meets on a monthly basis - collaborates with system to improve services - collaborates with other municipal libraries and acts as part of an integrated network of libraries - one member attends continuing education workshops and system meetings - participates in board development training - has excellent relationship with elected officials - has policy, budget and trained staff in place to meet an excellent level of service

* denotes that within the legislative framework, each of the seven library systems and each municipal library within a system, has developed service, funding and relationship models that respond to local conditions

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
Excellent – the highest level of service

Collaboration and Cooperation

To respond with maximum effectiveness to the entire community, all library boards reach out in cooperation and collaboration with other agencies and organizations. Partnerships enhance and expand services in a cost effective and cost efficient manner. Libraries partner with:

- other libraries (public, school, academic, and special)
- library organizations and consortia
- educational institutions
- cultural institutions, archives and museums
- municipality and its departments
- social agencies
- governmental agencies
- business and industry
- community-based organizations
- media sources
- private sector
- volunteers and library advocates

Facilities

Library facility standards are based on the library's mission statement and service goals. The facility is designed with community needs in mind and arises from a community needs assessment. Ideally, library facilities are flexible, functional, attractive and adaptable.

The library should be located near business, municipal or recreational areas to provide greatest accessibility to users. The library must have an exterior sign identifying the facility as a library, and adequate parking for vehicles and bicycles. It should have a separate entrance if the library is housed in a shared facility. The facility must comply with federal, provincial and local building codes and safety regulations. Barrier-free physical access for the disabled is required for new library buildings and desirable for existing structures.

The interior of the library should provide adequate space to meet service, operation and storage needs, including collection space, space to meet technology needs, and seating space. There should be adequate provision for current and future electrical, data and telephone connections, controlled temperatures and humidity for the benefit of users and staff as well as the protection of library property, and adequate interior and exterior lighting in all areas. Libraries less than 20,000 sq. ft. should ideally be located on a single level. The most efficient space is open and square or rectangular rather than being irregular in shape.

Major service factors to consider in developing a facility plan are: collection size, use of technology, adult and children's programming, seating, and meeting room space. Architectural formulas for space allocation are used to determine actual facility size and design.

The following rules of thumb have been used to determine facility size by major components:

Collection space	1 square foot for every 10 volumes/items (111 volumes per sq. m.)
User space	30 square feet (2.7 sq. m.) per user space @ 5 user spaces per 1,000 population
Staff space	150 square feet (13.9 sq. m.) per staff member
Public-access computer work space	25 sq. ft. (2.3 sq. m.) per workstation
Meeting room space	10 sq. ft. (0.9 sq. m.) per seat
Programming space	10 sq. ft. (0.9 sq. m.) per child
Washrooms, janitorial, mechanical, etc.	25% of net space
Multipurpose rooms	based on community service and program objectives

Standards for Facilities

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	850 sq. ft. 79 sq. m.	850 sq. ft. 79 sq. m.	850 sq. ft. 79 sq. m.
601 - 1,200	950 sq. ft. 88 sq. m.	1,050 sq. ft. 98 sq. m.	1,150 sq. ft. 107 sq. m.
1,201 - 3,000	1,500 sq. ft. 139 sq. m.	2,500 sq. ft. 232 sq. m.	3,200 sq. ft. 297 sq. m.
3,001 - 5,000	3,200 sq. ft. 297 sq. m.	3,600 sq. ft. 334 sq. m.	4,300 sq. ft. 399 sq. m.
5,001 - 10,000	5,200 sq. ft. 483 sq. m.	6,900 sq. ft. 641 sq. m.	8,500 sq. ft. 790 sq. m.
10,001 - 20,000	9,500 sq. ft 883 sq. m.	13,000 sq. ft 1,207 sq. m.	16,000 sq. ft 1,486 sq. m.
20,001 +	15,000 sq. ft. 1,394 sq. m.	17,000 sq. ft. 1,579 sq. m.	19,000 sq. ft. 1,765 sq. m.

