

---

# Berks County Public Libraries Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities For System Member Evaluation

## **Purpose**

The Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities (URR) establishes benchmarks for the System Administrator to evaluate System member libraries. Member libraries should strive to provide excellent and equitable library service in their communities through compliance with all elements listed in this document.

## **Definitions**

*BCPL*- Berks County Public Libraries, also known as the Berks County Library System, or the System.  
*District*- Reading District Libraries  
*ILS*- Integrated Library System; used at member libraries to enable cardholders to borrow materials  
*OCL*- Office of Commonwealth Libraries  
*System Administrator*- this role is the department head of the County Library System, known formally as Berks County Public Libraries  
*System Headquarters*- the department's location at 1040 Berks Road, Leesport, PA 19533  
*URR*- Uniform Requirements & Responsibilities

## **Structure & 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 posted on the library's website within two months of their approval and maintained throughout the calendar year. Approved library board meeting minutes from previous years should be made available to the public in a manner determined at the library's discretion. The process for the public to obtain such minutes must be clearly noted on the library's website.
4. All forms and reports, as required by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries or by the System are submitted by established deadlines.
5. An audit of the previous calendar year's finances is submitted to the System Administrator by September 15 annually.
6. The calendar year is the library's fiscal year.
7. The library's operating hours, including holiday closures, are reported to the System Administrator by December 1 and become effective the following January 1. Changes made at any other time require 30 days' written notice to the System Administrator. Depending upon the circumstances, the library may need to complete OCL's Temporary Closure Notification Form.
8. The board operates according to written bylaws, which are reviewed annually. Review of the bylaws is noted in meeting minutes and a copy of the bylaws with revised/reviewed dates is updated on the library's website. When the bylaws are revised, a digital copy is

- submitted to the System Administrator within 60 days of approval.
9. The library may choose to post its approved budget on the library's website each year, with revisions posted as needed, or provide clear instructions for the public to request a copy.
  10. The library has a mission statement, which is reviewed annually. Review of the mission statement is noted in meeting minutes and a copy of the mission statement with revised/reviewed dates is updated on the library's website. When the mission is revised, a digital copy is submitted to the System Administrator within 60 days of approval.
  11. The library carries Directors and Officers insurance for board members and secures necessary bonding for the Board Treasurer and its employees as appropriate.
  12. 80% attendance at the bi-monthly System/District Directors' Meetings and the District Youth Services meetings is required.

## **Policies**

The board and library director jointly plan and develop policies according to an established review cycle. System-wide service and circulation policies conform to standardizations adopted by the majority vote of the library directors and by signed agreements of participation in the Integrated Library System network. Internet policies are in keeping with the System-wide policy which can be found in the appendices.

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, revised as needed, and in accordance with changes in state and federal employment regulations.

Sample policies are available from the System Administrator.

All policies and approved board meeting minutes are to be posted on the library's website within two months of their approval.

## **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. A library director cannot serve as the library's representative at any Advisory Board meeting.

Member libraries must send a minimum of 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 sites sponsored by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, Webjunction, or Niche Academy. These events must be at least one hour in length.

The System Administrator, in collaboration with the District Consultant, will annually conduct a New Trustee Orientation before the end of the second quarter. This orientation will review both System and District services as well as trustee responsibilities. All trustees are 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 board service.

## **Strategic Planning**

The library maintains a strategic plan that outlines goals and measurable objectives designed to meet community needs. The plan is reviewed and updated annually as part of a continuous evaluation process.

## **Programming & Public Relations**

The library offers a schedule of ongoing activities that reflect community interests and fosters mutually beneficial community partnerships within its mandated service area. It participates in the annual Collaborative Summer Library Program (Summer Quest) and complies with OCL's reporting requirements. The library also maintains a calendar of youth, teen and adult programs that support life-long learning and align with the PA Forward framework based on community needs.

The library actively promotes its programs through an ongoing public relations plan that uses a variety of sources and formats. Libraries using the [berkslibraries.org](http://berkslibraries.org) website post all programs and Board of Trustees' meetings on the online events calendar.

## **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 including mileage reimbursement for this training.

All library directors are trained by District and/or System personnel in the use of the Integrated Library System and by System staff for all 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.

All new library directors must complete a BCPL orientation within the first three months of employment. Other staff responsible for library operations in the absence of the library director must attend a BCPL orientation within the first six months of becoming the interim director.

Member libraries will comply with state requirements for staff continuing education. All library staff who work at least 20 hours per week in direct support of library service shall attend six hours of qualifying continuing education every two years.

## **Service Areas**

Service areas of each member library are defined by OCL and accepted by BCPL and member libraries. Member libraries should follow the procedure outlined in the System Membership Policy if they are interested in adding an unclaimed service area in Berks County to their existing service area.

Libraries should make every effort to create mutually beneficial partnerships with organizations and businesses within their mandated service areas.

## **Library Facilities**

The member library, or the municipality owning the library's facility, must notify the System Administrator in writing of any proposed new construction or expansion projects that increase the library's usable floor space. This requirement does not apply to routine maintenance projects and renovation projects that do not increase the library's usable floor space.

[Appendices to be added for Final Draft- Borrowing Policy, Internet Access Policy, System Membership Policy, URR Midpoint Compliance Review, URR Checklist]