

Maryland
Public Library Associate

Education and Training
Requirements Guide

Maryland State Library
February 2018

Maryland State Library Board

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Introduction

Public Library Associates have a unique role in the Maryland Libraries' ecosystem. LATI and continuing education requirements are one way to ensure that customers receive the same level of quality customer service at any library in the state. Initial participation in LATI and continuous ongoing training help ensure that Library Associates are prepared to use all the resources available to them and to keep current on trends in library service.

This is a guide to the education and training requirements for public library associates in the state of Maryland. It also contains the procedures for maintaining records for ongoing continuing education to meet the legal requirements.

All guidelines and procedures in this guide are effective as of February 2018. All library associates need to acquire six (6) semester hours or 90 contact hours every five (5) years to remain in the retirement system and/or stay employed in Maryland public libraries.

COMAR Regulation 13A.05.04.03

A. Definition. The public library associate provides support services requiring rudimentary knowledge of library service, the library collections, and the policies and regulations governing the library.

B. Job Responsibilities.

- (1) The library associate works under the direction of an experienced professional librarian.
- (2) Examples of appropriate job responsibilities are:
 - (a) Assisting library patrons in locating information through the library;
 - (b) Providing information to the public on library services, policies, and procedures;
 - (c) Collecting, recording, and compiling information and statistics;
 - (d) Assisting in the preparation and presentation of library programs;
 - (e) Operating a small library branch or service outlet;
 - (f) Assisting in the review and selection of library materials;
 - (g) Checking and transcribing bibliographic and cataloging information as required; and
 - (h) Assisting in the development and maintenance of information technology.

C. Education and Training.

- (1) To be appointed to a public library associate position, an applicant shall have:
 - (a) A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution; and
 - (b) Completed a minimum of 90 clock hours of approved in-service training or 9 hours of formal academic course work in library science.
- (2) An appointee with only a bachelor's degree shall have 2 years from the date of appointment to complete the training requirements in §C(1)(b) of this regulation.
- (3) Upon completion of the training requirements in §C(1) and (2) of this regulation, Library Associates shall complete 6 semester hours or their equivalent in an accredited institution or in an in-service program in subjects that are relevant to the assignment of a Library Associate every 5 years.

D. An in-service program that forms the basis for credit under this regulation shall meet the standards for approval promulgated by the Library Development and Services Division of the State Department of Education.

E. Requirements and Responsibilities of Public Library Administrators and Boards of Trustees.

Public libraries shall:

- (1) File with the State Department of Education a letter of assurance of compliance with these regulations; and
- (2) Maintain personnel records on each library associate to include:
 - (a) Job description,
 - (b) Formal education,
 - (c) Experience,
 - (d) In-service training, and
 - (e) Academic courses completed.

F. Requirements and Responsibilities of the Division of Library Development and Services of the State Department of Education. The Division:

- (1) May perform periodic review and evaluation of the library associate personnel records in each public library system and report to the State Superintendent of Schools on compliance with these requirements;
- (2) Shall develop or assist libraries in the development of in-service education and staff development programs appropriate for the training of library associates;
- (3) Shall publish criteria for the approval of in-service training and the awarding of library associate credits; and
- (4) Shall approve in-service training for the awarding of library associate credits.

Initial Education Requirements

If you are a library associate and are: (1) employed by a Maryland public library and (2) enrolled in the state retirement system, you are required by Maryland State regulation (COMAR 13A.05.04.03) (see: Additional Resources and Forms) to meet specific education and training requirements. Public library associates are required to:

1. Have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
2. Complete 90 contact hours of approved in-service training through the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) or 9 hours of formal academic work in library science within 2 years of employment.
3. Upon completion of the initial training, complete 6 semester hours or their equivalent (90 contact hours) in an accredited institution or in an in-service program in subjects that are relevant to the assignment of the library associate every 5 years.

There are two consequences of not obtaining and maintaining the educational requirements: (1) removal from state retirement system and/or (2) job loss.

Records of all of the training requirements must be kept by each library system and the individual library associate. The Staff Development Coordinator in each library system will be required to verify that each library associate is in compliance with the regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact Tamar Sarnoff, Chief of the Public Libraries and State Networking Branch at the Maryland State Library at 667-219-4802, tamar.sarnoff@maryland.gov.

Continuing Education Requirements

According to the Maryland State regulation, all public library associates must continue to meet training and education requirements after they finish the Library Associate Training Institute. Every 5 years, each library associate must complete 6 semester hours or their equivalent 90 contact 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 library associate

All learning activities must be approved by the Staff Development Coordinator to ensure they are consistent with the goal of providing a high level of customer service. All learning activities must fall in the areas specified above to count toward meeting the education and training requirements.

