



BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities For System Member Evaluation

1. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Boards of member libraries conduct the business of library governance in accordance with the following procedures:

- 1) Board meetings, with the library director in attendance, are held regularly with a quorum and not less than six times a year;
- 2) An annual notice of the board meeting schedule is published in the appropriate local newspaper no later than two (2) weeks before the first meeting of the year.
- 3) Approved library board meeting minutes are to be posted on the library's website;
- 4) All forms and reports, as required by Commonwealth Libraries or by the System are submitted by established deadlines and audits by September 15 annually;
- 5) The calendar year is the library's fiscal year;
- 6) any changes in library hours, including Holiday hours, other than summer changes, are to be reported to BCPL Offices by December and become effective the following January 1. Any other changes require a thirty (30) day written notice to the System Administrator, and the Polaris System Administrator;
- 7) The board operates according to written bylaws which are reviewed annually. Review of the bylaws should be noted in meeting minutes and copies of the bylaws with revised/reviewed dates updated on the library's website;
- 8) The library has a mission statement to be reviewed on an annual basis and revised as needed;
- 9) Library carries Directors and Officers insurance for Board members and secures necessary bonding for Board Treasurer and employees as appropriate;
- 10) 80% attendance at monthly System Director's Meetings and Youth Services meetings held at System Headquarters.

Achievement requires compliance with all 10 elements listed. To confirm compliance as well as all other board actions called for in this document, a packet with materials must be sent to System Office by December 31 of each year along with the Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities compliance check list.

2. POLICIES

The board and library director jointly plan and develop policies; a suggested list can be found in Appendix B. System-wide service and circulation policies conform to standardizations adopted by majority vote of the Library

Directors and by signed agreements of participation in the Horizon Polaris network. Internet policies are in keeping with the System-wide policy which appears as Appendix E of these Responsibilities.

All policies and approved board meeting minutes are to be available to the public upon request and are posted on the Library's website.

Each local Board determines the review cycle for each policy and informs the System Board upon completion of review. The Policy Review Checklist can be found on The HQ intranet and copies are kept on file at System Headquarters.

Board members plan and develop a personnel policy for employees not covered by contractual agreements or the personnel policies of municipal government. Personnel policies are to be reviewed annually, and revised as needed and in accordance with changes in state and federal employment regulations.

Samples and additional information about these policies are available from BCPL Office.

Achievement requires policy development and review in each of the areas indicated. Reviews should be noted in meeting minutes and copies of revisions and/or new policies, if any, sent to System HQ when approved.

3. SYSTEM PARTICIPATION AND TRUSTEE EDUCATION

Library boards are represented by at least one trustee at all BCPL Advisory Board meetings. These trustee representatives compose the BCPL System Member Representatives referenced in the BCPL Bylaws. Each Library annually designates one trustee and one alternate to serve as the representative to the System Member Representatives.

Member Libraries must send no less than two (2) board members from each library to a state or System sponsored continuing education event annually. State sponsored continuing education events include those hosted virtually on the Office of Commonwealth Libraries sponsored site, Webjunction.

BCPL will annually conduct a Trustee/Director Leadership Workshop before the end of the first quarter. All trustees are entitled and encouraged to attend as part of their annual continuing education requirement. All newly seated board members are expected to attend within their first year of serving as a board member.

4. PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The library has a long-range plan which includes goals and measurable objectives tailored to meet the needs of the community; the plan is reviewed and updated annually as part of a continuing process of evaluation.

Achievement requires creation of a planning document which incorporates the elements listed. Materials and assistance in developing long-range plans is available from BCPL. A written evaluation of progress toward library goals must be sent to BCPL Offices by January 31 of each review year. New plans must be submitted to BCPL Office once local Boards formally adopt the Plan.

5. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The library actively promotes its services and programs through an ongoing public relations program utilizing sources of print, broadcast and online media. This program also includes the following:

- a) Presentations to organizations such as service clubs, municipal governments, and other community groups;
- b) Posters, flyers, brochures, and bookmarks advertising library services;
- c) Posting events to the shared System website events calendar (for libraries hosted on the berkslibraries.org website);
- d) An annual report made available to the public by March 30 of the year following (i.e. 2019 annual report published by March 2020);
- e) Libraries participate in county-wide programs and/or displays associated with each theme or event in the System's yearly marketing calendar.

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Library Director attends a minimum of ten (10) hours of continuing education annually; the library board or municipal authority provides paid time off and reimbursement of expenses for this training.

All Library Directors are trained by System personnel in the use of the Polaris ILS and other network services. This requirement shall also apply to any other staff that may be responsible for library operations in the absence of the library director. Member libraries will comply with state requirements for staff continuing education.

