

**Maryland  
Public Librarian  
and  
Public Library Director  
Certification Guide  
2017**

**Maryland State Library  
Revised August 2017**

# Maryland State Board of Education

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22 S. Calhoun Street  
Baltimore, MD 21223  
(667)219-4803 phone  
(667)219-4798 fax  
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# **Table of Contents**

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<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Administration of the Program</b>	5
<b>Certification</b>	
How to Apply for Certification	6
<b>Certification Renewal</b>	
Description	7
Continuing Education Credits	8
Renewing Certification	9
Tracking Continuing Education	10
<b>Role of the Staff Development Coordinator</b>	11
<b>Additional Resources and Forms</b>	12

# **Introduction**

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This guide has been created for professional public librarians and directors regarding the certification and re-certification processes in the state of Maryland. It outlines the process of receiving initial certification and the procedures for re-certification.

All guidelines and procedures in this guide are effective as of October 1, 2017.

# **Administration of the Program**

## **Maryland State Department of Education**

The public librarian and public library director certification program for the state of Maryland is governed by the *Code of Maryland Regulations* (COMAR) under Title 13A.05.04.02 and is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Certification is required to enter and continue in the Maryland state retirement system. This system covers Maryland public school teachers as well as public librarians and public library directors. For this reason, both sets of employees share a common certification system which is administered and housed in MSDE.

The Maryland State Library and the MSDE Division of Educator Effectiveness work together to administer the program. The responsibilities of each group are as follows:

- The Maryland State Library
  - Oversees the certification regulations specific to public libraries
  - Administers the requirements for public librarian certification
    - Qualifications necessary for initial certification
    - Requirements for certification renewal
    - Qualifications for continuing education credits
  - Provides technical assistance to local library systems on the requirements
  - Contact:  
Carrie Sanders  
Public Libraries and State Networking Services Branch  
Maryland State Library  
Phone:  
[@maryland.gov](mailto:carrie.sanders@maryland.gov)
  
- Division of Educator Effectiveness: (formerly The Division of Certification and Accreditation)
  - Oversees the certification certificate process
  - Processes certification and re-certification requests
  - Contact:  
**Certification Assistance Line**  
Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore MD 21201  
Phone: 410-767-0412  
TTY/TDD: 410-767-6442  
Toll Free: 1-866-772-8922  
[www.mdcert.org](http://www.mdcert.org)

# Certification

## *How to Apply for Certification*

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### Certification

If you are a professional public librarian or director, and are: (1) employed by a county public library and (2) enrolled in the state retirement system, you are required to have a *Professional Public Librarian Certificate* or *Public Library Director Certificate*. An applicant for a professional certificate must have a master's degree from an ALA accredited library school. There are two consequences of not applying for your certificate: (1) removal from state retirement system and/or (2) job loss.

### How to Apply for Certification

#### Process:

The Staff Development Coordinator or designated Administrator in the library system will initiate the process for initial certification for all librarians in their system. The process is as follows:

1. Staff Development Coordinator or designated Administrator sends the following to the Certification Branch (see address on page 5):
  - A cover letter/application with the following information about the applicant:
    - Full name
    - Full date of birth
    - Social security number
    - Address of applicant
    - Phone number of applicant
    - E-mail address of applicant
  - A copy of the applicant's transcript in a sealed envelope from the issuing institution
  - Alternately, these materials can be mailed to [certdocuments.msde@maryland.gov](mailto:certdocuments.msde@maryland.gov). Official transcripts may be mailed, but must be initialed and dated by the SDC
2. At the same time, the applicant creates an account on the EIS portal [www.mdcert.org](http://www.mdcert.org). Applicant completes this form:  
<http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DEE/Certification/InitialAppCertification2017.pdf>
3. Letter/application and transcript are received in Certification and assigned to a Certification specialist.
4. The Certification specialist matches the application to the transcript.
5. An email is sent to the applicant stating that he/she has been approved and needs to pay the fee.
6. Once payment is received, the applicant can print out his/her certificate from the portal.

