

Chapter 2 (Governance and Administration)

Public library service is provided to the people of Illinois through local tax-supported public libraries, regional library systems, the Illinois State Library, and the statewide library network (ILLINET). Illinois public libraries are governed by boards of trustees elected or appointed according to the provisions of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes* under which the libraries are established—village, city, town, district, township, etc.

For Illinois public libraries to maintain the highest standards of excellence, they shall be staffed by a qualified librarian, be administered by a board of trustees, file an *Illinois Public Library Annual Report* (IPLAR) with the Illinois State Library, have a written mission statement and a long-range/strategic plan, and periodically review policies and procedures that reflect the needs of the local community.

Library boards carry the full responsibility for the library and its policies. The three roles of a library trustee are to hire the library administrator, make library policy, and approve library budgets. Administering library policy, including management of day-to-day operations, collection management, technology plans, and staffing decisions, is delegated to the library administrator. The library administrator provides the board with clear, relevant, and timely information that will enable it to make informed decisions in regard to policy, planning, and budget.

Governance and Administration Standards

1. The mission statement and long-range/strategic plan are developed by the board, administrator, and staff and then approved by the board. These documents are based on a sound knowledge of public library service and a deep understanding of the community. Surveys, neighborhood dialogues, hearings, and input from staff members who serve the community on a daily basis provide a framework for this understanding. The process includes the difficult task of eliciting input from those who do not use the library.
2. The Library prepares, on an annual basis the *Illinois Public Library Annual Report* (IPLAR). The Illinois State Library is the agency legally required to: (1) compile, preserve and publish public library statistical information [15 ILCS 320/7(m)], and (2) compile the annual report of local public libraries and library systems submitted to the State Librarian pursuant to law [15 ILCS 320/7(n)]. In addition, all Illinois public libraries are required by statute [75 ILCS 16/30-65] to prepare an annual report. The library administrator, on a monthly basis, prepares a monthly report for the library board of trustees. This report will include, at the minimum, the minutes of the last month's meeting, monthly financial statements, administrator report, and library use statistics.
3. The board reviews most library policies every three years. The policy governing the selection and use of library materials must, by law, be reviewed biennially. [75 ILCS 5/4-7.2 or 75 ILCS 16/30-60].
4. Board members participate in relevant local, state, regional, and national decision making to effect change that will benefit libraries. This can be achieved through a variety of methods. Among these, board members can:
 - a. Write, call, or visit legislators
 - b. Attend meetings of other units of local government
 - c. Serve on ALA, ILA, or system legislative committees
 - d. Participate in other community organizations that have similar legislative interests

- e. Include the subject of legislation on board meeting agendas
 - f. Provide a forum for local community issues
5. The board and the library administrator develop and conduct a meaningful and comprehensive orientation program for each new board member. This can be achieved by creating a trustee orientation checklist. (See Appendix D)
 6. On an annual basis, each trustee participates in a continuing education activity that focuses on libraries, trusteeship, or other issues pertinent to libraries and reports on this activity to the full board.
 7. The library provides financial support for trustee membership in ILA and ALA as well as trustee attendance at workshops and conferences when fiscally possible.
 8. In encouraging citizens to run for the position of library trustee or in recommending citizens for appointment, the standing library board of trustees can use the following as a guide:
 - a. Library trustees are selected for their interest in the library, their knowledge of the community, their ability to work well with others, their willingness to devote the time and effort necessary to carry out the duties of a trustee, their open-mindedness and respect for the opinions of others, and their ability to plan and establish policies for services.
 9. The library keeps adequate records of library operations and follows proper procedures for disposal of records. (See Appendix B)
 10. The library complies and keeps current with appropriate Illinois and federal laws pertaining to public libraries.
 - a. The library complies with the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120] and has a written policy specifying, at a minimum, how trustee board meetings and meetings of board committees are publicly posted, how other types of notification are made, and how the public attends and may participate in board and committee meetings.
 - b. The library has a written Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy.
 - c. The library has a written equal employment opportunity policy and a written workers' compensation procedure.
 - d. The library bonds all staff and trustees responsible for library finances.
 11. The library has a board-approved set of written bylaws that govern the conduct of the board of trustees and its relationship to the library and staff. Bylaws provide the library board of trustees with guidelines that allow for consistent, organized, and productive meetings and operations. The library trustees regularly review the bylaws to ensure the library board is operating under the bylaws' guidelines and to ensure that the bylaws meet current organizational needs.
 12. The library maintains insurance covering property and liability, including volunteer liability.
 13. The library has a chain of command in place that will provide a smooth transition process when key members of the library staff leave the organization.

Governance and Administration Checklist

- Library has an elected or appointed board of trustees.
- Library has a qualified library administrator.
- Library administrator files an *Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR)* with the Illinois State Library.
- Library administrator prepares monthly reports (including statistics) of operations and services for the board's review.
- Library administrator and/or library board treasurer prepares monthly fiscal reports for the board's review.
- Library has a mission statement and a long-range/strategic plan.
- Library maintains an understanding of the community by surveys, hearings, and other means.
- Library board reviews library policies on a regular basis.
- Library board members participate in local, state, regional, and national decision making that will benefit libraries.
- Library develops an orientation program for new board members.
- Library board members attend local, regional, state, and national conferences pertinent to libraries when fiscally possible.
- Library keeps adequate records of library operations and follows proper procedures for disposal of records.
- Library complies and keeps current with appropriate Illinois and federal laws pertaining to public libraries.
- Library has a board-approved set of written bylaws that govern the conduct of the board of trustees and its relationship to the library and staff.
- Library maintains insurance covering property and liability, including volunteer liability.
- Library has a written succession plan focused on both internal and external talent development to fill anticipated needs for library leadership and other key personnel.