All new Directors must complete a BCPL orientation within the first 3 months of employment. Other staff responsible for library operations in the absence of the Library Director must attend a BCPL orientation with the first 6 months of employment.

7. COLLECTIONS

At least 3% of the library's materials are weeded annually.

As per PA State Code 9335 b (2) "annually spend not less than 12% of its operating budget on collections", and BCPL System recommends a minimum of 10% of total materials expenditure for Juvenile items and 5% on Young Adult items for a balanced collection.

Achievement of this Guideline is determined by performance recorded on monthly statistical reports to the System and fiscal reports to Commonwealth Libraries. Weeding is in accordance with the criteria outlined in **CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries** (revised and edited by Jeanette Larson); this tool is available for download at <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew>.

8. PROGRAMMING

- a) The Library participates in the annual Collaborative Summer Library Program and complies with reporting requirements of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries and the BCPL System.
- b) The Library develops a calendar of children, teen and adult programming that supports life-long learning and the PA Forward Initiative based on community need.
- c) The Library participates in a schedule of ongoing activities reflecting community interests and develops and maintains community partnerships of mutual benefit.
- d) The Library participates in county-wide program(s) and/or displays associated with each theme or event in the System's marketing calendar

Effective January 2014
Revised November 2014
Revised 2020

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

BCPL- Berks County Public Libraries

System Headquarters- Berks County Public Libraries administrative unit located at 1040 Berks Road, Leesport, PA 19533

The HQ- the BCPL intranet located at <https://sites.google.com/view/the-hq/>

Polaris- Our Integrated Library System used at Member Libraries for daily library functions such as check-in, check-out, holds, etc.

Polaris System Administrator- this role oversees the Polaris ILS

System Administrator- this role is the department head of the County Library System, Berks County Public Libraries

Appendix B: Library Service Policies

Policies should address the following topics; other issues may be included as local boards determine to be appropriate.

The below policy types are based on recommended best practices for libraries and not an endorsement or requirement for BCPL System Membership.

1. Organization
 - a. Mission Statement/Vision Statement/ Core Values Statement
 - b. Board Governance
 - i. Bylaws
 - ii. Conflict of Interest
 - iii. Meetings of the Board/Right to Know officer, Policy/Minutes Repository
 - iv. Retention of Documents
 - v. Whistleblower policy
 - vi. Equal Employment Statement
 - vii. Board Job Description
 - viii. Library Director Evaluation Policy
 - ix. Volunteer Policy
 - c. Fiscal Authority and Responsibility
 - i. Annual Fee/Charges schedule
 - ii. Fraud prevention
 - iii. Purchasing and Petty cash
 - iv. Monetary Donations, Gifts and Cash Bequests
 - v. Limitations of Acceptance of Gifts
 - vi. Solicitation and Sales Policy
2. Public Service Policies
 - a. Library Patrons
 - i. Confidentiality of Patron Records*
 - ii. Parental Access to Children's Records
 - iii. Non Resident Borrowing Policy
 - iv. Internet Access Policy**
 - v. Unattended/Abandoned Children
 - vi. Patron Behavior Policies
 - vii. Programming Policy
 - viii. Use of Personal Equipment and Devices
 - ix. Patron Complaints/ Response to Complaints
 - x. Test Proctoring
 - b. Facilities
 - i. Hours of Operation
 - ii. Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather
 - iii. Safety and Security Policies
 - iv. Meeting Room Policies
 - v. Bulletin Board, Display and Exhibit policies
 - vi. Library Equipment and Use
 - c. Polaris Policies***

- i. Registration
 - 1. Residency Requirements for Non-fee cards
 - 2. Out of County residents
 - 3. Cards for Minors
 - 4. Expiration and Invalidation of Library Cards
 - a. Rescindment and Re-instatement of Borrowing privileges
 - 5. Teacher or Group Home Cards
 - 6. Temporary/Internet Access only cards
 - 7. Transfer of Cards- use of cards by family members
 - ii. Circulation Policies
 - 1. Loan Periods/Maximum items (by item type, by patron type)
 - 2. Renewals
 - 3. Requests for Holds
 - 4. Interlibrary Loan
 - 5. Lost and Damaged materials
 - 6. Refunds
 - 7. Claimed returns
 - 8. Staff Override permissions
- d. Collection Management
- i. Selection objectives and priorities
 - ii. Retention of Materials/ Weeding
 - iii. Censorship/Request for Reconsideration
 - iv. Donations

