

From: [Sarah Redfield](#)
To: [Bryce M Cundick](#); [Stockman, Lori](#)
Cc: [Forster, Sarah](#)
Subject: Petition for Agency Rulemaking Pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A. § 8055
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2026 11:32:35 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[Att Alternative Rule Proposal rev. Aug..docx](#)
[Att Compare Alternative w MLC rev. July.docx](#)
[Att Email April 1 re MLC Rules-Alternative Proposal \(Working Draft\).pdf](#)

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chairperson Cundick:

Thank you and the Commission members for your continuing diligence as you work to adopt equitable rules that will ensure all Maine libraries provide quality service to their communities in cooperation with each other.

Please consider this email a petition for the Commission to adopt the attached alternative approach, Alternative Rule Proposal. As submitted here, the Alternative includes drafters' notes and a Fact Statement with further background. These reflect some of my background research, including fifty-state surveys on some points raised by the Commission. I am also attaching a chart comparing the Alternative and the MLC drafts.

As you know, I have previously provided the substance of this Alternative to you and to the Commission. (Attached as Email April 1 re MLC Rules–Alternative Proposal (Working Draft)). However, because I do not know whether that Email was read or reviewed by you or other Commissioners, and because I am not aware of any Commission discussion concerning its substance at a public meeting, I am submitting it more formally now in my capacity as an individual citizen pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A. § 8055(1). (I am a registered Maine voter residing at 22 Riverwood Drive in York, Maine.)

As I understand it, 5 M.R.S.A. § 8055(3) requires the Commission to consider this petition and accept or reject it within 60 days. If necessary, I am also prepared to submit this petition signed by at least 150 registered Maine voters pursuant to 5 M.R.S.A. § 8055(3), 21 M.R.S.A. § 354, and the procedures adopted by the Commission as noticed on the agenda and described in the draft minutes of the Commission's [June 15, 2026](#) meeting. Such a submission, as I understand it, would require the Commission to institute rulemaking proceedings on the petitioned Alternative.

I have no wish to disrupt the timeline the Commission is currently following for adopting its rules. Rather, I am submitting the petition individually now **in the hope that the Commission will consider some of its substantive ideas when it continues discussion of its draft rule at its working session.**

Similarly, in submitting this proposal and the accompanying information, I am very aware that the Commission and the State Library have, and have access to, far more resources and individual detailed knowledge and experience with Maine's libraries than I do. In this context, I emphasize that, **from the outset the Alternative has been intended only as a Working Draft that would benefit substantially from collaborative discussion reflecting the expertise and judgment of the Commission and the Attorney General's Office.**

As noted above, the alternative proposed rule and related information are attached to this email. I am also sending a written copy by regular mail so that the Commission has the full text in 12-point font, printed on both sides, together with the notarized letter from the Town of York Clerk. The written copy is addressed to you and to Ms. Lori Stockman, Maine State Librarian, Maine State Library, 64 SHS, Augusta, ME 04333-0064.

Please let me know if any additional information or documentation is required or would otherwise be useful for your consideration.

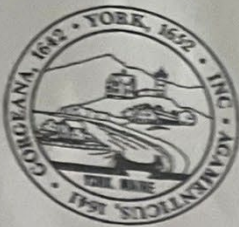
Sincerely yours,



Professor Sarah E. Redfield
22 Riverwood Drive
York, Maine 03909
207-752-1721
sarah.redfield@gmail.com

Attachments:

- Att Alternative Rule Proposal rev. Aug
- Att Compare Alternative w MLC rev. July
- Att Email April 1 re MLC Rules–Alternative Proposal (Working Draft)
- Att SER Registered Voter



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York, Maine 03909-1314

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Selectmen
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Town Clerk/
Tax Collector
(207)363-1003

Finance/
Treasurer
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Code Enforcement
(207)363-1002

Planning
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Assessor
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Police Department
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Dispatch
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York Beach Fire
Department
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York Village Fire
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATE OF MAINE
TOWN OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to Certify that: Sarah E. Redfield

22 Riverwood Dr.

York, Maine

Is a resident and legally registered to vote in the Town of York, County of York,
and State of Maine, United States of America
and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of American Citizenship.

In witness thereof, I have here unto set my hand and affixed the seal of the said
Town of York on this 29 day of July 2026, AD

April R. Calina

Town Clerk, York Maine

Deputy
Leah

{Maine Library Commission (MLC) Library Rule—Alternative Draft Proposed by Ad Hoc Group (Mar 9, 2026, Rev. 1 May 2026; Rev. 2 July 2026; Rev. Aug. 2026).

94-075 MAINE LIBRARY COMMISSION

SUMMARY: The first Chapter of this rule establishes the geographic boundaries of the Maine Regional Library System (MRLS) and determines how school, academic, special, and public libraries are assigned to each region. This rule also identifies State infrastructure and services (benefits) provided under the purview of the Maine Library Commission and the Maine State Library to all Maine citizens and to public libraries as defined. The rule codifies prior recognition of existing public libraries as qualified public libraries for purposes of state and federal funding and support and establishes procedures for adding libraries to and removing libraries from membership in the Maine Regional Library System.

The second Chapter codifies existing Maine State Library Policy on Anti-Discrimination and Civil Rights, expands that policy to include socioeconomic status, and extends that policy to public libraries.

The third Chapter establishes rules of practice for the Maine Library Commission to adopt and implement its rules consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.

[Drafting notes: Text in brackets labeled “Drafting Notes” reflects internal explanatory commentary and background provided by the drafters and is not intended to be part of the rule text.]

Chapter __: MAINE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to implement Title 27 M.R.S. Ch. 4 by establishing the Maine Regional Library System, including the geographic boundaries of its regions, the assignment of libraries to each region, and procedures for participation as a Maine Regional Library System Member. This Chapter supplements the Legislature’s definition of “public library” in a manner that recognizes the long history of Maine’s public libraries as locally created and locally controlled institutions accountable to their communities; the diversity of communities served by public libraries; the legislatively mandated value of cooperation and resource sharing; and the State’s role in supporting libraries through shared infrastructure. This rule also codifies prior recognition of existing Maine public libraries and establishes procedures for adding libraries to, and removing libraries from membership in the Maine Regional Library System.

[Drafting notes: As drafted, this rule reflects the intent of the Maine legislature to treat libraries as locally established and maintained, to recognize the value of cooperative and shared infrastructure, and to reflect the State’s supportive role. This supportive approach is consistent with the Maine State Library’s (MSL) stated mission: “to provide, broaden, and improve access to information and library services to all Maine residents” (from MSL website). It is also consistent with the mission and goals of the MSL /MLC strategic plan as submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 9134: “Overall, the Maine State

Library formally partners with over fifteen organizations and agencies via contracts and agreements and always works in partnership with all Maine libraries to fulfill our mission to help people, make Maine libraries stronger and transform information into knowledge.” The plan also sets out as State goals: “GOAL 1: Expand library resource sharing and services for all Maine residents; GOAL 3: Provide and improve library services to individuals with disabilities; and to Maine residents, including children, living in underserved areas and rural areas; GOAL 4: Expand and enhance life-long learning opportunities for Maine residents.” (GOAL 2 is included in the professional development provisions in Section 6)]

This rule is an alternative to the Draft Rule being considered by the Maine Library Commission and stands in direct contradiction to its overall approach. This rule grandparents the status of the existing public libraries and would remove their status only by the library’s request or for cause. By comparison, the Maine Library Commission’s rule would create eligibility criteria and condition various benefits, including state internet discounts and support, upon meeting those criteria. While the Maine Library Commission has said there would likely be no immediate threat and that there would be time for “onboarding,” their proposed rule remains (immediately) enforceable. The Maine Library Commission rule remains a potential “stick” while this alternative is steadfastly neutral.

For each part of this alternative, the drafters have asked this question: Is this a standard where, if a library failed to meet it, you would be willing to disqualify a library from being a Maine Regional Library System (MRLS) Member and deny that library and its community current services including state broadband discounts and support?

Section 2. Definitions

A. Area Reference and Resource Center

“Area reference and resource center” means a large public, school, or academic library designated by the State Librarian and receiving state aid for the purposes of making its resources and services available without charge to all residents within a library region, of providing supplementary library services to local libraries within the library region and of coordinating the services of all local libraries within the library region that by contract become part of the library region. 27 M.R.S. § 110(2).

[Drafting notes: This definition tracks the statutory language and intent.]

B. Common borrower’s card

“Common borrower’s card” means a system of personal identification for the purpose of borrowing and returning books and other materials from any library that participates in the regional system. 27 M.R.S. § 110(3).

[Drafting notes: This definition tracks the statutory language and intent.]

C. Library Director

“Library Director” means the person responsible for the day-to-day management and oversight of the library, whether paid or volunteer.

[Drafting notes: This definition follows the language of the Maine Library Commission proposal.]

D. Library Record

“Library record” means a record in any form that is maintained by a library and that contains any of the following types of information:

- 1) Information that the library requires an individual to provide in order to be eligible to use library services or borrow materials;
- 2) Information that identifies an individual as having requested or obtained specific materials or materials on a particular subject;
- 3) Information that is provided by an individual to assist a library staff member to answer a specific question or provide information on a particular subject.

“Library record” does not include information that does not identify any individual and that is retained for the purpose of studying or evaluating the use of a library and its materials and services.

[Drafting notes: This definition supplements the provisions of 27 M.R.S. § 121 governing confidentiality of Maine library records. Most states do not specifically define this term; this language is taken from analogous Ohio law, Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 149.432.]

E. Library Patron

“Library Patron” means any individual who uses the services or resources of the library.

[Drafting notes: This definition supplements the provisions of 27 M.R.S. § 121 governing confidentiality of Maine library records.]

F. Local Library Board

“Local library board” means the body which has the authority to give administrative direction or advice to a library through its librarian. 27 M.R.S. § 110(8).

[Drafting notes: This definition tracks the statutory language and intent.]

G. Maine Library Advisory Council

“Maine Library Advisory Council” means the Council established pursuant to 27 M.R.S. § 114-A to provide advice and make recommendations to regions, the Maine State Library, and the Maine Library Commission.

[Drafting notes: This definition tracks the statutory language and intent.]

H. Maine Public Library Fund

“Maine Public Library Fund” means an interest-bearing account that receives money deposited by the Treasurer of State pursuant to Title 36, section 5291 and any other money contributed to the fund. The fund is administered by the State Librarian. All money deposited in the fund and the earnings on that money remain in the fund to be used to provide grants to free public libraries for use in providing services identified as priority services by the State Librarian. Money in the fund may also be used for the necessary administrative and personnel costs associated with the management of the fund but may not be deposited in the General Fund or any other fund except as specifically provided by law. 27 M.R.S. § 8.