To convert square feet to square meters, multiply square feet x .0929

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
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Space Planning Worksheet

Library _____

Person completing form _____ Date _____

DESIGN POPULATION

1

a. Current local population (for comparison only) _____

b. Projected local population _____

c. Projected non-resident population _____

d. TOTAL (b + c) = _____

COLLECTION SPACE

2

a. Books: # of volumes _____ /10 = _____ sq.ft

b. Audio Media: # of items _____ /10 = _____ sq.ft

c. Visual Media: # of items _____ /10 = _____ sq.ft

d. Periodical display: # of titles _____ /1.5 = _____ sq.ft

e. Periodical storage: # of titles _____ /0.5 x # of years retained = _____ sq.ft

f. TOTAL (a+b+c+d+e) = _____ **sq.ft**

USER SEATING SPACE

3

a. Projected population (from Step 1d) _____

b. 5 seats/each 1000 people = _____ seats

c. # of seats _____ x 30 = _____ sq.ft

STAFF WORK SPACE

4

a. # of workstations _____ x 30 = _____ sq.ft

MEETING ROOM SPACE

5

a. General meeting: # of seats _____ x 10 = _____ sq.ft

b. Conference room: # of seats _____ x 25 = _____ sq.ft

c. Children's programs: # of seats _____ x 10 = _____ sq.ft

d. TOTAL (a+b+c) = _____ **sq.ft**

SPECIAL USE SPACE   Special use space must be allotted for elements of an individual library's program of service or for special types of furnishings such as index tables, newspaper racks, pamphlet files, microfilm readers, or photocopiers. Special use space typically constitutes about 10 percent of the overall gross area.

6

a.   Collection space (from Step 2g) = _____ sq.ft

    user seating space (from Step 3c) = _____ sq.ft

    staff work space (from Step 4a) = _____ sq.ft

    meeting room space (from Step 5c) = _____ sq.ft

b.   SUBTOTAL 1 (sum of 6a items) = _____ sq.ft

c.   Multiply SUBTOTAL 1 BY 0.1 = _____ sq.ft

NON-ASSIGNABLE SPACE   Some representative types of non-assignable space are furnace rooms, janitor's closets, storage rooms, vestibules, corridors, stairwells, elevator shafts, and rest rooms. Non-assignable space generally comprises about 20-25% of the gross square footage of the finished building.

7

a.   SUBTOTAL 1 (from Step 6b) = _____ sq.ft

b.   Special-use space (from Step 6c) = _____ sq.ft

c.   SUBTOTAL 2 (a + b) = _____ sq.ft

d.   Multiply subtotal 2 by 0.25 = _____ sq.ft

8

PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTER WORK SPACE

a.   # of workstations _____ x 25 = _____ sq.ft

9

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

a.   Collection space (from Step 2f) _____ sq.ft

b.   User seating space (from Sept 3c) _____ sq.ft

c.   Staff work space (from Step 4a) _____ sq.ft

d.   Meeting room space (from Step 5d) _____ sq.ft

e.   Special use space (from Step 6c) _____ sq.ft

f.   Non-assignable space (from Step 7d) _____ sq.ft

g.   Public access computer work space (from Step 8a) _____ sq.ft

h.   **GROSS AREA NEEDED** (a+b+c+d+e+f+g) _____ **sq.ft**

To convert square feet to square meters:
  multiply square feet by .0929 (i.e. 525 square feet = 48.77 sq. m.)

Technology Standards

Technology standards are set or determined by the member library board, the regional library system, The Alberta Library (TAL) and agreements with the Alberta Public Library Electronic Network (APLEN) and Industry Canada (IC). Further to that, all libraries are expected to comply with *The Alberta Libraries Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) legislation in cleaning up past usage and searches on public stations, and concealing from the public all patron information.

The IC agreement ensures free public access to the Internet during the library's open hours. It also ensures public access to any software or equipment purchased with IC funds. For example, if a library purchased a digital camera in a round of funding, then the digital camera would be available for public use. Another condition of the grant is to establish a web presence, which is met by the visityourlibrary.net website.