**Must conform to Section 428 of The Library Code*

***Must conform to the BCPL System Internet Policy in Appendix E*

**** Must conform to Polaris policies as stated in most current manual*

Appendix C: Personnel Policies

A personnel policy should address the following:

Filling vacancies (recruitment, selection, appointment)

Personnel procedures

- Job descriptions
- Probation
- Performance evaluation
- Conduct on duty
- Grievance procedures
- Personnel records
- Resignation and dismissals

Salaries, position classification

Benefits

- Insurance
- Retirement
- Worker's compensation

Hours, schedules

Staff development

- In-service training
- Certification
- Professional affiliations

Vacation and leave

- Vacation
- Sick leave
- Holidays
- Personal leave
- Professional and educational leave
- Jury duty
- Maternity and paternity leave

Appendix D: Training for Network Services

Training in the use of technology and network services shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

Polaris policies and procedures

Email overview

Training will be scheduled at a time mutually convenient to library personnel and System staff. Newly hired library directors without prior Polaris experience must complete training within 60 days of employment in a System library. Training on Cooperative Purchasing will also be given at this time.

Appendix E: Internet Policy

POLICY ON INTERNET ACCESS FOR BERKS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Purpose

The public libraries of Berks County are committed to the promotion of lifelong learning. As part of that commitment, the libraries will provide public access to the diverse and unique resources available via the internet and the World Wide Web.

Children and the Internet

The *Children's Internet Protection Act* (pub. L. 106.554) requires that a library receiving federal funds must "have in place a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any computers with Internet access..." In compliance with this provision of federal law, the public libraries have installed a filtering mechanism on all computers and library provided internet connections to protect young users from inappropriate material.

Parents are reminded that filtering is not foolproof. It diminishes the likelihood that searchers will inadvertently retrieve text or images that they may find offensive, but does not completely eliminate that possibility. Filters may also block access to sites that users would consider both inoffensive and useful. Parental supervision of young children searching the Internet is strongly advised.

Rights of Adults

Adults (those 17 and older) may request unfiltered access to the Internet for any purpose that does not violate the law or the libraries' policies. The filter on an individual library-owned computer will be disabled in response to such a request. Library staff may not disable the filter on patron-owned laptops or other wireless access devices.

Right to Privacy

All library users have the right to expect that their information-seeking activities in the library are private and confidential with the understanding that no records of internet use are being retained. While the Berks County Public Libraries and member libraries do not retain internet usage records or history and works to protect patron's privacy, they are not responsible for insuring the privacy of any information or data sent or received by patrons while using the libraries PC's, laptops, tablets, network, or Wi-Fi.

Conditions and Terms of Use

1. Information available via the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks; use of such information must not violate any copyright or trademark law.
2. Because the Internet allows access to ideas, information and commentary from sources around the world, the libraries cannot control its content. Therefore, individual users must accept responsibility for

determining the validity and accuracy of information located on the Internet. The libraries are not responsible for any use made of information obtained from Internet resources.

3. The Internet and its available resources may contain material and ideas that are controversial and conflict with the personal beliefs of users. Parents or guardians, not library staff, are responsible for the information selected and/or accessed by their children.
4. Viewing of certain materials in the public library may be considered improper in time, place or manner. Libraries reserve the right to terminate an Internet session that disrupts library services or involves user behavior that violates library policy.
5. Patrons may not use public library Internet connections for any commercial or for-profit purpose.
6. A cost-recovery fee for print-outs may be charged.
7. The County of Berks, Berks County Public Libraries, member libraries, member library board members, or any employees are not responsible for damages to patron owned equipment including but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell/smart phones, gaming devices, lot devices, etc. while using the libraries wireless internet connection. This includes but is not limited to, damage caused by configuration changes, viruses, spyware, malware, or other malicious code received via the libraries wireless connection.
8. Printing is not available through the library's wireless connection.

Limitations

Some libraries do not provide access to subscription services, e-mail, or chat lines; use of such web-based services as "Hotmail" may be permitted at the discretion of the local library.

User Responsibilities

1. Users will sign an Internet use agreement; agreements for those under 18 years of age will require parent or guardian signature.
2. Users must observe time limits and other procedural guidelines set by individual libraries for use of the Internet terminals.
3. Users are responsible for damage to equipment beyond what occurs with normal usage; hardware and software may not be abused, modified, or destroyed.

Staff Assistance

Library staff have received training in Internet searching and are capable of offering basic instruction in how to navigate. However, due to limited staffing and time constraints, patrons are encouraged to take the initiative and explore on their own.

