

Voluntary Public Library Trustee Certification

Montana State Library Certification for public library trustees is voluntary.

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 Overview

Earn fifteen continuing education (CE) credits in a 4-year period:

- Minimum of ten credits in the Library Administration CE category
- Balance of credits are electives

The Board chair will verify CE credits for other Board members. The Board chair's CE credits can be verified by another member of the Board.

One credit is equal to one hour. Only .5 is accepted for partial credits earned; no other partial credits are accepted.

Frequently Asked Questions

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
- Increase board member effectiveness
- Contribute 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

Where can I find CE?

- 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 United for Libraries and 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 website](#) and [ASPeN event calendar](#).

What do I need to do to get started on certification?

- Sign up for an account in [ASPeN](#).
- Login to ASPeN and register for CE in the events calendar
- Claim your CE credits when you complete CE activities
- [Access ASPeN Help](#)

Beginning July 2022, public library standards require trustees have three hours of continuing education each year. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways but should include a quorum of the Board for each continuing education opportunity. This standard does not require tracking of continuing education credits for certification.

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