[Drafting notes: Included verbatim from statute.]

I. Maine Regional Library System

“Maine Regional Library System” means a network of library regions interrelated by formal or informal contract for the purpose of organizing library resources and services for research, information and recreation to improve statewide library service and to serve collectively the entire population of the State. 27 M.R.S. § 110(11). The regional library system is referred to as the Maine Regional Library System or MRLS.

[Drafting notes: The definitional text is included verbatim from the statute. The last sentence is taken from prior Maine Library Commission proposals.]

J. Maine Regional Library System Member

“Maine Regional Library System Member” or “MRLS Library Member” means any grandparented library and any additional library as defined in sub-Section M(1) of this Section; provided, however, that it does not include any library that has been withdrawn or removed pursuant to the provisions of Section 9 of this Chapter.

[Drafting notes: This section is added to establish an overarching category where long-standing libraries are recognized as such without further requirements and where other libraries can be added or withdrawn or removed from membership. Substantive sections in the Chapter further delineate requirements and procedures.]

K. Maine State Library Consultant or Specialist

“Maine State Library consultant or specialist” means an individual who acts as a general library consultant or specialist to one or more library regions to study the needs of the library region or regions and make recommendations to the Maine Library Advisory Council, to coordinate services among libraries of all types; to provide liaison between the library region or regions and the Maine State Library; to encourage local initiative and commitment to regional cooperative library service; and to work with Area Reference and Resource Center staff members in planning area reference and interlibrary loan service. (27 M.R.S. §§ 110(8), 117).

[Drafting notes: This definition tracks the language and intent of two sections of the statute.]

L. Maine Technology Education Access Fund (METEAF)

“Maine Technology Education Access Fund (METEAF)” means the fund established pursuant to Title 35-A M.R.S. § 7104-B(2) to provide discounts and to otherwise assist in paying the costs of libraries acquiring and using advanced telecommunications technologies.

[Drafting notes: This definition is a shortened version of Title 35-A M.R.S. § 7104-B, which created METEAF.]

M. Public library

“Public library” means a library freely open to all persons and which receives its financial support from a municipality, private association, corporation or group. The above serves the informational, educational and recreational needs of all the residents of the area for which its governing body is responsible. For purposes of this Chapter, “public library” is further defined as follows:

- 1) “Additional Library” means any entity or association that has successfully applied to participate as a Maine Regional Library System Member pursuant to Section 8(B).
- 2) “Grandparented Library” means any library listed in the “FY24_Public_Library_Data” from the Maine State Library, which list is included in the Appendix and incorporated by reference.
- 3) “Qualified library” means any grandparented or additional library that has not been withdrawn or removed pursuant to Section 9.
- 4) “Withdrawn or removed library” means any library that is withdrawn or removed pursuant to Section 9 from the list of libraries established by Section 8.

[Drafting notes: The first paragraph of this definition tracks the statutory definition of “public library” in Title 27 M.R.S. § 110(10). The additional terms are intended to establish objective categories and procedures for Maine Regional Library System membership in a manner which addresses expressed concerns that entities which could not meet the statutory definition may seek recognition as public libraries for the purpose of accessing State-supported services or benefits; the examples cited in discussion included efforts to be designated as a library to obtain access to free films or perhaps efforts to have a room with books designated as a library in order to access free internet.]

Section 3. Application of this Rule

This rule applies to any public library in the State of Maine that participates or seeks to participate in the Maine Regional Library System.

[Drafting notes: This section follows the layout of the Maine Library Commission proposal.]

Section 4. Regions of the Maine Regional Library System

A. General

This section identifies the geographic boundaries for each library region that collectively make up the Maine Regional Library System and assigns libraries and an Area Reference and Resource Center (ARRC) to each region.

B. Regional Boundaries

- 1) Boundaries of each region are determined by using three factors: county population figures from the decennial census published by the U.S. Census Bureau, the total number of public libraries in the state, and the service area of each ARRC;
- 2) Counties that are geographically proximate comprise each individual region;
- 3) To the extent feasible, county population is evenly divided to create three regions.

C. Regions

The Maine Regional Library System shall have three regions comprised of the following counties:

- 1) Northeastern Maine Library Region: Aroostook, Hancock, Knox, Lincoln, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Waldo, Washington;
- 2) Central Maine Library Region: Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Somerset;
- 3) Southern Maine Library Region: Cumberland and York.

D. Area Reference and Resource Centers (ARRC)

Each region has the following ARRC:

- 1) Northeastern Maine Library Region: Bangor Public Library;
- 2) Central Maine Library Region: Maine State Library;
- 3) Southern Maine Library Region: Portland Public Library.

E. Assigning Libraries to Library Regions

All participating libraries are assigned to the region that serves the county where the library is physically located.

[Drafting notes: This section follows the Maine Library Commission proposal verbatim except for moving Lincoln County from the Central Region to the Northeastern Region to reflect the tri-county areas where Lincoln is more typically included—Knox, Lincoln, and Waldo are combined, for example, for Prosecutorial Districts, Judicial Divisions, Midcoast Council of Governments, Soil and Water Conservation.]

Section 5. State-Supported Library Services

A. Services available to all citizens of the State shall include:

- 1) DigitalMaine or its equivalent;
- 2) Download or CloudLibrary, or its equivalent, provided that the library patron has a valid Maine library card including a Common Borrower's card; and
- 3) Such other similar services as may become available.

[Drafting notes: This section reflects current library policy that some materials are available to all Maine residents regardless of local library affiliations. The use of the terms "or its equivalent" and "such other services" is intended to provide leeway should the specifics of the organizations or services provided by the Maine State Library or MaineInfonet change.]

B. Services available to all MRLS Library Members that meet the standards in Section 6 shall include:

- 1) Internet connection (1–10 Gigabits per second) through the Maine School and Library Network managed by NetworkMaine at no additional cost to the library;
- 2) Content filtering, email, web hosting, technology support, and consortia pricing through the Maine School and Library Network managed by NetworkMaine at no additional cost to the library;
- 3) Discounts through the federal E-Rate (Schools and Libraries Universal Service) program on eligible technology required to maintain an internet connection;
- 4) Discounts and support through NetworkMaine and the Maine Technology Education Access Fund (METEAF);
- 5) Eligibility to receive grants through the Maine Public Library Fund;
- 6) Eligibility to receive grants funded through the Maine State Library so long as they agree to fulfill all applicable reporting requirements;
- 7) Eligibility for discounted membership to the Maine Association of Nonprofits; and
- 8) Eligibility for subsidized van delivery service for Interlibrary Loan (ILL) subject to the following conditions:

The library must have at least one library staff member subscribed to the Maine State Library Delivery listserv for Van Delivery participants;

The library must have more than 100 ILL materials per year as reported on the most recent Public Library Survey for Maine libraries submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The 100 ILL materials are the combined total of the borrowing and lending ILLs per library; and

The library must agree to pay a portion of the annual cost based on the population served by the library;

Provided, however, that where a library does not qualify for ILL, a Maine State Library Consultant or Specialist shall review the library's use and potential use and make specific recommendations for alternative methods for library patrons to be served within the State.

[Drafting notes: This section incorporates benefits reflected in prior Maine Library Commission proposals and is intended to clarify that all MRLS Library Member libraries remain eligible for free or discounted internet service with Section (5) adding an explicit reference to the Maine Technology Education Access Fund (METEAF).]

Subsection (B)(8) tracks decisions previously made by the Maine State Library or Maine Library Commission and recognizes the costs associated with Interlibrary Loan. Similarly, Sub-Section (B)(8)(c) provides for a partial subsidy to replace the previous full subsidy for one day a week of service. This fee responds in a small way to concerns regarding the Maine State Library budget. The proviso clause is intended to reinforce continued access by requiring review of alternative delivery methods where a library does not qualify for subsidized van delivery service, including continued use of the U.S. Mail as described in discussion by the Commission as well as additional access solutions where feasible.

Other costs or cost savings are not directly addressed in this proposal, in part because the drafters were uncertain which measures were at issue or available. Similarly, potential approaches that might involve additional costs were not included, even though such approaches might advance other objectives of these rules. For example, the creation of a discretionary fund could support specific professionalism efforts for libraries or librarians; these might include support for enhanced cataloging systems or support for librarians who could not otherwise afford the expense to attend statewide library functions such as the Maine Library Association Annual Meeting.]

Section 6. Eligibility for State-Supported Library Services

To receive the services enumerated in Section 5, an MRLS Library Member must meet the following minimum standards of library service:

A. Report

The library shall submit the Public Libraries Survey (a.k.a. the Public Library Annual Report) to the Maine State Library by April 1 each year.

B. Professional Development

The library shall promote quality library services by supporting professional development. In addition to the minimum professional development for library directors in ¶ C, aspirational benchmarks are established.

C. Library Director

The Library Director shall engage in at least 4 hours of professional development annually in the areas of

- 1) Library management;
- 2) Library governance;
- 3) Library facility and maintenance;
- 4) The fundamentals of librarianship;
- 5) Trends in library service; or
- 6) Other areas of study relevant to daily operations of a public library.

Additional professional development in these subject areas is encouraged for the director and staff, including volunteers, with a benchmark of at least 12 hours per year per person.

D. Library Board

Local library board members are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities annually in the areas specified, with a benchmark of at least four hours per year minimum:

- 1) Library governance;
- 2) Board roles and responsibilities;
- 3) Fundraising;
- 4) Advocacy;
- 5) Strategic planning; or
- 6) Other areas of study relevant to daily oversight of a public library.

E. Certification

For required hours of professional development, each participant shall maintain a certificate of participation or other documentation verifying attendance and shall indicate that attendance on a report to the Maine Library Commission or otherwise provide that documentation to the Maine Library Commission upon request.

[Drafting notes: This section generally follows the prior Maine Library Commission proposal and supports the Maine Library Commission/Maine State Library goal: "GOAL 2: Improve the Maine library workforce via continuing education, professional development and leadership opportunities."]

The drafters were unable to identify any quantitative or qualitative survey data on the impact of requiring professional development. Recognizing that formal survey data on this point would be valuable, the drafters relied on anecdotal information in recommending four hours of professional

development for library directors and no mandated hours for other personnel.

For example, in response to the Maine Library Commission's proposal, one of the thirty libraries serving populations between 1,500 and 2,000 stated, "But they didn't come close to touching on how such a requirement might apply or whether it should apply to all-volunteer libraries. . . We'd be required to have a "director," who could be a volunteer but NOT a board member. [Would] that person have to work at least 12 hours a week plus attend 12 hours of professional development seminars over a year? I'm pretty sure that no one in our library community is prepared to commit to that."