#### Fee:

\$10.00

#### Payment methods:

1. Library system check, money order or cashiers' check mailed to the Certification Branch
2. Credit card – pay online through PayPal on the EIS portal (\$1.50 service charge applies)

Once your application is processed, you may access your certificate online from the portal. Your certificate can be viewed, downloaded, and printed from the portal. All certifications will have a January 1 or July 1 start date. This certificate is valid for 5 years.

# Certification Renewal

## *Description*

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### **Public Librarian**

According to the Maryland State Law, all professional public librarians must renew their *Professional Public Librarian Certificate* every 5 years. In order to renew your certificate, you must complete 6 semester hours or their equivalent (90 contact or clock hours) in an accredited institution or in an in-service program in one of several areas:

- Management and supervision
- Library automation or technology
- Reference or technical services
- Other subjects that are relevant to the job of the librarian

### **Public Library Director**

According to the Maryland State Law, all professional public library directors must renew their *Professional Public Library Director Certificate* every 5 years. In order for you to renew your certificate, you must complete 6 semester hours or their equivalent (90 contact or clock hours) in an accredited institution or in:

- An in-service program in library management or administration
- Other subjects that are relevant to the professional assignment of a public library director

All learning activities must fall in the areas specified above to count toward certification renewal.

### **Each public librarian and public library director is responsible for:**

- Obtaining and maintaining their certification
- Keeping a complete record of all documentation for their certification (including username and password for their online account)
- Earning and keeping track of all of their required continuing education credits for certification renewal

# Certification Renewal

## Continuing Education Credits

### Definition of Continuing Education Credits

Continuing education credits are awarded on the basis of contact hours. A contact hour is defined as 60 minutes of continuous participation in a learning activity. Credit will only be given for full contact hours and half hours beyond the first hour, not including lunch and breaks. For example, if a learning activity is 3 hours with a 15 minute break, you can receive only 2.5 contact hours.

### How to Earn Continuing Education Credits

Continuing education credits can be earned through a combination of the following:

- Attending academic courses and accumulating semester hours
- Attending a seminar, library-sponsored, or commercial workshop and earning continuing education credit through contact hours
- Participating in an e-learning course and earning continuing education credit through contact hours or as defined by the e-learning course sponsor
- Serving on the Blue Crab Award Committee or the Maryland Author Award Committee (Credit for this activity can only be earned once every five-year period)
- Creating a workshop, seminar or class in accordance with page 7 of this guide (Contact hours for this activity can only be earned once for each training created and are limited to the number of contact hours awarded to the actual training)
- Creating and implementing a learning portfolio

### Continuing Education Credit Examples Chart

<b>Learning Activity</b>	<b>Number of Contact Hours</b>
<i>Academic Course</i> 1 semester of cataloging	3 semester hours
<i>Seminar/Workshop</i> Virtual Reference Training	3 hours (9:00 am – 2:00 pm minus lunch and breaks)
<i>eLearning Course</i> Resolving Interpersonal Issues	12 hours (12 hours online and assignments)
<i>Creating a 6 hour course</i>	6 hours
<i>Personal learning portfolio</i>	(number of hours to be determined)

# Certification Renewal

## *Renewing Certification*

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### How to renew your Certification

1. Accrue the 90 contact hours (or 6 semester hours) of continuing education as required.
2. Request renewal:

#### Two methods:

##### **By mail:**

Within ninety days of the expiration of your certification, send

- A cover letter requesting the renewal of your certificate,
- A *Full Record of Continuing Education Activities* form **with original signature of the renewing librarian and the staff development coordinator; and**
- A \$10.00 money order, certified check, cashier's check or library system check payable to the Maryland State Department of Education to:  
Maryland State Department of Education  
ATTN: Certification Branch  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201-2595

Or

##### **Online**

Within ninety days of the expiration of your certification, send

- A cover letter requesting the renewal of your certificate,
- A *Full Record of Continuing Education Activities* form **with original signature of the renewing librarian and the staff development coordinator; and**
- Pay online once you are notified that your certificate renewal has been approved

##### **Fee:**

\$10.00 (please note there is an additional \$1.50 processing fee if paid online)

Once your renewal documents have been processed, you will receive an email indicating that your certificate is ready for printing as soon as payment has been made.

**Please remember:** Renewal requests submitted prior to 90 days before the expiration of a certificate will be rejected.