APLEN sets conditions as well. Member libraries must connect to a node (the regional library system) and the node must have a *Z39.50 compliant Integrated Library System (ILS). Member libraries are expected to participate in resource sharing according to provincial resource sharing policy using Resource Sharing Software (RSS), Remote Patron Authentication (RPA) and TALOnline—the province-wide library catalogue, via the regional system.

Libraries are required to collect electronic performance measure statistics for their annual reports to Alberta Community Development, Libraries, Community and Voluntary Sector Services Branch. This also meets the IC requirement to tally computer use. It is also designed to reflect library use beyond the traditional borrowing of materials and answering of reference questions.

It is imperative that member library boards have computer security policies, computer use policies and hardware replacement/upgrade plans (based on replacement of all equipment within 3-5 years). Statements about authorized software, licenses, authorized use, and a yearly review of hardware and software should be included in the policies. Member library boards should also consider the cost of training/learning to use software and troubleshoot common problems for library staff.

When purchasing equipment, setting up network configurations, or deciding on placement of equipment, member library boards are encouraged to involve their regional library system staff. Regional library systems will help member libraries purchase equipment that meets existing industry standard and meets the SuperNet recommendations. Regional library systems staff will also suggest appropriate equipment for reliable, stable Internet connectivity (wherever possible, it is assumed libraries will access high speed Internet connections).

It should be noted that Technology Standards are constantly evolving, and, while there is an expectation that library boards be progressive and proactive in their planning, there needs to be balance in the approach to technology.

* Z39.50 protocol allows multiple library catalogues to be searched simultaneously by one software product. In the case of TALOnline, Site Search is the software used.

Recommended Reading

APLEN Technology Plan
Technology Toolkit for not for profit organizations
[Regional library system] Technology Plan
[Regional library system] Policies
[Local public library] Technology Plan, Plan of Service, Technology Policies

Technology standards

Population	Essential	Enhanced All of essential plus	Excellent All of enhanced plus
Up to 1,200	Basic requirements: - ILS access - Internet access – including email - CAP/APLEN software/equipment access for the public - database access including VISUNET (CNIB) - virus protector on all workstations And: - 1 public workstation - 1 staff workstation	- hot swap (replacement) computer	- access to training available on the Internet - 1 additional public workstation
1,201 - 3,000	Basic requirements, plus: - 2 public workstations - 1 circulation workstation - 1 staff workstation	- server to manage workstations/printers/backup in local area network (LAN) - hot swap - access to data projector equipment	- access to local digitized content/ content creation software - 1 additional staff workstations
3,001 - 5,000	Basic requirements and LAN server plus: - 3 public workstations - 2 circulation workstations - 2 staff workstations	- access to local digitized content/ content creation software - access to data projector equipment	- local access to training using mobile training lab
5,001 - 10,000	Basic requirements and: - access to local digitized content/ content creation software - access to data projector equipment Plus: - 1 public workstation/1000 population - 3 circulation workstations - 1 staff workstation per 1 FTE	- local access to training using mobile lab	- local access to own training lab
10,001 - 20,000	Basic requirements plus: - 10 public workstations - 4 circulation workstations - 1 staff workstation per 1 FTE	- local training lab - redundancy for server drives - on-site IT staff - redundancy for Internet connection - 2 additional public workstations	- access to voice-over-IP (VOIP) technology - 3 additional staff workstations
20,001 +	Basic requirements and: - local training lab - redundancy on Internet connection - on-site technology staff - redundancy on LAN server Plus: - 5 circulation stations - 1 staff workstation per 1 FTE - 15 public workstations	- RAID (redundancy of disc drives) on all servers - Redundancy on switches/router-modems/hubs/ workstations and all other hardware in library - 5 additional public workstations	- VOIP technology - network hardware meets IP v6 standard - 5 additional staff work stations

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
Excellent – the highest level of service

Hours of Opening

Member libraries schedule open hours to match local community needs and to provide maximum convenience for residents of the community. Hours of opening will be determined and implemented based on a community needs assessment and current/anticipated traffic patterns.

