



Webseite Chat  
with Jennie Stapp  
March 20, 2024

# How We Gather



- Rename with Name and Library or Town
- Share Questions in Chat
- Raise Hand to Speak

# Webside Chat



- MSL Updates
  - Public Library Standards Procedure
  - Montana Digital Opportunity Plan
  - Network Advisory Council updates
  - Upcoming Webinars and Events
- Information and News Sources

# Public Library Standards - Process

- To help libraries meet the public library standards we have updated the process. Some changes we have made:
  - Sending reminders in March
  - Using LibPas – the same software you use for your statistics to collect information
  - More support from the consultants if a library needs to complete a deferral
  - Providing a grace period where libraries can work with their statewide consultant to meet a standard
- We also explain how deferrals work and what to consider as you complete the public library standards.
- You can review the entire document on our website.

## Standard Operating Procedure for Public Library Standards



### Timeline/Process

	Activity
March	MSL will send a reminder to all public libraries that encourages them to review the public library standards – particularly the standards that have been challenging in the past.  MSL Consultants assist libraries with meeting standards.
March - Early April	MSL Continuing Education Coordinator will create a certification report to see which directors are NOT in compliance with certification to pre-populate Counting Opinions' form.  MSL will notify directors that have expired or soon to expire certifications.
May – Mid-July	Report forms open for public library directors to complete.
May – July	MSL staff track responses, send reminders, answer questions, and prepare deferrals.
June – August	MSL consultants review the deferral requests and work with any libraries that have a deferral. The goal is to help as many libraries as possible come into compliance before the State Librarian reviews the deferral requests.  As part of this process, the consultants will ask probing questions to determine the cause of the deferral. They will work with the library to meet the standard within the grace period. They will extend as much assistance as possible to the library.
August – September	MSL staff prepare state aid spreadsheets for Central Services.
September	State Librarian reviews remaining deferrals. Library directors and board chairs review State Librarian responses and sign forms.
October – November	State aid/federation checks are prepared and sent to libraries.
October – June	Consultants work with libraries that have deferrals to implement compliance plans.

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## Standard Operating Procedure for Public Library Standards



### Standards Report Form Questions

- Libraries will be asked whether they comply with each standard listed within Administrative Rules.
- If they answer no, the libraries will be asked the following questions:
  - Why were you unable to meet this standard? How was this standard a hardship for your library?
  - How will you meet the standard in the future? If the standard requires a multi-year solution, what will you do in each year to comply with the standard?
  - Who will be responsible for the activities listed above?
  - What date will your library meet the standard?
- Pre-populated Information
  - Prior year statistics submission status.
  - Responses from prior year deferrals will be displayed for review and updating.
  - New directors will see a date by which they must be certified under "The director is or will be certified by the Montana State Library within the required timeframe mandated by the certification program adopted by the Montana State Library Commission."
  - MSL will make note of any libraries with unusual governing structures that addresses the fact that they meet the standards in spirit but perhaps not in the letter of the rule.

### General guidelines for Deferral Requests

- MSL Consultants should work with libraries who do not complete a standard within the 3-month grace period. If a library cannot meet the standard within that 3-month period of time the State Librarian reserves the right to deny state funding due to a lack of hardship.
- Libraries that submit a plan for meeting a deferral should follow that plan. If they are unable to do so they need to communicate with their assigned consultant. A failure to follow through on a plan could lead to state funding being denied until the standard is met. The State Librarian will consider adverse circumstances or changes (such as a change in personnel) before denying state funding.

For more information about [Montana Public Library Standards](#) please visit the [MSL Website](#).

Contact your [MSL Statewide Library Consultant](#) for assistance or for any questions.

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# Montana Digital Opportunity Plan

## DIGITAL EQUITY

**\$2.75B**

### Digital Equity Act

Three programs that provide funding to promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. They aim to ensure that all communities can access and use affordable, reliable high-speed internet to meet their needs and improve their lives.

## Funding Overview

Program	National	MT Allocation
State Planning	\$60M	\$600K
State Capacity Grant (formula)	\$1.44B	TBD
Competitive program	\$1.25B	N/A <sup>1</sup>

# Montana Digital Opportunity Plan

**2024**



**2025 - 2029**



**Feb**

**1st Half**

**2nd Half**

**1st Half '25**

**Annually**

**1st Half '29**

Digital Opportunity Plan due (2/24)<sup>1</sup>

Submit State DO Capacity Grant Application to NTIA (\$1.44B, formula)

Receive Year 1 of DO Capacity Grant Funds from NTIA

Conduct grant process (or transfer funds to other state agencies)

NTIA holds competitive DO grant program for implementing entities (\$1.25B)

NTIA disburses competitive DO grant funds to implementing entities

Receive DO Capacity Grant funding annually from NTIA and disburse funds to implementing entities, as needed