For broader context, the drafters ran 50-state surveys in Lexis. These surveys included the 24 states identified in public discussion by Maine State Library staff as relevant bases for comparison (Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming). The drafters refer to these here as "preferred states." The Lexis surveys would identify statutory and regulatory requirements, but would not necessarily identify standards or policy developed or imposed in practice without a statutory or regulatory foundation. The full text of the surveys is on file with the drafters.]

After reviewing the survey data, the drafters replaced the requirement of professional development for trustees with an aspirational benchmark. This benchmark-based approach aligns with the American Library Association's move away from prescriptive standards and toward benchmarking services for particular communities. It is also consistent with the practice in 47 states, which do not impose a statutory or regulatory requirement of this kind. The drafters' research identified only three states (including one preferred state) that impose professional development requirements specifically on library trustees, and only two that link this to state aid: Alabama requires that at least two board members complete "APLS trustee training," and failure to comply may result in forfeiture of state funds. Ala. Admin. Code r. 520-2-2-.03. Wisconsin provides that, to qualify for state aid, a public library system must ensure that "in-service training for participating public library personnel and trustees" is provided. Wis. Stat. § 43.24(2)(e). New York requires 2 hours of "trustee education" per year; enforcement mechanisms are unclear. (In some states, library boards may be covered by broader statewide requirements that statutorily created boards complete annual training on topics such as right-to-know laws.)

The drafters retained the Maine Library Commission proposal for four hours of professional development training for library directors and added an aspirational benchmark for more. Although this is fewer than the hours

required in many of the states that do impose such requirements, most states impose no statutory requirement at all.

The drafters had difficulty finding and identifying comparative data from other states and distinguishing between required certification and required continuing education. That said, at least eight states, including two preferred states, clearly have statutory or regulatory provisions for continuing education or professional development hours. These range from three to twenty hours per year—for example, Louisiana requires fifteen hours over five years; Georgia, ten hours biennially; Michigan and Texas, ten hours for libraries serving populations over 100,001; and Kentucky, one hundred hours over five years. In still other states, the requirement is attendance at library meetings (Missouri) or hours required during the first three years for a certificated librarian (Indiana). In some states, the requirements are tiered to library size, but the drafters could not identify any provision specific to volunteer directors as a category.

The drafters also attempted to identify research relevant to the point raised in Commission discussions that paid staff may provide greater continuity and reliability than volunteers. Although some literature suggests that professionalization is advantageous as library operations increase in technical complexity, other research on volunteer administration emphasizes the intrinsic value of civic motivation and community engagement.

The lived experience and anecdotal information gathered by the drafters suggest that volunteers have long been critical to Maine libraries, just as volunteers are critical to firefighting and other community services. The drafters decline to devalue the proven history of library volunteers and are unwilling to disqualify a library from MRLS membership because services are offered by volunteers or because a library is not able to have two staff members, whether volunteer or paid, on site during all public hours.

More generally, the drafters looked at research that places a dollar value on volunteer time of \$34.79 (2026) with \$32.99 reported for Maine (2025). The drafters also noted research showing that Maine's volunteer rate is higher than the national average (2023).

Analysis of the FY24 Public Library Survey data identifies 22 Maine libraries operating exclusively with volunteer staff and other libraries where volunteers also play substantial roles. Of the 22 libraries, twelve report total operating revenues below \$10,000, eight report between \$10,000 and \$20,000, and two exceed \$50,000. These institutions collectively serve a population of over 43,000 residents. Looking at all the data, the drafters were simply unwilling to accept that a State agency would prefer to remove state infrastructural support from these libraries and their communities rather than see them continue with volunteers.

The drafters chose a self-administered method for recording participation in any required professional development, leaving open the possibility that the Maine Library Commission might decide to include it in its requisite report/survey or might request documentation. This is analogous to the current approach of the Maine State Library regarding its Voluntary Certification Program and VPLC Progress Checklist, where participants record their own course completion.

F. Confidentiality

Consistent with the provisions of Title 27 M.R.S. § 121, the library maintains confidentiality of library records as to the identity and intellectual pursuits of any person using the library including but not limited to the library patron's name, address, phone number and e-mail address; or information that identifies a library patron as having requested, obtained or used books or other materials in any medium at the library or provided by the library. (27 M.R.S. § 121(1)(A), (B).

[Drafting notes: This section tracks the provisions of Title 27 M.R.S. § 121 governing confidentiality of Maine library records and adds the reference to intellectual pursuits, which is included in Massachusetts law, ALM GL ch. 78, § 7.]

Internal Policies

The library must have policies reflecting the following:

- 1) The library maintains internal policies regarding circulation, collection development, reconsideration of library materials, programs, internet acceptable use/Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), child safety, patron behavior, and meeting space use;
- 2) The local library board reviews the library's policies at least once every five years;
- 3) The library has a Library Director, provided, however, that this position may not be filled by an individual who also serves as a trustee on the board of trustees.

[Drafting notes: This section generally follows the prior Maine Library Commission proposal but reorganizes the requirements by grouping policy-related provisions as one subsection and sustainability requirements in the following subsection. It also differs from the prior proposal by changing the language from "3 to 5 years" to 5 years, clarifying the requirement while allowing any library choosing a shorter cycle should it choose to do so.

This version eliminates the 2 person staffing requirement proposed by the MLC and leaves staffing decisions to local control.

This approach is consistent with the drafters' view that enforcement of workplace safety standards is not within the scope of the grant of statutory authority to the Maine Library Commission as a "minimum standard of library service" but is instead a matter regulating workplace safety and thus reserved to the Maine Department of Labor, which has authority over

occupational safety. It is also consistent with the drafters' view that libraries should be able to determine their own needs and that these needs will be different in different communities.

Research by the drafters did uncover safety issues—as suggested by the number of calls to local police—particularly at larger libraries such as Portland or Lewiston, but did not identify similar concerns in all locations. Some libraries have said they neither want nor need two people at a time and that a strict two-person staffing requirement would be unduly burdensome especially for small libraries. For some libraries, safety concerns will be more appropriately addressed by local governing bodies and their insurers.

For context on this point, the drafters' research found only 3 states with provisions specific to staffing numbers and hours. Generally, such Library personnel presence requirements vary significantly across jurisdictions, with some states having no minimum staffing mandates while others establish specific requirements tied to population served or funding eligibility. Regulations typically focus on weekly hour commitments rather than continuous presence, and many requirements are linked to state funding qualification rather than basic operational mandates.]

G. Sustainability

The library shall, at a minimum, provide:

- 1) A mission statement;
- 2) A strategic plan that is reviewed at least once every three years; and
- 3) Demonstration of annual support (funding or in-kind support) from the local library board, from the municipality or unit of local government in which it is legally situated, from charitable organizations, or from similar sources.

[Drafting notes: This section generally follows the prior Maine Library Commission proposal but adds a requirement for a mission statement, which was previously a Maine Library Commission standard.

For context, the drafters' research identified 14 states that have strategic and long-range plan requirements (Michigan, Pennsylvania, Iowa, New York, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Virginia, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Texas, New Hampshire, Mississippi, Nevada, and Georgia).

Also for context, the Maine State Library is obligated under Title 27 M.R.S. § 36 to “formulate and present to the Legislature a plan for statewide library development.” The Maine State Library's current strategic planning efforts appear to be reflected in its Five-Year State Plan for 2023–2027, submitted under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), 20 U.S.C. §§ 9134, 9141 as “approved by the Maine Library Commission.”

This section also broadens the list of sources of support to allow for arrangements that may exist in some localities that serve these purposes but are not precisely delineated as municipal or board.]

H. Access

- 1) The library does not charge members of its legal service area for membership;
- 2) The library has a physical location;
- 3) The library is open to the public for at least 10 hours per week for a minimum of 50 weeks per year; provided, however, that this subsection does not apply to a library with a legal service area of 1,000 or fewer persons or to a library that primarily serves a summer community.
- 4) The library has at least one dedicated public access computer and printer;
- 5) The library has a dedicated phone and email address;
- 6) The library has organized print and other library materials reflecting diverse needs of the community it serves.

[Drafting notes: This section generally follows the prior Maine Library Commission proposal but replaces the requirement that libraries be open “year-round” with a requirement of at least 50 weeks per year. This change reflects the fact that approximately 16 libraries report that they are not open a full 52 weeks annually.

This section also differs from the prior Maine Library Commission proposal by revising the categories of libraries to which the hourly minimum weekly open-hours requirement does not apply, in order to better recognize the diversity of communities and service contexts in which Maine libraries operate.

The drafters recognize that any number is likely to be somewhat arbitrary. For context, a review of the FY24 Public Library Survey data seems to indicate that with a 12-hour-per-week standard, 23 existing libraries will be out of compliance; if summer and winter hours are averaged, then it appears that 20 would be cut off. As written, the Commission’s proposed exception for libraries located on islands with legal service areas of fewer than 300 year-round permanent residents would apply to only seven or so of these.

As drafted by the MLC, this exception does not include North Haven, which reports a population of 425, but which is an island; it also does not include Allagash, which has population of 236, but is not an island (currently open 6 hours).

A review of the FY24 Public Library Survey data suggests that the shift to 10 hours and the summer distinction would apparently leave nine libraries needing to increase their hours.

For general context, the drafters' research found that 12 other states require a fixed minimum number of open hours tied to population served, and 17 other states require a fixed minimum number of open hours that is not based on population served. The number of required hours ranges from 10 (Alaska, for populations under 750, and 15 for populations between 750 and 1,500) to 60 (New York, for populations of 100,000 and above, with minimums of 12 hours for populations up to 500 and 20 hours for populations between 500 and 2,499). Again, for context, even Maine's largest libraries all serve populations below 70,000.]

I. Library values

The library shall be guided by the Library Bill of Rights, Core Values of Librarianship, and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association;

Section 7. Certifying Eligibility for Services

A. Agreement

A library shall maintain a signed Maine Regional Library System Agreement on file with the Maine State Library. The Agreement shall be resubmitted every three years.

B. Self-certification

A library shall self-certify its compliance with the requirements of Section 6 as part of the annual Report required under Section 6(A).

C. Signatories

The Library Director and the head of the Local Library Board shall sign the agreement.

[Drafting notes: This section tracks the Maine Library Commission prior proposal.]

Section 8. Qualified Libraries

A. Grandparented Libraries

As defined in Section 2, libraries included in the FY24 Public Library Survey Dataset are grandparented and considered Qualified Libraries for purposes of 35-A M.R.S. § 7104-B, 20 U.S.C. §§ 9101–9165, and such other eligibility standards as may be relevant.