Based on actual and potential customer needs, libraries normally include evening and weekend hours in addition to regular weekday hours.

A member library housed in a school must be open to the public outside of the hours during which the school is in operation for regular classes, including being open during evenings or weekends or both, and during the summer. [*The Libraries Act 17(*c)]

"Essential" weekly hours open means the fewest number of hours the library is physically open to the public every week during the year in order to provide basic (essential) library service. Many public libraries exceed the minimum standards to provide greater service to, and use by, the public ("Enhanced" or "Excellent" hours of opening).

In addition, technological advances have made it possible to provide some library services outside of library hours. Access to electronic, Internet-based services outside of open hours enhance local library services.

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	12	15	20
601 - 1,200	15	20	25
1,201 - 3,000	20	25	30
3,001 - 5,000	25	30	40
5,001 - 10,000	30	40	50
10,001 - 20,000	40	50	60
20,001 +	45	55	60+

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
Excellent – the highest level of service

Staffing/Personnel

Library boards—like all employers—must abide by the Employment Standards Code, Labour Relations Code, human rights legislation and relevant federal and provincial acts.

Personnel Policies

The library has board-approved personnel policies in place that are consistent with provincial and federal regulations, are reviewed at least every three years, and are made available to all staff members.

Personnel policies required under the Alberta *Libraries Regulation* include:
- job descriptions for employees and volunteers
- performance appraisals for employees and volunteers
- qualifications for staff positions
- working hours
- conditions of employment
- grievance procedure
- orientation of staff
- continuing education for staff, including expenses for attendance at library meetings, conference workshops and courses, and memberships in library associations

Personnel

Regardless of the size of the community, a library board has one employee, the director, who is responsible for the administration of library services. The director is responsible for hiring, training, and releasing all staff. Supported by the staff, the director:

- Implements policies of the board
  - engages in strategic planning—assesses community/user needs, sets objectives, evaluates and measures effectiveness of library programs
  - recommends policy to the board
- Manages the library
  - carries out effective collection development practices (including selection and weeding)
  - provides guidance in the use of all library resources
  - provides reference and reader's advisory services
  - maintains awareness of and implements current and emerging technologies for the benefit of library patrons
  - uses a variety of electronic tools including: email, online databases, electronic discussion lists, web sites, etc.
  - performs basic troubleshooting on computers and other library equipment
  - utilizes appropriate problem-solving and decision-making skills to further the goals and objectives of the library
  - adapts to new ideas and changing methods in order to offer improved library service
- Markets library services to the entire community
- Communicates positively and effectively with people
- Projects an image of competence and courtesy to the public they serve
- Works effectively with board members, staff and colleagues
- Works within political and social structures of the community
- Makes effective use of system consultants, Libraries Branch consultants and other library development resources
- Keeps up on relevant provincial and federal legislation

Member library staff possess the skills to support the responsibilities of the director. The range of skills includes interpersonal skills, social awareness, teamwork/leadership, and competence in the practices and procedures of the library.

Volunteers may enhance public library service, but do not substitute for paid staff.

Education

Educational programs ensure that library personnel have attained a level of expertise that enables them to handle information.

Staff with an MLS have a post-graduate degree in library studies, library science or information science from an accredited university. These standards require a librarian with an MLS for libraries in communities with populations above 5000 wanting to offer an "excellent" level of staffing.

Library Technicians have a diploma in library or information studies from a technical institute or community college.

LOA (Library Operations Assistant) Certificate is obtained from a Library Operations Assistant correspondence program (or equivalent). The LOA must also have a high school diploma.

Job Descriptions and Salary Scale

Job descriptions for all positions and a salary grid are included in the personnel policies or provided elsewhere and are made available to all staff members. Job descriptions list the main responsibilities of each position and include any educational and experience requirements.

Fair and Equitable Compensation

Library employees have salaries, hours, and benefits comparable with other community positions requiring similar educational preparation and job assignments (e.g. local municipality and school district positions).

Salary schedules provide for regular increases, for additional merit increases and for recognition of continuing education.