##### **Reminder:**

Keep copies of all of the documentation listed above for your own records.

# Certification Renewal

## Tracking Continuing Education Credits

You are required to keep track of the continuing education credits that you earn annually. This booklet provides the forms necessary to maintain your record of learning activities. At the end of your certification period, you must submit these forms to *your* Staff Development Coordinator or designated Administrator for final approval.

The chart below explains the steps needed to keep track of your Continuing Education Credits.

Steps for Keeping Track of Continuing Education Credits		
	<i>Step</i>	<i>Explanatory Notes</i>
<b>1</b>	-Attend a continuing education activity.	Academic courses, institutes, seminars, library sponsored workshops, commercial workshops and e-learning courses will be approved if they are planned, coordinated, administered, and evaluated in terms of learning objectives.
<b>2</b>	-Make sure that you have <b>formal documentation</b> from the sponsoring agency. -If no <b>formal documentation</b> is available, complete either the <i>Official Record of Earned Continuing Education Activity</i> or the <i>Official Record of Earned Academic Credit</i>	<b>Formal documentation</b> must have a description of the activity (date, sponsor, name of activity, number of contact or clock hours)
<b>3</b>	-Record continuing education activity on the <i>Full Record of Continuing Education Activities</i> form -Put the number of contact/clock hours that have been earned in the appropriate column. -Attach <b>formal documentation</b> for each learning activity. -If the training covers multiple dates, include all dates in the listing for that training.	<i>Full Record of Continuing Education Activities</i> is used to maintain a record of all of the activities that you have attended during each certification period.
<b>4</b>	-At the end of your certification period, turn in the <i>Full Record of Continuing Education Activities</i> and the <b>formal documentation</b> to your Staff Development Coordinator for review and final approval.	Staff Development Coordinator will review and give final approval for the Continuing Education activities based upon the criteria listed in Step 1/Explanatory Notes.  Each Staff Development Coordinator will determine how far in advance you must submit your documentation to them to meet your re-certification deadline.

# Role of the Staff Development Coordinator

## *Description*

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The role of the Staff Development Coordinator for each library system is to make sure that professional librarians and directors have *Professional Public Librarian or Professional Public Library Director Certificates*, and that they are earning the appropriate continuing education credits for renewal.

### **New Professional Librarians and Directors**

The Staff Development Coordinator is responsible to:

- Ensure that new librarians and directors receive the proper forms for certification.
- Provide all new librarians and directors with a copy of the **Maryland Public Librarian and Public Library Director Certification Guide**.
- Review the certification renewal process with them.

### **Continuing Education Credits**

The Staff Development Coordinator will maintain a record of all public librarian and director certifications. At the end of a certification period, the Staff Development Coordinator will receive a copy of the **Full Record of Continuing Education Activities** form and the formal documentation from all professional librarians and directors. The Staff Development Coordinator must review and give final approval for the continuing education activities based upon the following criteria:

- Academic course, institutes, seminars, library sponsored workshops, and commercial workshops will be approved if they are planned, coordinated, administered, and evaluated in terms of the learning objectives.
- The skills learned are related to job activities.

### **Keeping Track**

The Staff Development Coordinator will be responsible for reviewing and approving all continuing education credits, maintaining a record of certification for each professional librarian and director of the library system, and sending a letter of verification with renewal of certificates. Records must contain:

- A copy of the certificate
- A copy of the **Full Record of Continuing Education Activities** form and formal documentation for all of the activities
- Copy of re-certification request documents to include: copy of expiring certificate; copy of **Full Record of Continuing Education Activities** form and formal documentation of each learning activity and a record of payment (copy of check or money order or credit card receipt)

This process allows library systems to make sure that their professional librarians and director are keeping up with their legal responsibilities, and it provides concise records of the areas of development each year.

# Additional Resources and Forms

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Additional resources can be found at [www.maplaonline.org/DLDS](http://www.maplaonline.org/DLDS) under the header - Library Staff Programs – Public Librarian and Director Certification

- This Guide dated August 2017
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) form
- The following forms:
  - Full Record of Continuing Education Activities**
  - Official Record of Earned Continuing Education Activity**
  - Official Record of Earned Academic Credit (for college coursework)**