B. Additional Libraries

Any library not included in sub-Section (A) may become an MRLS Library Member upon approval by the Maine Library Commission in consultation with the Maine Library Advisory Council. Approval requires that:

- 1) The library files a written request signed by its current Library Director, with the Maine Library Commission with a copy provided to the Maine Library Advisory Council;
- 2) The library demonstrates that:

- a) it has the support of its municipality or local government or, in the case of a nonprofit library organization, the support of its Board of Trustees or other similar entity or entities; and
- b) it has been in operation for at least one year, providing free access to residents in its legal service area; and
- 3) The Maine State Library Consultant or Specialist for its area agrees that it has the likely capacity to maintain the eligibility standards of these rules.

[Drafting notes: This is a new section intended to recognize the status and value of existing libraries and also provide a method for other libraries to become members. As previously noted, the Maine Library Commission has recognized 257 libraries (or 261 counting branches) as qualified public libraries. As the Maine State Library states prominently and explicitly—in red, bold text—“By a ruling of the Maine Library Commission these libraries meet the definition of an approved library found in the 1996 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and are eligible for assistance from the Maine State Library.”

This number appears to be relatively constant. In 1966 there were 253 public libraries according Planning Information prepared by the Governor’s Task Force to Study Library Needs in Maine. The drafters have not compared the lists year by year. The drafters have, however, identified at least eight additional libraries and acknowledge that other such libraries may exist. The drafters are unclear about the status of these libraries but understand that some have chosen not to participate in the MRLS.

Section 9. Removal from the MRLS Library Membership List

A. Voluntary withdrawal

Any MRLS Library Member may withdraw from membership upon written request signed by the majority of the local library board. Withdrawal shall be effective for the Fiscal Year following receipt of the request and shall remove that library from eligibility for services provided in Section 5; provided, however, that residents of that library service area may remain individually eligible for services provided in Section 5(A). [Drafting notes: The drafters are aware of at least one library that has stated its intent to withdraw from the MRLS and eligibility for the State Library programming provided by this rule (even though that library apparently remains on the dataset). This section offers a specific method for withdrawal.]

B. Removal on Motion of the Maine Library Commission

The Maine Library Commission may, on its own motion, remove a library from membership for failure to meet the requirements in Section 6, provided, however, that before removing a library the Maine Library Commission shall:

- 1) Notify the Library Director and local library board in writing, by certified U.S. mail, of its intent to remove the library and the grounds for removal;
- 2) Offer the library the opportunity to meet with the Maine State Library Consultant or Specialist for its area;
- 3) Offer the library an opportunity to discuss any issues it may have with the Maine Library Advisory Council;
- 4) Provide the Library Director and local library board with at least 60 days to respond in writing and identify any errors in the Maine Library Commission's review; or cure any continuing deficiencies.

C. Removal on Complaint

A library may be removed from MRLS Library Membership based upon a complaint filed with the Maine Library Commission by a library patron alleging that a library has failed to provide free access or failed to adhere to the library values specified in this rule; provided, however, that before removing a library the Maine Library Commission shall:

- 1) Notify the Library Director and local library board in writing, by certified U.S. mail, of its receipt of a complaint;
- 2) Provide the library board and Library Director with a copy of the Complaint;
- 3) Provide the Library Director and local library board with at least 60 days to respond in writing to the Complaint;
- 4) Offer the library board and Library Director an opportunity to engage in alternative dispute resolution prior to holding any hearing on the Complaint, such alternative dispute resolution to be conducted by and in a manner agreed upon by the Maine Library Commission liaison and the parties; provided, however, if such alternative dispute resolution is unsuccessful, opportunity shall be provided for an adjudicatory hearing consistent with Chapter ____ and Title 5 M.R.S. §§ 9051–9064.

Chapter ____: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY

The Maine State Library and all public libraries shall not discriminate in their services, programs, or activities on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, socio-economic status, or disability. These libraries shall comply with the Maine Human Rights Act and applicable federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Maine State Library and public libraries shall commit to providing reasonable modifications to policies and practices to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Patrons who believe they have been subjected to discrimination may file a complaint with the Maine State Librarian or directly with the Maine Human Rights Commission.

[Drafting notes: This section tracks Maine State Library's current policy and extends its obligations to public libraries. The section also adds ethnicity and socioeconomic status as prohibited bases for discrimination.]

Chapter __: RULES OF PRACTICE

Section 1. Appointment of Liaison

The Maine Library Commission shall appoint the Vice-Chair of the Commission as its liaison for purposes of rulemaking under the Maine Administrative Procedure Act (Title 5 M.R.S. § 8051-A) and for purposes of determining alternative dispute resolution processes as a method of informal disposition consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act (Title 5 M.R.S. § 9053).

Section 2. Public Meetings

Consistent with the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. Chs. 13, 14, the Maine Library Commission may hold meetings in person, remotely, or in hybrid in-person/remote format. Where meetings are held remotely, the Maine Library Commission shall publish the appropriate instructions for joining the meeting and shall provide opportunity for public comment during the meeting. To facilitate public communication, the Commission shall provide opportunity for the public to participate in any chat function available on online platforms, provided however, that the Commission itself is not required to participate in the chat function.

[Drafting notes: A policy for remote meetings is required by statute and was recently adopted by the Commission. This provision extends that policy to address opening chat functions. In an in-person meeting, members of the public have the opportunity to communicate informally with each other. Online technology provides this capability via so-called chat functions. This function also offers a methodology for materials, which could be handed out to the audience in an in-person meeting, to be shared virtually. This section recognizes the previously stated Commission concern that conducting a meeting and paying attention to the remarks or posts in the chat is difficult by absolving the Commission of any obligation to participate in the chat itself.]

Section 3. Rulemaking

In addition to the requirements of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, Title 5 M.R.S. §§ 8051–8074, when conducting rulemaking proceedings, the Maine Library Commission shall maintain a register where any person may file a written or electronic request for notice of rulemaking, which notice shall be effective for at least one year.

Section 4. Adjudication

The Maine Library Commission shall follow the requirements of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, Title 5 M.R.S. §§ 9051–9064, when conducting adjudicatory proceedings. Any proceeding on a complaint by a library patron to remove a library from MRLS Membership shall be considered a determination of issues of substantial public interest pursuant to Title 5 M.R.S. § 9052.

[Drafting notes: This Chapter provides a preliminary approach for MAPA-compliant process likely to be needed to adopt and implement these rules,

*including the process for removal of libraries from membership in MRLS.
Further details may be desirable.]*

Working Draft

APPENDIX FY24_Public_Library_Data

1.1 +A:BTLibrary Name	1.2 Municipality	1.3 County
ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	DEXTER	PENOBSCOT
ABEL J. MORNEAULT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	VAN BUREN	AROOSTOOK
ACTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	ACTON	YORK
ALBERT CHURCH BROWN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CHINA	KENNEBEC
ALBERT F. TOTMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY	PHIPPSBURG	SAGADAHOC
ALBION PUBLIC LIBRARY	ALBION	KENNEBEC
ALICE L. PENDLETON LIBRARY	ISLESBORO	WALDO
ANDOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY	ANDOVER	OXFORD
ATKINS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CORINTH	PENOBSCOT
AUBURN PUBLIC LIBRARY	AUBURN	ANDROSCOGGIN
BANGOR PUBLIC LIBRARY	BANGOR	PENOBSCOT
BASS HARBOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY	TREMONT	HANCOCK
BAXTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	GORHAM	CUMBERLAND
BELFAST FREE LIBRARY	BELFAST	WALDO
BELGRADE PUBLIC LIBRARY	BELGRADE	KENNEBEC
BERRY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BUXTON	YORK
BERWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY	BERWICK	YORK
BETHEL LIBRARY ASSN.	BETHEL	OXFORD
BINGHAM UNION LIBRARY	BINGHAM	SOMERSET
BLUE HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY	BLUE HILL	HANCOCK
BOLSTERS MILLS VILLAGE LIBRARY	HARRISON	CUMBERLAND
BONNEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CORNISH	YORK

BOOTHBAY HARBOR MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BOOTHBAY HARBOR	LINCOLN
BOWDOINHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY	BOWDOINHAM	SAGADAHOC
BREMEN PUBLIC LIBRARY	BREMEN	LINCOLN
BREWER PUBLIC LIBRARY	BREWER	PENOBSCOT
BRIDGE ACADEMY PUBLIC LIBRARY	DRESDEN	LINCOLN
BRIDGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	BRIDGTON	CUMBERLAND
BRISTOL AREA LIBRARY	NEW HARBOR	LINCOLN
BROOKSVILLE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	BROOKSVILLE	HANCOCK
BROWN MEMORIAL LIBRARY – CLINTON	CLINTON	KENNEBEC
BROWN MEMORIAL LIBRARY – BALDWIN	EAST BALDWIN	CUMBERLAND
BROWNFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY	BROWNFIELD	OXFORD
BROWNVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	BROWNVILLE	PISCATAQUIS
BUCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BUCKSPORT	HANCOCK
CALAIS FREE LIBRARY	CALAIS	WASHINGTON
CAMDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY	CAMDEN	KNOX
CANAAN PUBLIC LIBRARY	CANAAN	SOMERSET
CAPE PORPOISE LIBRARY	KENNEBUNKPORT	YORK
CARIBOU PUBLIC LIBRARY	CARIBOU	AROOSTOOK
CARRABASSETT VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	CARRABASSETT	FRANKLIN
CARVER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	SEARSPORT	WALDO
CARY LIBRARY-HOULTON	HOULTON	AROOSTOOK
CARY MEMORIAL LIBRARY-WAYNE	WAYNE	KENNEBEC
CASCO PUBLIC LIBRARY	CASCO	CUMBERLAND
CASE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	KENDUSKEAG	PENOBSCOT