Orientation

The library board has an orientation program in place for all new employees, which introduces them to the mission, goals, objectives and policies of the library, as well as to the particular responsibilities of the new employee's job. Employees should have an understanding of the history and development of library services in Alberta, and in their community. New employees are oriented to regional library systems and their policies and services.

Training/Continuing Education/Professional Development

The library board encourages continuing education and training for its staff and makes provision for this in its policy, Plan of Service and budget. Membership in a library organization is included.

The library board provides funding to train all staff adequately. This funding covers salary, registration and related travel expenses for attendance at conferences, workshops and in-service training. The library sends its director to at least one major provincial library conference (e.g. NetSpeed or the Alberta Library Conference) each year.

Working Conditions

Library boards must comply with the Employment Standards Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Workers Compensation Regulations, human rights legislation and other relevant legislation. All library staff are trained and equipped to deal appropriately with emergency situations in the library.

Library staff have access to e-mail for work-related communication and professional development. Staff are also given the opportunity to learn to use new equipment and technology, including new databases and software. The library has at least one computer dedicated for staff use only. Where possible, ergonomically designed furniture and equipment is made available for the comfort and health of library staff.

Evaluation

Employee performance is evaluated annually. A performance appraisal system is in place that provides staff with an evaluation of current performance and guidance in improving or developing new skills. Under the appraisal system, the Library Board evaluates the Library Director; the Library Director evaluates all other library staff (or delegates the responsibility as appropriate).

Staffing Levels, Education, Experience

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	- open hours + 1 hour per open day - High School diploma	- open hours + 1.5 hours per open day - High School diploma - 3 years library experience	- open hours + 2 hours per open day - LOA Certificate - 5 years library experience
601 – 1,200	- open hours +1 hour per open day - High School diploma	- open hours + 1.5 hours per open day - High School diploma - 3 years library experience	- open hours + 2 hours per open day - LOA Certificate - 5 years library experience
1,201 – 3,000	- open hours + 1 hour per open day - High School diploma	- open hours + 1.5 open hours per day - LOA Certificate - 3 years library experience	- open hours + 2 open hours per day - Library Technician - 5 years library experience
3,001 – 5,000	- 0.35 FTE/1000 population - LOA Certificate	- 0.5 FTE/1000 population - Library Technician - 3 years library experience	- 0.7 FTE/1000 population - Library Technician - 5 years library experience
5,001 - 10,000	- 0.35 FTE/1000 population - Library Technician	- 0.5 FTE/1000 population - Library Technician - 3 years library experience	- 0.7 FTE/1000 population - 1 MLS - 5 years library experience
10,001 - 20,000	- 0.35 FTE/1000 population - 1 MLS - IT staff on site	- 0.5 FTE/1000 population - 1 MLS - 3 years library experience - IT staff on site	- 1.0 FTE/1000 population - 2 MLS - 5 years library experience - IT staff on site
20,001 +	- 0.35 FTE/1000 population - 1 MLS - IT staff on site	- 0.5 FTE/1000 population - 2 MLS - 3 years library experience - IT staff on site	- 0.7 FTE/1000 population - 3 MLS - 5 years library experience - IT staff on site

Libraries without on-site IT staff have access to IT expertise from headquarters and from local companies.

FTE	=	Full-time equivalent, based on a 35-hour work week (1820 hours/year)
MLS	=	Post-graduate degree in library studies, library science or information science from an accredited university
Library Technician	=	Two-year diploma in library or information studies from a technical institute or community college
LOA Certificate	=	Library Operations Assistant from a correspondence program (or equivalent). Must also have a high school diploma

Education levels and experience refer to Library Director

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
Excellent – the highest level of service

Collections

Member libraries provide a wide range of materials and resources in a variety of formats and in sufficient quantities to meet the current and potential literacy, cultural, educational, recreational, and information needs of their communities.

In accordance with local policy and demographics, the collection is balanced to provide both juvenile and adult materials. Traditionally, the balance is 25-40% juvenile and 60-75% adult.

