



New Minimum Standards for New York's Public and Association Libraries (Effective January 1, 2021)

All public and association libraries in New York State must meet minimum standards of service according to Section 90.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. These standards support improved public library services for the people of New York and are intended to:

- ◆ promote quality local public library service in all communities of New York State,
- ◆ empower libraries to strengthen community relations and promote public support for quality library services, and
- ◆ support a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement

When Must a Library Meet the Minimum Standards?

All the minimum standards for public and association libraries must be met at the time of application for a library charter or registration. Education Law requires that a library be chartered and registered in order to legally receive local and State funds.

Any public or association library that was registered (licensed) by the department on or before December 31, 2020, shall meet the new minimum standards by January 1, 2021 to continue to be registered by the department. A public or association library seeking to register with the department on or after January 1, 2021 shall be registered with the department if it meets the new minimum standards.

What if a Library Cannot Meet Minimum Standards?

If a library cannot meet one or more of the minimum standards, the director or board president should contact the library system to discuss available options. Education Law and Commissioner's Regulations provide a process for libraries that cannot meet a standard because of circumstances beyond the library board's control.

How do Public Library Systems and the State Library Help Libraries Meet the Minimum Standards?

The Public Library System Directors Organization (PULISDO) and the New York State Library work together in a strong partnership to help public and association libraries meet the minimum standards.

See online:

Helpful Information for Meeting Minimum Public Library Standards for further information.
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/helpful/index.html>

For more information on Minimum Standards for New York's public libraries, contact your public library system, visit the New York State Library web site or contact the Division of Library Development.

New York’s 14 Minimum Standards for Public and Association Libraries (as of January 1, 2021)

- (1) is governed by written bylaws which define the structure and governing functions of the library board of trustees, and which shall be reviewed and re-approved by the board of trustees at least once every five years or earlier if required by law;
- (2) has a community-based, board-approved, written long-range plan of service developed by the library board of trustees and staff;
- (3) provides a board-approved written annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its mission, goals and objectives, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service;
- (4) has board-approved written policies for the operation of the library, which shall be reviewed and updated at least once every five years or earlier if required by law;
- (5) annually prepares and publishes a board-approved, written budget, which enables the library to address the community’s needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service;
- (6) periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the library's programs, services and collections to address community needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service;
- (7) is open the following scheduled hours:

Population	Minimum weekly hours open
Up to 500	12
500 - 2,499	20
2,500 - 4,999	25
5,000 - 14,999	35
15,000 - 24,999	40
25,000 - 99,999	55
100,000 and above	60

- (8) maintains a facility that addresses community needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service, including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, power and data infrastructure, and a public restroom;
- (9) provides programming to address community needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service;
- (10) provides a circulation system that facilitates access to the local library collection and other library catalogs; and provides equipment, technology, and internet connectivity to address community needs and facilitate access to information;
- (11) provides access to current library information in print and online, facilitating the understanding of library services, operations and governance; information provided online shall include the standards referenced in paragraphs (1) through (5) of this subdivision;
- (12) employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of section 90.8 of the *Regulations of the Commissioner of Education*;
- (13) provides library staff with annual technology training, appropriate to their position, to address community needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service; and
- (14) establishes and maintains partnerships with other educational, cultural or community organizations which enable the library to address the community’s needs, as outlined in the library’s long-range plan of service.