Digital Opportunity program concludes (5 years after initial allocation to sub-grantees)

<sup>1</sup> The MBO has applied for a no-cost extension on the DOP, which has received verbal approval

Source: Digital Equity Planning Grant NOFO

# Montana Digital Opportunity Plan

## Goals

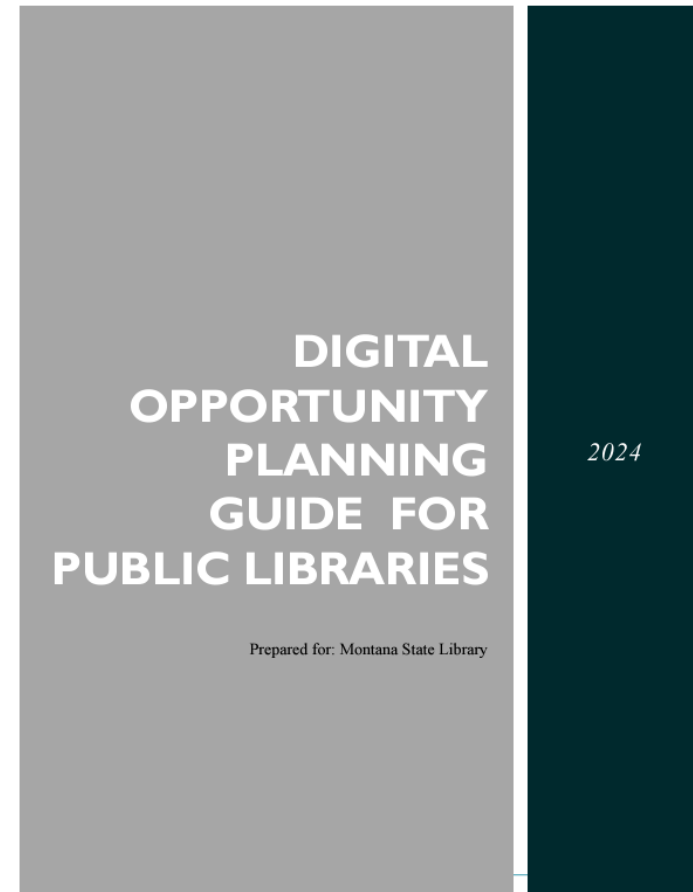
- Broadband Availability and Affordability
- Online Accessibility and Inclusivity
- Digital Skills
- Device Availability and Affordability

## Covered Populations

- Persons 60 or over
- Incarcerated individuals
- Veterans
- Persons with disabilities
- Individuals with language barrier
- Rural residents
- Members of ethnic/racial minority
- Individuals not exceeding 150 percent poverty level

# Montana Digital Opportunity Plan

- Planning guide available on MSL website under Consulting – Technology
- Watch for webinar week of April 8
- Kate McMahon will be at MLA and available to meet with librarians interested in planning for Digital Opportunity grants





# 30-second Balance Break



- ✓ Stretch
- ✓ Look Away from Your Screen
- ✓ Think About Any Questions You Have

# Network Advisory Council March 11 Meeting Update

- [Agenda](#)
- Highlights:
  - Public Library Standards road map discussion
  - Technical support recommendations and next steps
  - Library staff salary study

[The Network Advisory Council \(NAC\)](#) represents the interests of all types of Montana libraries and maintains the perspective of statewide geographical balance as it explores ways to help libraries; assesses community needs; identifies innovation opportunities; reviews and evaluates the feasibility, design, and outcomes of statewide library projects; assists with statewide planning, and advises the State Librarian and the State Library Commission.

# Links from Live Webinar Chat

- [SOP Public Library Standards](#)
- [Digital Opportunity Plan](#)
- [ASPeN Event Calendar for date and time](#)
- [Network Advisory Council](#)
- [March 11 NAC Agenda](#)
- [NAC Meeting Recording](#)

# Upcoming Webinars and Events

- March 22
  - Learning about Libraries and the Montana Legislature
- April 9
  - Montana’s Water Information Resources
- April 17-20
  - Montana Library Association Annual Conference
- April 23
  - Connecting with Local Government Officials
- Visit the ASPeN Event Calendar for More!
  - Coming in May
    - New Webinar Series: Connecting with Local Government Officials
    - Trustee Workshops with the MSU Local Government Center in Billings and Havre



Questions?



# Information and News Sources

- [MSL Website](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [MSL Help Desk](#)
- [ASPeN Events Calendar](#)
- [MSL Learn](#)
- [MSL YouTube Channel](#)
- [Email/call any MSL staff member](#)



# MSL Evaluation Survey



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Next Webside Chat  
Friday, May 10, 2024