Revised and approved by the Berks County Public Libraries Board of Trustees
11.20.2019



MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

Berks County Public Libraries, a federated library system, was established in 1986 by the County Commissioners to support and coordinate county-wide development and promotion of public library services. It is the mission of **Berks County Public Libraries**, hereafter referred to as *the System*, to serve as the advocate for the library and information service needs of all the residents of Berks County.

Operating as a department of county government and in cooperation with Reading District Library Center, the System provides leadership and technical assistance for improvement of its member libraries and library resources.

THIS AGREEMENT between the Advisory Board of the System ("System Advisory Board") and the Board of Trustees of _____ **Library**, hereafter called *the Member Library*, establishes the responsibilities and commitments of both parties.

IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED that the System will:

- 1) Apply for, receive, and distribute state funds (Aid to Public Libraries and disbursements of the Statewide Card Program) in accordance with the Funding Formula developed and approved by the System Advisory Board. The System Advisory Board will review the formula yearly and present any potential changes to Member Libraries two years in advance of those changes;
- 2) Annually seek and distribute funding from the County of Berks to provide support for the improvement of member library collections and programs;
- 3) Establish and maintain an integrated library system (ILS) including a shared database of bibliographic and borrower information;
- 4) Provide professional consulting to library staff and trustees;
- 5) Establish and maintain an intralibrary delivery program;
- 6) Identify and apply for grants to improve services and resources;
- 7) Create outreach opportunities that further develop a library presence in the County;
- 8) Develop and maintain a public relations services and library marketing support (including print and digital formats), based on periodic assessment of member library needs by System staff;
- 9) Develop and maintain a System-wide website available for any Member library to use in accordance with System policy;
- 10) Consult with the System Advisory Board in the preparation of plans and policies and in the securing of funds;
- 12) Review, evaluate, and revise plans for library service development in Berks County on an ongoing basis.

IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED that the Member Library will:

- 1) Be established, governed, and maintained so as to meet or exceed the standards to qualify for all levels of state aid and county funding as defined by and in accordance with the Pennsylvania Library Code, Act of June 14, 1961, P. L. 324 as most

recently amended (Standards for System members, 22 Pa. Code §141.26 and Branch Libraries 22 Pa. Code §141.27) and as set forth by the System Uniform Requirements and Responsibilities;

2) Retain control of and title to all property, endowments, gifts, and other locally raised funds, and shall determine their use in providing library services;

3) Make its collections and services available on an equal basis to all residents served by the System;

4) Participate in the Access Pennsylvania database and Statewide Card program;

5) Abide by the Pennsylvania Interlibrary Loan Code and System/District interlibrary loan protocols;

6) Adopt borrower policies as required by the shared ILS;

7) Ensure consistent and efficient system-wide customer service by circulating materials through the shared ILS and adopt the System Borrowing Policy;

8) Abide by the System Automation Agreement;

9) Support the System in its efforts to secure funds for the development of county-wide library services and the implementation of this agreement.

FAILURE TO MEET MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT AND/OR STANDARDS

The System Administrator will conduct an annual review of Member Libraries to determine whether a Member Library is in compliance with this agreement. Should the Administrator determine that a Member Library has not met one or more of the responsibilities or standards, the Administrator will inform the Member Library's Board President, Library Director and the System Advisory Board. The Member Library will develop specific actions to correct the deficiency(-ies) and submit a detailed plan and timeline to the Administrator. The Administrator and Advisory Board will review the plan with the Member Library and make recommendations for any necessary changes. The plan must be presented at a System Advisory Board meeting for approval. The Member Library will provide regular updates to the Administrator and System Advisory Board on the plan and timeline status.

Effective January 1, 2022, if the Member Library is not meeting requirements of the plan or timeline and/or the deficiency(ies) has not been rectified by the deadline laid out in the plan and timeline, then \$2,000 of the County and state aid appropriations for the following year may be withheld for each deficiency. The Administrator will report to System Advisory Board about the Member Library's continuing deficiency(-ies). The System Board will decide whether to withhold \$2,000 of the Member Library's county and state aid appropriation for each deficiency. The funds withheld will be distributed to the remaining Member Libraries according to their original pro-rata share of funds received from the appropriate formulas. The System Board may direct that funds distributed to remaining Member Libraries must be spent for a particular purpose. When the Member Library successfully rectifies its deficiency(-ies), it will receive its full appropriation in the following year.

THIS AGREEMENT may be revised or amended through the following procedure:

Amendments or revisions may be proposed at any regular meeting of the System Advisory Board of **Berks County Public Libraries**. A written notice of this action, together with a copy of the proposed change, shall be sent to the Board of the Member Library.