Materials are selected in accordance with a regularly reviewed collection policy and a local needs assessment. The materials are centrally catalogued, using the most recent Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules and the Dewey Decimal Classification system. The catalogue is automated and the materials are available for loan to other libraries.

It is accepted that a library, no matter how small a population it serves, should have a collection of at least 2500 items.

Libraries provide (either on site, electronically or through membership in consortia):
- books
- reference materials
- large print books
- books in other languages
- local history collections and other collections of local interest
- periodicals and newspapers
- audio cassettes (word and music)
- compact disks (word and music)
- videos and/or DVDs
- talking books
- alternate formats
- electronic databases
- other materials as specified in the *Library Regulation*

The collection is kept current, with a high percentage of materials less than five years old. Systems recommend weeding guidelines to their member libraries; one basic guideline is if the item was published more than five years ago or has not circulated in five years, consider weeding it.

Annual and Reference materials require more frequent weeding.

Book Collections

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	- 2500 items - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 3000 items - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 3500 items - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
601 - 1,200	- 2,500 items - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 3,000 items - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 3,500 items - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
1,201 - 3,000	- 5,000 or 3 items/capita - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 6,000 or 3.5 items/capita - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 7,000 or 4 items/capita - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
3,001 - 5,000	- 10,000 or 3 items/capita - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 12,500 or 3.5 items/capita - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 15,000 or 4 items/capita - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
5,001 - 10,000	- 15,000 items or 2.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 20,000 items or 3.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 25,000 items or 4.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
10,001 - 20,000	- 30,000 or 2.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 40,000 or 3.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 50,000 or 4.5 items/capita - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years
20,001 +	- 50,000 items or 2 items/capita, whichever is greater - 15% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 5 years	- 60,000 items or 2.5 items/capita, whichever is greater - 20% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 4 years	- 70,000 items or 3 items/capita, whichever is greater - 25% of collection less than 5 years old - entire collection weeded every 3 years

Essential – provides basic library service
Enhanced – builds on the essential service
Excellent – the highest level of service

Visual Media Collections

Visual media collections include videocassettes and DVD's. Standards for developing, maintaining and weeding book collections also apply to visual media collections.

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	40	60	80
601 - 1,200	60	90	120
1,201 - 3,000	- 100 or 6/100 population whichever is greater	- 140 or 8/100 population whichever is greater	- 200 or 12/100 population whichever is greater
3,001 - 5,000	- 200 or 6/100 population whichever is greater	- 300 or 8/100 population whichever is greater	- 400 or 12/100 population whichever is greater
5,001 - 10,000	- 400 or 6/100 population whichever is greater	- 500 or 8/100 population whichever is greater	- 800 or 12/100 population whichever is greater
10,001 - 20,000	- 600 or 5/100 population whichever is greater	- 1,000 or 8/100 population whichever is greater	- 1,400 or 10/100 population whichever is greater
20,001 +	- 1,000 or 3/100 population, whichever is greater	- 1,600 or 4/100 population, whichever is greater	- 2,000 or 5/100 population, whichever is greater

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Audio Media Collections

Audio media collections include books on tape and CD and music media. Standards for developing, maintaining and weeding book collections also apply to audio media collections.

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	50	100	150
601 - 1,200	75	150	225
1,201 - 3,000	- 100 or 7/100 population whichever is greater	- 200 or 15/100 population whichever is greater	- 300 or 20/100 population whichever is greater
3,001 - 5,000	- 350 or 10/100 population whichever is greater	- 550 or 15/100 population whichever is greater	- 750 or 20/100 population whichever is greater
5,001 - 10,000	- 600 or 10/100 population, whichever is greater	- 800 or 13/100 population, whichever is greater	- 1000 or 15/100 population, whichever is greater
10,001 - 20,000	- 1,200 or 10/100 population, whichever is greater	- 1,600 or 13/100 population, whichever is greater	- 2,000 or 15/100 population, whichever is greater
20,001 +	- 2,000 or 6/100 population, whichever is greater	- 2,600 or 8/100 population, whichever is greater	- 3,000 or 10/100 population, whichever is greater

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Periodical Collections

Periodicals include magazines, journals and newspapers in print format. The recommended retention rate for most periodicals is 12 months. For newspapers, the retention rate depends on local needs.