CHARLES M. BAILEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	WINTHROP	KENNEBEC
CHARLOTTE HOBBS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LOVELL	OXFORD
CHASE EMERSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY	DEER ISLE	HANCOCK
CHEBEAGUE ISLAND LIBRARY	CHEBEAGUE ISLAND	CUMBERLAND
CHERRYFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY	CHERRYFIELD	WASHINGTON
CLIFF ISLAND LIBRARY	CLIFF ISLAND	CUMBERLAND
COLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	ENFIELD	PENOBSCOT
COMMUNITY LIBRARY	LYMAN	YORK
COOLIDGE LIBRARY	SOLOMON	SOMERSET
CUMSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	MONMOUTH	KENNEBEC
CUNDY'S HARBOR LIBRARY	HARPSWELL	CUMBERLAND
CURTIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BRUNSWICK	CUMBERLAND
CUSHING PUBLIC LIBRARY	CUSHING	KNOX
D.A. HURD LIBRARY	NORTH BERWICK	YORK
DANFORTH PUBLIC LIBRARY	DANFORTH	WASHINGTON
DAVIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LIMINGTON	YORK
DENMARK PUBLIC LIBRARY	DENMARK	OXFORD
DORCAS LIBRARY	PROSPECT HARBOR	HANCOCK
DR. SHAW MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MOUNT VERNON	KENNEBEC
DYER LIBRARY	SACO	YORK
EAST BLUE HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY	EAST BLUE HILL	HANCOCK
EAST MILLINOCKET PUBLIC LIBRARY	EAST MILLINOCKET	PENOBSCOT
EDYTHE DYER COMMUNITY LIBRARY	HAMPDEN	PENOBSCOT
ELLSWORTH PUBLIC LIBRARY	ELLSWORTH	HANCOCK

FALMOUTH MEMORIAL LIBRARY	FALMOUTH	CUMBERLAND
FARMINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	FARMINGTON	FRANKLIN
FAYE O'LEARY HAFFORD LIBRARY	ALLAGASH	AROOSTOOK
STURDIVANT PUBLIC LIBRARY	EAST MACHIAS	WASHINGTON
FORT FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY	FORT FAIRFIELD	AROOSTOOK
FORT KENT PUBLIC LIBRARY	FORT KENT	AROOSTOOK
FRANKLIN LIBRARY	FRANKLIN	HANCOCK
FREELAND HOLMES LIBRARY	OXFORD	OXFORD
FREEPORT COMMUNITY LIBRARY	FREEPORT	CUMBERLAND
FRENCHBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	FRENCHBORO	HANCOCK
FRENCHMANS BAY LIBRARY	SULLIVAN	HANCOCK
FRIEND MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY	BROOKLIN	HANCOCK
FRIENDSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY	FRIENDSHIP	KNOX
FRYEBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY	FRYEBURG	OXFORD
GALLISON MEMORIAL LIBRARY	HARRINGTON	WASHINGTON
GARDINER PUBLIC LIBRARY	GARDINER	KENNEBEC
GIBBS LIBRARY	WASHINGTON	KNOX
GLADYS J. CRAIG MEMORIAL LIBRARY	ASHLAND	AROOSTOOK
GRAY PUBLIC LIBRARY	GRAY	CUMBERLAND
GREAT CRANBERRY LIBRARY	CRANBERRY ISLES	HANCOCK
GUILFORD MEMORIAL LIBRARY	GUILFORD	PISCATAQUIS
HAMLIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	PARIS	OXFORD
HARRISON VILLAGE LIBRARY	HARRISON	CUMBERLAND
HARTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	HARTLAND	SOMERSET
HARVEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	PARKMAN	PISCATAQUIS

HENRY D. MOORE LIBRARY	STEUBEN	WASHINGTON
HOLLIS CENTER PUBLIC LIBRARY	HOLLIS	YORK
HOPE LIBRARY	HOPE	KNOX
HUBBARD FREE LIBRARY	HALLOWELL	KENNEBEC
ISAAC F. UMBERHINE PUBLIC LIBRARY	RICHMOND	SAGADAHOC
ISLESFORD LIBRARY	ISLESFORD	HANCOCK
JACKMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY	JACKMAN	SOMERSET
JACKSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY	TENANTS HARBOR	KNOX
JAY-NILES MEMORIAL LIBRARY	JAY	FRANKLIN
JESUP MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BAR HARBOR	HANCOCK
JIM DITZLER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	NEW SHARON	FRANKLIN
JOHN B. CURTIS FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	BRADFORD	PENOBSCOT
JULIA ADAMS MORSE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	GREENE	ANDROSCOGGIN
KATAHDIN PUBLIC LIBRARY	ISLAND FALLS	AROOSTOOK
KENNEBUNK FREE LIBRARY	KENNEBUNK	YORK
KEZAR FALLS CIRCULATING LIBRARY	PARSONSFIELD	YORK
LAURA E. RICHARDS LIBRARY	GEORGETOWN	SAGADAHOC
LAWRENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY	FAIRFIELD	SOMERSET
LEWISTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	LEWISTON	ANDROSCOGGIN
LIBBY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	OLD ORCHARD BEACH	YORK
LIBERTY LIBRARY	LIBERTY	WALDO
LIMERICK PUBLIC LIBRARY	LIMERICK	YORK
LINCOLN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LINCOLN	PENOBSCOT

LINCOLN MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY - DENNYSVILLE	DENNYSVILLE	WASHINGTON
LINCOLNVILLE COMMUNITY LIBRARY	LINCOLNVILLE	WALDO
LISBON LIBRARY DEPT	LISBON FALLS	ANDROSCOGGIN
LITHGOW PUBLIC LIBRARY	AUGUSTA	KENNEBEC
LIVERMORE PUBLIC LIBRARY	LIVERMORE	ANDROSCOGGIN
LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY	LONG ISLAND	CUMBERLAND
LONG LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY	ST. AGATHA	AROOSTOOK
GOODALL MEMORIAL LIBRARY	SANFORD	YORK
LOUIS T. GRAVES MEMORIAL LIBRARY	KENNEBUNKPORT	YORK
LOUISE CLEMENTS LIBRARY	CUTLER	WASHINGTON
LUBEC MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LUBEC	WASHINGTON
LUDDEN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	DIXFIELD	OXFORD
MADAWASKA PUBLIC LIBRARY	MADAWASKA	AROOSTOOK
MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY	MADISON	SOMERSET
MARK AND EMILY TURNER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	PRESQUE ISLE	AROOSTOOK
MARTHA SAWYER COMMUNITY LIBRARY	LEBANON	YORK
MAYHEW LIBRARY ASSN	ADDISON	WASHINGTON
MCARTHUR PUBLIC LIBRARY	BIDDEFORD	YORK
MECHANIC FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY	MECHANIC FALLS	ANDROSCOGGIN
MERRILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY	YARMOUTH	CUMBERLAND
MEXICO FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	MEXICO	OXFORD
MILBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY	MILBRIDGE	WASHINGTON
MILDRED STEVENS WILLIAMS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	APPLETON	KNOX

MILLINOCKET MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MILLINOCKET	PENOBSCOT
MILO FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	MILO	PISCATAQUIS
MONHEGAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MONHEGAN	LINCOLN
MONROE COMMUNITY LIBRARY	MONROE	WALDO
MONSON PUBLIC LIBRARY	MONSON	PISCATAQUIS
NAPLES PUBLIC LIBRARY	NAPLES	CUMBERLAND
NEW GLOUCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY	NEW GLOUCESTER	CUMBERLAND
NEW PORTLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY	NEW PORTLAND	SOMERSET
NEW VINEYARD PUBLIC LIBRARY	NEW VINEYARD	FRANKLIN
GARY W. WOOLSON COMMUNITY LIBRARY	NEWBURGH	PENOBSCOT
NEWPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY	NEWPORT	PENOBSCOT
NORRIDGEWOCK PUBLIC LIBRARY	NORRIDGEWOCK	SOMERSET
NORTH GORHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY	GORHAM	CUMBERLAND
NORTH HAVEN PUBLIC LIBRARY	NORTH HAVEN	KNOX
NORTHEAST HARBOR LIBRARY	NORTHEAST HARBOR	HANCOCK
NORWAY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	NORWAY	OXFORD
OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	OAKLAND	KENNEBEC
OGUNQUIT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	OGUNQUIT	YORK
OLD TOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY	OLD TOWN	PENOBSCOT
ORONO PUBLIC LIBRARY	ORONO	PENOBSCOT
ORRINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	ORRINGTON	PENOBSCOT
ORRS ISLAND LIBRARY	HARPSWELL	CUMBERLAND
PALERMO COMMUNITY LIBRARY	PALERMO	WALDO
PARIS PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTH PARIS	OXFORD

PARSONS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	ALFRED	YORK
PATTEN FREE LIBRARY	BATH	SAGadahoc
PEABODY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	JONESPORT	WASHINGTON
PEAVEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY	EASTPORT	WASHINGTON
PEMBROKE LIBRARY	PEMBROKE	WASHINGTON
PHILLIPS PUBLIC LIBRARY	PHILLIPS	FRANKLIN
PITTSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY	PITTSFIELD	SOMERSET
PORTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MACHIAS	WASHINGTON
PORTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY (and branches)	PORTLAND	CUMBERLAND
PRINCE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CUMBERLAND	CUMBERLAND
PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON
RANGELEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	RANGELEY	FRANKLIN
RAYMOND VILLAGE LIBRARY	RAYMOND	CUMBERLAND
READFIELD COMMUNITY LIBRARY	READFIELD	KENNEBEC
REVERE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	ISLE AU HAUT	KNOX
RICE PUBLIC LIBRARY	KITTERY	YORK
RICHVILLE LIBRARY	STANDISH	CUMBERLAND
RICKER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	POLAND	ANDROSCOGGIN
ROBERT A. FROST MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LIMESTONE	AROOSTOOK
ROCKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	ROCKLAND	KNOX
ROCKPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY	ROCKPORT	KNOX
RUMFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY	RUMFORD	OXFORD
RUTHERFORD LIBRARY	SOUTH BRISTOL	LINCOLN
SALMON FALLS LIBRARY	HOLLIS	YORK
SCARBOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY	SCARBOROUGH	CUMBERLAND

SEARSMONT TOWN LIBRARY	SEARSMONT	WALDO
SHAPLEIGH COMMUNITY LIBRARY	SHAPLEIGH	YORK
SHAW PUBLIC LIBRARY – GREENVILLE	GREENVILLE	PISCATAQUIS
MERCER SHAW LIBRARY	MERCER	SOMERSET
SHERMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY	SHERMAN	AROOSTOOK
SIMPSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CARMEL	PENOBSCOT
SKIDOMPHA PUBLIC LIBRARY	DAMARISCOTTA	LINCOLN
SKOWHEGAN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	SKOWHEGAN	SOMERSET
SOLDIERS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	HIRAM	OXFORD
SOMESVILLE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	MOUNT DESERT	HANCOCK
SOUTH BERWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTH BERWICK	YORK
SOUTH CHINA PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTH CHINA	KENNEBEC
SOUTH PORTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY (and Branch)	SOUTH PORTLAND	CUMBERLAND
SOUTH THOMASTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTH THOMASTON	KNOX
SOUTHPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	SOUTHPORT	LINCOLN
SOUTHWEST HARBOR PUBLIC LIBRARY	SOUTHWEST HARBOR	HANCOCK
SPAULDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY	SEBAGO	CUMBERLAND
SPRINGVALE PUBLIC LIBRARY	SANFORD	YORK
STEEP FALLS LIBRARY	STEEP FALLS	CUMBERLAND
STETSON PUBLIC LIBRARY	STETSON	PENOBSCOT
STEWART FREE LIBRARY	CORINNA	PENOBSCOT
STEWART PUBLIC LIBRARY	ANSON	SOMERSET
STOCKTON SPRINGS COMMUNITY LIBRARY	STOCKTON SPRINGS	WALDO

STONINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	STONINGTON	HANCOCK
STRATTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	STRATTON	FRANKLIN
STRONG PUBLIC LIBRARY	STRONG	FRANKLIN
SWAN’S ISLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	SWAN’S ISLAND	HANCOCK
THOMAS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CAPE ELIZABETH	CUMBERLAND
THOMASTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	THOMASTON	KNOX
THOMPSON FREE LIBRARY	DOVER-FOXCROFT	PISCATAQUIS
TOPSHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY	TOPSHAM	SAGADAHOC
TREAT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	LIVERMORE FALLS	ANDROSCOGGIN
TURNER PUBLIC LIBRARY	TURNER	ANDROSCOGGIN
UNDERWOOD MEMORIAL LIBRARY	FAYETTE	KENNEBEC
UNITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	UNITY	WALDO
VASSALBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	EAST VASSALBORO	KENNEBEC
VETERANS MEMORIAL LIBRARY	PATTEN	PENOBSCOT
VINALHAVEN PUBLIC LIBRARY	VINALHAVEN	KNOX
VOSE LIBRARY	UNION	KNOX
WALDO PEIRCE READING ROOM	FRANKFORT	WALDO
WALDOBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	WALDOBORO	LINCOLN
WALKER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	WESTBROOK	CUMBERLAND
WALTER T. A. HANSEN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	MARS HILL	AROOSTOOK
WARREN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	WARREN	KNOX
WASHBURN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	WASHBURN	AROOSTOOK
WATERBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY	WATERBORO	YORK
WATERFORD LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	WATERFORD	OXFORD
WATERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	WATERVILLE	KENNEBEC

WEBSTER LIBRARY	KINGFIELD	FRANKLIN
WELD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	WELD	FRANKLIN
WELLS PUBLIC LIBRARY	WELLS	YORK
WEST BUXTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	BUXTON	YORK
WEST PARIS PUBLIC LIBRARY	WEST PARIS	OXFORD
WHITEFIELD LIBRARY	WHITEFIELD	LINCOLN
WHITMAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY	BRYANT POND	OXFORD
WHITNEYVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	WHITNEYVILLE	WASHINGTON
WILLIAM FOGG PUBLIC LIBRARY	ELIOT	YORK
WILTON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY	WILTON	FRANKLIN
WINDHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY	WINDHAM	CUMBERLAND
WINSLOW PUBLIC LIBRARY	WINSLOW	KENNEBEC
WINTER HARBOR PUBLIC LIBRARY	WINTER HARBOR	HANCOCK
WINTERPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY	WINTERPORT	WALDO
WISCASSET PUBLIC LIBRARY	WISCASSET	LINCOLN
WITHERLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	CASTINE	HANCOCK
WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY	BAILEYVILLE	WASHINGTON
YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY	YORK	YORK
ZADOC LONG FREE LIBRARY	BUCKFIELD	OXFORD

Drafting notes: Concern has been expressed about individuals or entities seeking public library status for the purpose of accessing services, benefits, or programs such as free or reduced-cost films or internet service for which they would not otherwise be eligible. Adopting this list is intended to prevent that outcome. This list is the FY24 Public Library Data downloaded from the Maine State Library (Maine State Library) website on March 30, 2026; the same list appears in the Maine State Library Directory as of that date with the addition of 4 branch libraries. Prior fiscal-year data appears to reflect the same number of libraries, suggesting that the

libraries listed are stable, known to be existing public libraries, and not likely to be entities seeking to gain advantage. The process for adding additional libraries is intended to ensure continued integrity of this eligibility limitation.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

27 M.R.S. §§ 111(2), 113

5 M.R.S. §§ 8051, 12003-A

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Rule repeals and replaces 94-07 Title 5 Maine Library Commission, Chapter 1: RULES REGARDING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES and the current Policy on Non-Discrimination.

8057-A FACT SHEET

5 M.R.S. § 8057-A

The goal in preparing this Alternative Draft proposed by Ad Hoc Group was to provide a non-punitive approach to ensuring that Maine libraries provide quality services well suited to their communities. That goal reflects the Legislature’s long-standing intent that Maine libraries be locally created and controlled, while also acting equitably and cooperatively to best serve the needs of all Maine citizens. The goal also reflects a commitment to preserving the unique value of Maine’s libraries—not as one-size-fits-all institutions, but as institutions as varied as Maine’s landscape and her people.

5 M.R.S. § 8057-A(1)(A): The principal reasons for the rule

In 2025, the Maine Library Commission proposed standards (in the context of their MRLS Agreement) for libraries to continue to be “public libraries.” Those libraries that did not meet the criteria would have become “designated limited service” libraries or “community reading rooms.” Failure to meet the criteria would also make a library ineligible for benefits including interlibrary loan and discounted or free internet. At the time of these proposals, it was estimated that some 60 libraries would be negatively affected. Subsequent to that first approach and following the advice of the Maine Attorney General’s Office, the Maine Library Commission appeared to have abandoned some of its criteria but remained committed to conditioning critical benefits on its eligibility criteria. The reason for this rule is to offer an alternative that starts from the perspective that supporting all of Maine’s libraries is the appropriate role of the Commission and that taking away services from libraries and communities that are already underserved is counterproductive.

The rule also extends prior Maine Library Commission policy to recognize discrimination on the basis of socioeconomic status as one of the listed prohibitions.

5 M.R.S. § 8057-A(1)(B): A comprehensive but concise description of the rule that accurately reflects the purpose and operation of the rule

The Alternative Draft proposed by Ad Hoc Group starts with the acknowledgment that the Maine State Library itself has made that the 257 (or 261 counting branches) libraries in its online Directory are qualified to participate in MRLS (and presumably therefore qualified to receive various itemized benefits).

The screenshot shows the Maine State Library website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to Agencies, Online Services, Help, and a search bar. Below this is a banner for the Maine State Library with a search bar and a login button. A prominent yellow banner in the center reads: "We're Moving! Starting Friday, March 27th all in-person visits/appointments, reference services, curbside lending will pause until further notice. More information on services during the move". Below the banner, there is a breadcrumb trail: Home → For Libraries → Maine Library Directories. On the left, there is a sidebar with a list of services: Interlibrary Loan, Reciprocal Borrowing, Directories (Academic, Public, Schools), and a link to the Adobe Reader. The main content area is titled "Maine Library Directories" and lists two bullet points: "Ability to search by town or library name and limit search by library type or county." and "Ability to generate lists of libraries based on search criteria". Below this, there is a paragraph stating: "By a ruling of the Maine Library Commission these libraries meet the definition of an approved library found in the 1996 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and are eligible for assistance from the Maine State Library." and a link to the Adobe Reader. The Institute of Museum and Library Services logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

The alternative draft proposal recognizes that these libraries—already so described and listed by the Maine State Library—are indeed qualified libraries and grandparents their status. It would remove that status only at the library’s request or for cause.

The Alternative Draft proposed by Ad Hoc Group also provides rules of practice for meetings and rulemaking previously unavailable from the Commission.

5 M.R.S. § 8057-A(1)(C) An estimate of the fiscal impact of the rule

This rule would grandparent the status of existing libraries and recognize them as qualified. It essentially maintains the status quo unless a library is called into question following under the procedures established by this rule. This approach is expected to have little fiscal impact on current library operations.

It is beyond the ability of the drafters to describe the fiscal impact, if any, on the budget or operations of the Maine Library Commission or the Maine State Library themselves.

It is also beyond the ability of the drafters to fully understand the full fiscal impact of the Maine Library Commission proposal, something which the Commission is better suited to analyze from its own experience. However, the drafters believe that the impact will be significant if eligibility for NetworkMaine, discounted or free internet, and ILL were further limited or if significant staffing or pay or hour requirements were imposed.

5 M.R.S.A § 8057-A(1)(D): An analysis of the rule

This rule follows much of what the Maine Library Commission has proposed in terms of definitions and regionalization. It departs from the Maine Library Commission in approach to criteria and standards. The various iterations of the Maine Library Commission’s approach to providing standards to ensure the quality of Maine public libraries have one thing in common: they use a “stick” to threaten libraries. (The multiple sources pursuing this approach are documented in [Who Defines “Public Library” in Maine Working Draft](#) (previously circulated to the Commission and others; on file with the drafters and available on request).

The Alternative Draft proposed by Ad Hoc Group is the opposite, calling for support and cooperation. Beyond the standards, this alternative also differs in its recognition of the diversity of Maine’s libraries and its insistence that there be no discrimination or inequitable treatment based on rurality or socioeconomic status. The Alternative Draft also adds provisions to help assure a voice for all libraries and the public in Commission deliberations and an ongoing opportunity for those interested in Maine’s libraries to cooperate and communicate with each other.

5 M.R.S.A § 8057-A(1)(E): A brief summary of the relevant information considered during the development of the rule.

Statutes & Regulations: Maine

- 1 M.R.S. §§ 400-414
- 5 M.R.S. §§ 8051-9064, 12001-12024
- 26 M.R.S. § 1 et seq.
- 27 M.R.S. Ch. 1, 3, 4, 4-A
- 35-A M.R.S. § 7104-B

- 35-A M.R.S.A. §§ 9401-9410
- An Act to Authorize the Establishment and Maintenance of Public Libraries, 1854 Me. Laws, 33d Leg., H.D. No. 24
- An Act Authorizing Towns to Establish and Maintain Free Public Libraries, ch. 28, 1873 Me. Laws
- An Act Relating to the State Library, 1861 Me. Laws, 40th Leg., House Doc. No. 47
- An Act to Establish Traveling Libraries, 1899 Me. Laws, ch. 22
- Me. Rev. Stat. ch. 3 (1903) (1916)
- 2025 Resolve, to Create a Working Group on the Status of School Libraries and on Public Libraries in Maine, 2025 Me. Laws 117
- 94-07 Title 5 Maine Library Commission, Chapter 1: RULES REGARDING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Statutes & Regulations: U.S.