Each public library associate is responsible for:

- Completing and documenting their fulfillment of the initial education requirements as stated on page 5 of this guide
- Earning and keeping track of all of their required 90 contact hours of continuing education for each 5 year period thereafter
- Keeping a complete record of all of the documentation for earning their 90 contact hours during each 5 year period, as described in the “Tracking Continuing Education Activity” section of this guide.

Continuing Education Requirements

Earning 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, with the approval of the Staff Development Coordinator, through a combination of the following:

- Attending academic courses and accumulating semester hours
- Attending a seminar or workshop (sponsored by the library or a commercially available) 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 or your Staff Development Coordinator
- Serving on the Blue Crab Award Committee or the Maryland Author Award Committee (Credit for this activity can only be earned once during any one five-year certification period)
- Creating a workshop, seminar or class in accordance with page 6 of this guide (Credit for this activity can only be earned once for each training created and is limited to the number of contact hours awarded to the actual training session)
- Creating and implementing a learning portfolio by approval of the Staff Development Coordinator

Continuing Education Credit Examples Chart

Learning Activity	Number of Contact Hours
<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)
Creating a 6 hour course	6 hours
Personal learning portfolio	number of hours to be determined (maximum of 40 hours)

Continuing Education Requirements

Tracking Continuing Education Activity

You are required to keep track of the continuing education credits that you earn annually. At the end of each 5 year period, you must submit documentation of your credits to *your* Staff Development Coordinator 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		
	Step	Explanatory Notes
1	--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.
2	--Make sure that you have formal documentation from the sponsoring agency. --If no formal documentation is available, complete either the <i>Official Record of Earned Continuing Education Activity</i> or the <i>Official Record of Earned Academic Credit</i> .	Formal documentation must have a description of the activity (date, sponsor, name of activity, number of contact hours, learning objectives).
3	--Record continuing education activity on the <i>Full Record of Continuing Education Activities</i> form. --Put the number of contact hours earned in the appropriate column. --Attach formal documentation 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> form is used to maintain a record of all of the activities that you have attended during each 5 year period.
4	--At the end of each 5 year period, turn in the <i>Full Record of Continuing Education Activities</i> form and the formal documentation 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 when each library associate's documentation must be submitted.

Library Associate Responsibilities

Process for ensuring legal requirements are met

Every 5 years you will need to ensure that you have completed the library associate training requirements. Check with your Staff Development Coordinator to verify when you need to submit your **Full Record of Continuing Education Activities** form and formal documentation for each learning activity.

It is each library associate's responsibility for:

- Maintaining a copy of records documenting the completion of the Library Associate Training Institute or 9 hours of formal academic course work in library science
- Earning and keeping track of the 90 contact hours of continuing education credit every 5 years
- Submitting appropriate documentation to your library's Staff Development Coordinator for approval and updating your records

Reminder:

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

Role of the Staff Development Coordinator

Description

The role of the Staff Development Coordinator for each library system is to make sure that public library associates complete their initial training and their ongoing education requirements by earning the appropriate continuing education credit. Staff Development Coordinators are also responsible for verifying that all public library associates are in compliance with the regulations.

If your system does not have a designated Staff Development Coordinator, the Library Director will determine who will be responsible for record keeping, compliance and other related duties.

The Staff Development Coordinator is responsible for:

New Public Library Associates

- Ensuring that new public library associates complete the Library Associate Training Institute program or 9 hours of formal academic course work in library science within 2 years of their employment
- Providing all new public library associates with a copy of the *Maryland Public Library Associate Education and Training Requirements Guide*
- Reviewing the education and training requirements and processes with them

Continuing Education Credits

The Staff Development Coordinator will maintain a record of all public library associate education and training. By the end of each 5 year cycle, the Staff Development Coordinator will receive a copy of the *Full Record of Continuing Education Activities* form and the formal documentation from all public library associates. 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 education and training for each public library associate of the library system, and verifying that all of the training requirements are met. Records must contain:

- Documentation that validates that the public library associate has completed the Library Associate Training Institute or 9 hours of formal academic course work in library science
- *Full Record of Continuing Education Activities* forms and formal documentation of each learning activity.

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

Upon approving a library associate's list of continuing education credits, the Staff Development Coordinator will issue a letter verifying that the requirement has been met. A sample verification letter can be found on www.maplaonline.org.

Additional Resources and Forms

Additional resources can be found at www.maplaonline.org/DLDS.asp
under the header - Library Staff Programs – Public Library Associate Education and Training

- This Guide dated February 2018
- The following forms:
 - [Full Record of Continuing Education Activities](#)*
 - [Learning Portfolio Form](#)*
 - [Learning Portfolio Example](#)*
 - [Official Record of Contact Hours](#)*
 - [Official Record of Earned Academic Credit](#)*
 - [Official Record of Earned Continuing Education Activity](#)*

A sample letter verifying that the library associate has completed his/her continuing education requirements

- [LATI Program Overview and Documents](#)
- [COMAR 13A.05.04.03](#)