The chart below reflects recommended numbers for periodical subscriptions in print format for circulation purposes and in house use. Electronic access to periodicals supplements print resources and is ideal for research.

Population	Essential	Enhanced	Excellent
Up to 600	8	12	16
601 - 1,200	12	18	24
1,201 - 3,000	- 1.0/100 population	- 1.5/100 population	- 2.0/100 population
3,001 +	- 30 or 0.5/100 population, whichever is greater	- 45 or 1.0/100 population, whichever is greater	- 60 or 1.5/100 population, whichever is greater

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Interlibrary Loan

Member libraries participate in the Alberta resource sharing network to ensure that Albertans have equitable access to resources which meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. Access to resources is strengthened through the sharing of information and material across jurisdictional lines and among types of libraries.

Member libraries, regardless of their size, are expected to participate in resource sharing by abiding by the terms for resource sharing set out in provincial legislation, the *Principles of Resource Sharing for Alberta Public Libraries* and library system agreements.

Interlibrary loan is an adjunct to, not a substitute for adequate local collection development.

To ensure an excellent level of resource sharing on behalf of their patrons, member libraries should:

- Consider interlibrary loan between libraries as a mutual relationship and be willing to supply materials as freely as requesting materials
- Make available for resource sharing all materials loaned to local patrons
- Exhaust local or library system resources before using the resource sharing network
- Inform patrons about interlibrary loan services
- Provide patrons with the ability to place interlibrary loan requests at access points that are convenient for them, including electronic access points
- Make reasonable efforts to obtain or supply interlibrary loan materials for patrons
- Treat interlibrary loan requests as confidential except when they must discuss requests to carry out the administrative functions of the library
- Provide assistance to patrons in placing interlibrary loan requests
- Complete interlibrary loan requests within 24 hours of receiving a request
- When requesting materials, provide sufficient information to identify the requested item
- When supplying materials, include a copy of the original request or supply sufficient information to identify the request
- Use the most efficient and cost effective delivery system

Reference and Information Service

Reference and information service is a process by which trained library staff satisfy the information needs of their patrons by accurately identifying the information required and providing the information or referring the customer to the most appropriate information source. Reference and information service is personal and confidential.

Member libraries serving populations up to 3,000 are expected to provide an essential level of reference service. Member libraries serving populations from 3,001 to 10,000 are expected to provide an enhanced level of reference service (which includes the elements of the essential level). Member libraries serving populations of 10,001+ are expected to provide an excellent level of reference service (which includes the elements of the essential and enhanced levels).

Essential Up to 3000 population	Enhanced 3,001-10,000 population All of essential plus	Excellent 10,001+ population All of enhanced plus
- clarifies reference question with reference interview - answers basic/directional reference questions within one hour - knows how to access the Ask A Question (AAQ) service - forwards reference questions to regional headquarters or to AAQ if unanswered within 24 hours - knows how to access Subscriptions Alberta online databases - provides patrons with basic instructions on the use of the Subscriptions Alberta online databases - provides reference services to patrons in person and by telephone during all hours the library is open - publicizes reference service in library and the community - answers requests for information or initiates a referral within one working day - assists patrons with effective use of technologies necessary to access electronic and other nonprint resources - assists patrons with the use of the online library catalogue	- prepares information guides to inform patrons about the availability of resources on a specific topic or issue - makes available an up to date community information and resource file - answers complex reference questions - provides patrons with basic training on the effective use of technologies necessary to access electronic or other nonprint resources - provides patrons with basic instruction on the use of the online library catalogue	- answers research/extensive reference questions - in cooperation with System headquarters, provides responses to Ask A Question - cooperates with other agencies in the community to provide reference services - provides patrons with advanced level instructions on the use of the Subscriptions Alberta online databases - provides reference services to patrons with disabilities in formats they can utilize - provides staff trained in reference work, including reference work with children - provides patrons with advanced training on the effective use of technologies necessary to access electronic or other nonprint resources - provides patrons with advanced instruction on the use of the online library catalogue