- 20 U.S.C. Ch. 72
- 47 U.S.C. § 254
- 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.5, 54.501, 54.504, 54.505, 54.1700, 54.1716

Reports & Articles

- Arthur D. Little, Inc., The Role of the Public Library in Maine: Consumer Needs and Attitudes Toward Public Libraries in Maine C-72581 (Aug. 1970)
- Jennifer Bartlett, Handle with Care: Benefits and Drawbacks of Volunteers in the Library, 27 Kentucky Libraries 3 (2013)
- Deborah A. Clark & Jenny Melvin Smith, What's Keeping Public Library Trustees Up at Night?, 33 Me. Pol'y Rev. 41 (2024)
- Nancy Grant, Maine Balsam Libraries Consortium Supports Maine's Rural Libraries, 33(2) Me. Pol'y Rev. (2024)
- James M. Jackson Sanborn & David J. Nutty, Maine Libraries: A History of Sharing and Collaboration, 22 Maine Policy Review 52 (2013)
- Daisy Domínguez Singh, Advocating for the Once and Future Library, 33 Me. Pol'y Rev. 96 (2024)
- Linda Lord, What Makes the Maine State Library Unique, 22 Me. Pol'y Rev. (2013)
- Maine Commission for Community Service, Volunteer Maine Annual Report (2025)
- Maine Secretary of State, A Guide to Rulemaking for State of Maine Agencies (2025)
- Keyes D. Metcalf, Cooperation Among Maine Libraries: A Report Prepared for the Larger Libraries of Maine 1961 (Maine State Library 1961)
- Melora Norman, Maine Library History, 22 Me. Pol'y Rev. 12, 22 (2013)
- Amy Stone, Rural Public Libraries in Maine: Getting Ready for Broadband Infrastructure and Online Life, 34 Maine Policy Review 281 (2025).

- Kate McGowen Wing, *Learning on the Fly: How High School Educated Public Library Directors in Maine Engage in Self-Directed Learning to Resolve Information Needs* (Simmons Univ. 2022) (Ph.D. dissertation)

Data

- 2020 Census: Maine Profile, Universal Service Administrative Company, E-Rate Entity Search Data (EPC Entity Dataset), FY2024–FY2025, <https://data.usac.org>
- Census Bureau, QuickFacts: Maine, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/ME>
- **Maine State Library, FY24 Public Library Data (2024)**
- Sarah Redfield, Library Directors Professional Development, 50 State Survey (compiled Lexis+) (May 2026)
- Sarah Redfield, Library Trustee Professional Development, 50 State Survey (compiled Lexis+) (May 2026)
- Sarah Redfield, Library Directors Degrees, 50 State Survey (compiled Lexis+) (April 2026)
- Sarah Redfield, Mandated hours, 50 State Survey (compiled Lexis+) (April 2026)
- U.S. Census Bureau, Percent Urban and Rural Population by State: 2020
- U.S. Census Bureau, Urban and Rural Classification (2020 Census)

News & Opinion

- Jennifer Maffett & Barbara Baig, *Maine’s Small Libraries Are Worth Celebrating*, Portland Press Herald (Apr. 28, 2026)
- Jen Maffett & Barbara Baig, *Why Small Libraries Matter: How Maine’s Small and Rural Libraries Serve Their Communities* (2026)
- [Judith Meyer](#), *New Standards Would Require All Maine Libraries to Pay Directors, Expand Hours of Operation*, [The Maine Monitor](#) (Nov. 15, 2025)
- [Judith Meyer](#), *Maine State Library Commission to Start Rulemaking Process for New Standards*, [The Maine Monitor](#) (Jan. 12, 2026)
- [Judith Meyer](#), *Maine Library Commission Unveils Draft Rule That Could Restrict Libraries’ Access to State Support*, [The Maine Monitor](#) (Mar. 10, 2026)
- [Judith Meyer](#), *Maine Library Commission Discusses Meaning of ‘Quality’ Library Service*, [The Maine Monitor](#) (Apr. 7, 2026)
- [Judith Meyer](#), *Maine Library Commission Moves to Update Patron Behavior Policy, Library Standards*, [The Maine Monitor](#) (May 13, 2026)
- Pen-Bay Pilot, *Maine Ranked Tenth in Informal Volunteering* (Nov. 28, 2024)
- Andrew Rice, *Police Calls to Portland Public Library More Than Doubled in 2025*, Press Herald (Apr. 11, 2026)
- Andrew Rice, *Lewiston Public Library Staff Juggle Safety Concerns with Serving All Patrons*, Sun Journal (May 11, 2024)

Miscellaneous

- ALA, [Core Values of Librarianship](#)
- ALA, [Code of Ethics](#)

- ALA, [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Maine InfoNet](#)
- [Maine Library Association](#)
- Maine Library Commission, Bylaws
- Maine Library Commission, Maine Public Library Standards (2019)
- Maine Library Commission, MRLS Public Library Agreement to Participate (various versions), see Sources as described in Working Draft What Does Public Library Mean?.
- Maine State Library, Anti-Discrimination and Civil Rights Policy
- Minerva Governance, Memorandum of Understanding
- [Networkmaine](#)

* Various individual library websites; various emails and interviews.

Maine Library Commission (MLC) Maine Regional Library System (MRLS)	AdHoc Alternative
Summary not provided.	Summary: Many of the core standards of the MLC MRLS approach are retained. Summarized here are the key differences. The AdHoc Alternative rejects an eligibility-based denial-of-benefits approach. Instead, it accepts as qualified libraries all 257 (261 counting branches) libraries now listed by the MSL and currently so recognized by the MSL. These libraries would remain qualified so long as they do not request to be removed or are not removed for cause under procedures specified in the AdHoc Alternative. The AdHoc Alternative retains the MLC requirement for 4 hours of professional development for Library Directors but rejects that requirement for Library Board members. In both cases, additional benchmarks are established. The AdHoc Alternative rejects the requirement for two staff to be present for all hours a library is open to the public, relying instead on the experience of local libraries. The AdHoc Alternative sets a minimum of 10 hours per week, 50 weeks per year for libraries to be open to the public, with an exception for very small and summer communities.
Section 1. Purpose to be added.	Section 1. Purpose. Ch. 1. Establishes MRLS geographical boundaries; identifies State infrastructure and services (benefits) provided by MLC and MSL to Maine citizens and libraries; codifies prior recognition of existing libraries as qualified libraries to assure availability of benefits.

	Ch. 2. Codifies anti-discrimination policy and adds socioeconomic status. Ch. 3. Establishes rules of practice for the Maine Library Commission consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.
Section 2. Definitions	Section 2. Definitions
2.A. Area Reference and Resource Center	2.A. Same as MLC, follows statutory language.
2.B. Maine Public Library Fund	2.H. Same as MLC, follows statutory language.
2.C. Public Library	2.M. Significantly differs from MLC. Includes direct statutory language and adds definitions of grandparented library, additional library, qualified library, and withdrawn or removed library, all to establish that existing libraries continue their current qualified status, with the possibility of new libraries being added to MRLS membership and other libraries being removed.
2.D. Regional Library System	2.I. Same as MLC, definitional text is included verbatim from the statute & last sentence from prior MLC proposals.
	Additional definitions provided for clarity and comprehensiveness.
	2.B. Common borrower's card, follows statutory language.
	2.C. Library Director, follows the language of the Maine Library Commission proposal.

	2.D. Library Record, follows & supplements the provisions of 27 M.R.S. § 121.
	2.E. Library patron, supplements the provisions of 27 M.R.S. § 121.
	2.F. Local Library Board, follows 27 M.R.S. § 110(8).
	2.G. Maine Library Advisory Council, follows 27 M.R.S. § 114-A.
	2.J. Maine Regional Library System Member, new definition to establish an overarching category where long-standing libraries are recognized as such without further qualification and where other libraries can be added or withdrawn or removed from membership.
	2.K. Maine State Library (MSL) Consultant or Specialist, follows 27 M.R.S. §§ 110(8), 11.
	2.L. Maine Technology Education Access Fund (METEAF), shortened version of Title 35-A M.R.S. § 7104-B.
Section 3. Application of this Rule	Section 3. Application of this Rule
Section 4. Regions of the Maine Regional Library System	Section 4. Regions of the Maine Regional Library System

4.A. General: identifies geographic regions and ARRC membership	Same as MLC.
4.B. Regional Boundaries	Same as MLC.
4.B.1. Three-factor determination	Same as MLC.
4.B.2. Counties proximate	Same as MLC.
4.B.3. Population evenly divided	Same as MLC.
4.C. Regions	Same as MLC.
4.C.1. Northeastern	Same as MLC, except Lincoln County moved to Northeastern to be with Knox and Waldo, which is typically the case for these counties.
4.C.2. Central	Same as MLC.
4.C.3. Southern	Same as MLC.
4.D. Area Reference and Resource Centers (ARRC)	Same as MLC.
4.D.1. Bangor Public Library	Same as MLC.
4.D.2. Maine State Library	Same as MLC.
4.D.3. Portland Public Library	Same as MLC.

4.E. Assigning libraries (all)	Same as MLC.
Section 5. Maine State Library Services and Eligibility Criteria	Section 5. State-Supported Library Services
5.A. General: Identifies <u>certain services</u> provided to Maine's libraries by MSL that are <u>benefits for MRLS members and adds eligibility criteria</u> for certain services.	5. A. Defines services available to <u>all citizens</u> , including Digital Maine and Download, Cloudlibrary, and similar or equivalent services.
5.B. Services available all MRLS member libraries	Same as MLC, specifying services available to MRLS member libraries that meet Section 6 standards.
5.B.1. Eligibility for MSL grants	Same as MLC @ 5.B.6.
5.B.2. Eligibility for van delivery	Same as MLC @ 5.B.8.
5.C. Services available if comply with 5.D.	Similar title at 5.A., 5.B. Services available for all citizens and public libraries as defined, i.e., all 257 (261) grandparented libraries, subject to later addition or deletion following procedures in these rules.
5.C.1. Internet connection through MSLN at no cost	Same as MLC @ 5.B.1.
5.C.2. Content filtering, email hosting, tech support, consortia pricing through MSLN	Same as MLC @ 5.B.2.

