

# Webisode Chat with Jennie Stapp

## Webinar Recording

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- Recorded on December 12, 2025
- [Watch the Recording](#)

## December Website Chat Highlights

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### Administrative Rule Updates

1. **Open Hours Standard (Rule 10.102.1159):**
  - Libraries will now report **average weekly open hours** via the Public Library Survey.
  - **Minimum required hours** reduced by **30%**, effective **July 1, 2026**.
  - Language changed from “desirable” to “recommended” to better reflect expectations.
2. **Certification Rule (Rule 10.102.1160):**
  - New sections (A–D) added to clarify CE credit eligibility.
  - Courses from entities beyond the State Library will qualify.
  - Drop-in sessions planned for feedback on certification policy and handbook revisions.

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### Public Library Survey

- All public libraries and 4 tribal college libraries submitted 2025 surveys on time.
- Data validation is underway; final certification expected by **April 2026**.
- **New questions** for 2026 will focus on **meeting spaces**:
  - Number available, reservable, and frequency of use.
- **Asynchronous programming questions** (e.g., recorded storytimes) will be removed.
- Virtual programming questions will be simplified but retained for Montana’s survey.

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### IMLS Funding Update

- **All previously paused or terminated federal grants** have been reinstated.
- Montana institutions like **Exploration Works** and tribal colleges affected positively.
- IMLS remains short-staffed but continues operations.
- Future funding depends on Congressional action regarding FY26 and FY27 budgets.
- Encouraging signs for **reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act**.

# Webside Chat with Jennie Stapp

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## Recognition & Good News

- **Tracy Cook** received the **Bridge Builder Award** from the Montana Local Government Center.
  - Early literacy initiatives:
    - [Incarcerated mothers recorded books for their children, now with \*\*video recordings\*\*.](#)
    - [Dolly Parton Imagination Library books distributed via \*\*Montana Food Bank Network\*\*.](#)
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## Upcoming Events & Reminders

- Watch for:
    - **Access and Usability webinar series**
    - **Certification drop-in sessions**
    - Updates via **Aspen's events calendar** and newsletters.
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## Next Webside Chat

- TBD – check ASPeN Calendar in January 2026