The Member Library shall indicate approval or disapproval. When a simple majority of the member libraries in the System approves the change, the System Board may adopt it at any regularly scheduled meeting by a favorable vote of at least four members.

THIS AGREEMENT shall be effective on the 1st day of January, 2021 and shall continue in force unless terminated by either party, such termination to be preceded by written notice sent by certified mail to the address of the other party six months before the termination date.

In the event any Member Library chooses to withdraw from the System, costs incurred due to the withdrawal of any party will be borne by the Member Library.

THIS AGREEMENT shall be reviewed and updated biennially.

THEREFORE, in consideration of mutual promises contained herein, the parties intending to be legally bound hereby, have caused this agreement to be executed by their respective officers on the day and year indicated above.

FOR **Berks County Public Libraries**

President, System Advisory Board

ATTEST:

Secretary

FOR _____ **Library**

President, Member Library Board

ATTEST:

Secretary



Library Automation Agreement

Berks County Public Libraries (the System) seeks to continue support of integrated automation in its member libraries in order to share library resources in the manner most effective for the benefit of all Berks County residents.

Toward that end, _____ (Member Library) enters into an agreement for the provision of automated library services delivered through Polaris ILS, provided by the System. _____ (Member Library) will be governed by the terms of this agreement.

Berks County Public Libraries Commitment: The System agrees to provide automation services and support including, but not limited to:

- Assume the primary financial and contractual responsibility for the operation of an Integrated Library System (ILS) and related electronic library services.
- Provision of an online catalog, circulation, acquisitions, cataloging, and other functionalities necessary to support library services.
- Enter cataloging records to the database for new acquisitions on behalf of the BCPL member libraries.
- Technical support of the network as needed in coordination with the District Library Center.
- Support of member library automation needs during library hours and emergency support as needed.
- Support of member library computers, including troubleshooting problems.
- Maintenance of appropriate files, reports, and other Polaris software applications responsive to member library needs.
- User accounts on the Polaris system.
- Coordinated purchase of supplies such as barcodes, labels, library cards and other associated items.
- Provide training and consultation to member libraries on the operations of Polaris ILS.
- A reference website containing important (non-sensitive) resources and support documentation about the automation system and services.
- Hardware support for member library computer equipment including barcode scanners and receipt printers.
- Hardware support for library local area networks.
- Maintenance and support of a wide area network connecting libraries to the Polaris network.
- Payment of telecommunication fees to connect libraries.

In addition, costs of software maintenance and acquisition of OCLC MARC records will be paid for by the System.

All catalog entries for the _____ (Member Library) holdings will be made by Berks County Public Libraries Bibliographic Services following procedures established by the System and based in established library best practices.

Member Library Commitment

- Member library is responsible for the computer hardware at their respective site and network services for connecting to the ILS and related electronic library services.
- Develop and enforce a confidentiality policy that protects the privacy of all library users.
- Follow system standards for the entry of patron information into the shared database.
- Notify BCPL staff of problems with network performance or connectivity as soon as possible after the problem is experienced.
- Notify Polaris Database Administrator, District Consultant and BCPL System Administrator of staff changes.

Implementation of automation on the Polaris ILS requires total compliance by _____ (Member Library) with all elements of BCPL circulation policies. Including loan periods, fine schedules, issuance of notices, registration requirements, and the confidentiality of registration data.

_____ (Member Library) agrees to comply with all Polaris ILS protocols and operating procedures. Training in these procedures will be conducted by the System for all paid Member Library staff; attendance at these training sessions is mandatory. The Library also agrees to observe all cataloging, processing, and classification requirements and practices established by BCPL.

Mutual Agreement/Termination

All libraries utilizing the Polaris ILS will share a common borrower database and a common library card; preserve the integrity of registration data; and generally work together to provide quality service and convenient access to resources to all library users. This agreement shall be reviewed annually by both parties; it may be amended as necessary by the System.

Should _____ (Member Library) elect to withdraw from membership in the Berks County Public Libraries System, all equipment purchased by the System in fulfillment of this agreement shall become the property of the County of Berks. In addition, _____ (Member Library) must assume the cost associated with deleting its holdings from the Polaris database.

If _____ (Member Library) breaks this agreement, the System will give them 60 days to correct any deficiencies or errors. If the Library does not, the System may elect to remove the Member Library from all automated library services.

_____ (Member Library) must assume the cost associated with deleting its holdings from the Polaris database.

For (Member Library):

Board President

Date

Library Director

Date

For Berks County Public Libraries:

Advisory Board President

Date

System Administrator

Date