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Acronyms and Definitions

AAQ	Ask A Question (provincial virtual reference service)
ACD	Alberta Community Development
	Libraries, Community and Voluntary Sector Services Branch
ALC	Alberta Library Conference
ALTA	Alberta Library Trustees Association
APLEN	Alberta Public Library Electronic Network
CAP	Community Access Program
CLA	Canadian Library Association
FOIP	*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
FTE	Full Time Equivalent (pertains to staff)
IC	Industry Canada
ILS	Integrated Library System
LAA	Library Association of Alberta
LAN	Local Area Network
LOA	Library Operations Assistant—certificate from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology's Rural Library Training Program
Member libraries	Municipal (public) libraries within regional library systems
MLS	Post graduate degree in library studies, library science or information science from an accredited university
NetSpeed	Annual library technology conference
Population	The official population numbers provided annually by Alberta Municipal Affairs for the municipality which established the library by bylaw
RAID	Redundancy of disk drives
Regional library system	The *Libraries Act* defines "Library System" as a library system established or a regional library continued as a library system under Part 2 (of the Act). This document uses the term regional library systems as a generic term for the seven library systems listed on page 23
RPA	Remote Patron Authentication
RSS	Resource Sharing Software
TAL	The Alberta Library, a consortium of public, university, college and other libraries in Alberta
TAL Online	Provides online access to the catalogues of over 232 libraries in Alberta
VISUNET	A partnership with CNIB for access to the CNIB online Catalogue
VOIP	voice-over-IP

Contacts

Chinook Arch Regional Library System
2902 – 7 Avenue N.
Lethbridge, AB   T1H 5C6
t: 403-380-1500
www.chinookarch.ab.ca

Marigold Library System
710 – 2nd Street
Strathmore, AB   T1P 1K4
t: 403-934-5334
www.marigold.ab.ca

Northern Lights Library System
Bag 8
Elk Point, AB   T0A 1A0
t: 780-724-2596
www.nlls.ab.ca

Parkland Regional Library
5404 – 56 Avenue
Lacombe, AB   T4L 1G1
t: 403-782-3850
www.prl.ab.ca

Peace Library System
8301 – 110 Street
Grande Prairie, AB   T8W 6T2
t: 780-538-4656
www.peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca

Shortgrass Library System
2375 – 10 Avenue S.W.
Medicine Hat, AB   T1A 8G2
t: 403-529-0550
www.shortgrass-lib.ab.ca

Yellowhead Regional Library
Box 400, 433 King Street
Spruce Grove, AB   T7X 2Y1
t: 780-962-2003
www.yrl.ab.ca

Alberta Community Development
Libraries, Community and Voluntary Sector Services Branch
8th Floor, Standard Life Centre
10405 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton Alberta   T5J 4R7
t: (780) 427-6315
Toll-free access: 310-0000
www.cd.gov.ab.ca/libraries

Resources

The Alberta *Libraries Act* Chapter L-11 2000: A Guide to the Legislation.
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Maine Library Association Public Library Standard 2000. Maine Library Association.
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   Sudbury, ON: Ontario Library Services-North, 1999.
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Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries. Illinois Library Association, 1997.

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   Kansas State Library. **http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/development/standard2000.html**

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   Saskatchewan Library Association, 1979.

Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries (rev .ed.). Nova Scotia: The Working Group, 2001.

Standards for Oregon Public Libraries: 2000. Oregon Library Association.
   http://olaweb.org/pld/standards.html

Standards for Utah Public Libraries, Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Library Division, 2003.
   http://library.utah.gov/plstandards.html

TLA Public Library Standards. Texas Library Association, c2000.
   http://www.txla.org/groups/plstand/sofar.html

Wisconsin Department of Instruction: Public Library Space Needs.
   http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/plspace.html#Introduction

Wisconsin Public Library Standards (3rd ed.) Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction,
   2000. **http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/pld/standard.html**