5.C.3. E-rate discount	Same as MLC @ 5.B.3, and adding METEAF support.
5.C.4. Eligibility for Maine Public Library Fund Grants	Same as MLC @ 5.B.5.
5.C.5. Discounted membership in the Maine Association of Nonprofits	Same as MLC @ 5.B.7.
5.C.6. Subsidized van delivery	Same as MLC @ 5.B.8.
5.C.6.a. staff member on listserv	Same as MLC @ 5.B.8.a.
5.C.6.b. > 100 ILL per year (in and out)	Same as MLC @ 5.B.8.b, adding that where a library does not meet the 100-item threshold the Library Consultant or Specialist shall review its use and recommend alternative methods.
5.C.6.c. pay proportionate portion of cost	Same as MLC @ 5.B.8.c.
5.D. Minimum standards for library service	Section 6. Eligibility for State-Supported Library Services
5.D.1. submit library survey	Same as MLC @ 6.A.
5.D.2. “promotes quality library services by ensuring:”	Similar @ 6.B. Same introduction, followed by a professional development requirement for library directors and aspirational benchmarks.
5.D.2.a. director 4 hours professional development listed areas	Same as MLC @ 6.C. Same 4 hours as MLC for library director plus benchmark at least 12, same subject list.

5.D.2.b. trustees 1 hour professional development listed areas	6.D. <u>None</u> mandated for Library Board, benchmark indicated at 4 hours per year.
5.D.2.c. maintains policies re: “confidentiality of patron records, circulation, collection development, reconsideration of library materials, programs, internet acceptable use/Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), child safety, patron behavior, and meeting space use”	Basically same as MLC, but reorganized to separate policy and sustainability, now 6.F and 6.E. Makes confidentiality mandatory consistent with statute.
5.D.2.d. trustees review library policies once every 3-5 years	Same as MLC @ 6.G.
5.D.3. “ensures the safety of its staff and the public by having two representatives of the library (employees or volunteers) on site when the library is open to the public”	6.F.3. <u>Removes mandatory requirement of 2 staff during open hours</u> to allow each library discretion to address its own needs.
5.D.4. “plans for long term sustainability by ensuring”	Similar @ 6.G.
5.D.4.a. strategic plan reviewed once every three years	Same as MLC @ 6.G.2.
5.D.4.b. annual funding from its municipality	Similar @ 6.G.3, providing more options for demonstrating community support, “Demonstration of annual support (funding or in-

	kind support) from the local Library Board or from the municipality or unit of local government in which it is legally situated.”
5.D.4.c. dedicated person who serves as director responsible for the day-to-day management and oversight of the library on behalf of the board of trustees or the municipality may be a volunteer position may not be filled by an individual who also serves as a trustee on the board of trustees	Similar @ 6.F.4.
5.D.4.d. at least one dedicated public access computer and printer	Same as MLC @ 6.H.4.
5.D.5. “promotes access to information by ensuring:”	Similar at 6.H, Access.
5.D.5.a. has physical location	Same as MLC @ 6.H.2.
5.D.5.b. “does not charge members of its legal service area for membership”	Same as MLC @ 6.H.1.

5.D.5.c. open at least 12 hours per week year round (except islands with < 300)	Similar @ 6.H.3, but changed to 10 hours and 50 weeks a year in effort to reflect current schedules more accurately; exception is broadened to include legal service area 1000 or fewer or summer community.
5.D.5.d. at least one dedicated public access computer and printer	Same as MLC @ 6.H.4.
5.D.5.e. dedicated phone and email	Same as MLC @ 6.H.5.
5.D.5.f. “organized print and other library materials reflecting diverse needs of the community it serves”	Same as MLC @ 6.H.6.
5.D.6. Library values	Same as MLC @ 6.I.
5.D.6.a. “complies with Maine’s confidentiality of library records law, 27 M.R.S. § 121”	Stated @ 6.E.
5.D.6.b. “guided by the Library Bill of Rights, Core Values of Librarianship and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association”	Same as MLC @ 6.I.
Section 6. Membership Agreement and Certification	Same at Section 7. Certifying Eligibility for Services

6.A. must maintain a signed MRLS agreement on file with MLS	Same as MLC @ 7.A. Also @ 6.E, requirement for professional development record.
6.B. Self-certify: “Member libraries seeking to access the services outlined in Section 5.C above shall self-certify compliance with the requirements of Section 5.D as part of the Public Libraries Annual Report.”	Same as MLC @ 7.B. Also @6.E requirement for professional development record.
	7.C. Signatories to agreement are Library Director and head of local Library Board.
	Section 8. Qualified Libraries – new section to define library statuses.
	8.A. Grandparented libraries, currently listed 257 named in Appendix and incorporated by reference.
	8.B. Additional libraries, allows for other libraries to become MRLS members by demonstrating that they have appropriate local support, that they have been in operation for at least one year providing free access to residents in their legal service area, and that the MSL Consultant or Specialist for their area agrees that they have the likely capacity to maintain the eligibility standards of these rules.
	Section 9. Removal from the MRLS Library Membership List, new section to allow for removal.

	9.A. Voluntary withdrawal establishes a process for a library which chooses not to be an MRLS member.
	9.B. Removal on Motion of the MLC establishes a process for the MLC to articulate its concerns about a library which is not sufficiently professional or qualified and a specified procedure for addressing those concerns.
	9.C. Removal on Complaint establishes a process for the MLC to address complaints brought by library patrons.
	Chapter __. Similar to current MLC policy. Codifies existing provisions of the MLC on anti-discrimination with the addition of socioeconomic status as a category.
	Chapter __. Rules of Practice Establishes basic rules of practice including several which are statutorily required. Standards are established for appointment of a liaison, public meetings, a rulemaking register, rulemaking petitions, and adjudicatory proceedings.



Sarah Redfield <sarah.redfield@gmail.com>

MLC Rules-Alternative Proposal (Working Draft)

1 message

Sarah Redfield <sarah.redfield@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 1, 2026 at 11:52 AM

To: adebiase@carrabassett.lib.me.us, althamco@spsdme.org, andersel@spsdme.org, atw@spsdme.org, ben.treat@bangorpubliclibrary.org, "bryce.cundick@maine.edu" <bryce.cundick@maine.edu>, bsteenburgh@falmouthmemoriallibrary.org, cdunay@smccme.edu, fcl@freeportmaine.com, hansen@hansen.lib.me.us, heather.perkinson@gmail.com, hgrimm@yarmouthlibrary.org, janeouderkirk@gmail.com, jhouston@lewistonmaine.gov, judith.moreno@maineccc.edu, klifoye@librarycamden.org, kmcelligott@curtislibrary.com, kwilfong@bates.edu, "Stockman, Lori" <Lori.Stockman@maine.gov>, "Visser, Marijke A" <marijke.a.visser@maine.gov>, mstanley@baileylibrary.org, peabodylibrarian@peabody.lib.me.us, perkinse@rice.lib.me.us, pnicklas@bangorpubliclibrary.org, sarah@lithgowlibrary.org, smoore@portlib.org

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Dear Commissioners and Council Members:

We thank you for the work you've done on the recent rule proposals. Here we offer you an alternative proposal, one that approaches Maine libraries from a significantly different perspective.

We know both this email and the proposal are lengthy, but we wanted to be as clear as we could on our reasoning. We hope you'll be able to look at this alternative working draft before your upcoming meeting, so that the information we provide can be part of your discussion.

While this draft incorporates much of what appeared in the March proposal, it differs significantly from both the March and November/December proposals in how it is framed. The prior MLC proposals emphasize eligibility criteria and the negative consequences of failing to meet them. By contrast, this alternative draft begins by acknowledging the long-standing value and extraordinary diversity of Maine's communities and their libraries and then offers eligibility criteria and *support* consistent with that recognition.

In preparing our alternative proposal, we attempted to remain true to what we see as the Legislature's intention and direction. We also attempted to remain true to the MSL/MLC's stated mission:

to provide, broaden, and improve access to information and library services to all Maine residents (MSL website)

Overall, the Maine State Library formally partners with over fifteen organizations and agencies via contracts and agreements and always works in partnership with all Maine libraries to fulfill our mission to help people, make Maine libraries stronger and transform information into knowledge. (MSL/MLC strategic plan submitted to IMLS)

At the same time, in preparing our alternative proposal, we tried to understand and address the motivation behind the November/December and March drafts as considered by the Commission. Based on what we have been able to discern—absent explicit clarification from the Commission—the concerns appear to be:

1. The need to comply with advice from the Attorney General's Office that enforceable standards and policies must be adopted as rules consistent with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act (MAPA), rather than embedded in agreements or other formats outside that process.
2. A desire to support greater professionalism among Maine's libraries and librarians and to encourage libraries to commit to their mission and strategic planning.
3. Concern that some entities may be misusing the designation "public library" to obtain discounted or free internet service or other benefits, such as access to free films, and that "any old" entity could claim public library status.
4. Financial pressures facing the State Library and the Commission.

The alternative we are suggesting addresses these concerns from a supportive rather than punitive perspective. We are, frankly, unable to understand how withdrawing State infrastructure from libraries—many in areas already underserved—would positively address these points.

More specifically, this alternative proposal addresses the issues identified above by:

1. (AG advice) Complying with MAPA by including both the initial MRLS standards and the required procedural provisions for rulemaking and adjudicatory processes to implement these standards. (We have also included the MLC standard on anti-discrimination.)
2. Professionalism: Incorporating the standards from the March draft, but reducing the PD to one hour for librarians and library board members—an approach more consistent with other states and less likely to impose time or cost burdens on those being regulated.
3. (System abuse) Addressing the "any old library" concern by recognizing that the 257 libraries previously found by the Commission to be qualified public libraries are, in fact, qualified public libraries. The draft defines these libraries as "grandparented" members of MRLS and establishes procedures for additions, withdrawals, and removals. This approach aligns with legislative intent that libraries be locally created and managed and that they work cooperatively to serve Maine citizens. It also recognizes the history of Maine's libraries—some of which predate statehood—and honors their unique character.
4. (Financial concerns) Continuing the March proposal's approach of imposing limits and fees for van delivery as a means of controlling costs, but not eliminating e-rate or other services. It seems unlikely that removing 27—or even 60—libraries from eligibility for free or discounted internet service would produce meaningful savings. (Indeed, as the recent MSLN request to the PUC for MTEAF funding suggests, cutting the most rural libraries may actually reduce available discounts, just as occurred when reporting of Free and Reduced Price Lunch numbers declined.) If additional cost-saving concerns exist, we hope the Commission will clarify them and invite us, and others, to collaborate—as creative and frugal Mainers—to develop solutions, beginning with a factual assessment of where assistance is needed.

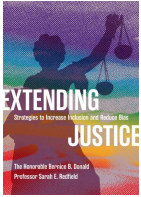
We welcome the opportunity to work with you to address your goals.

Because we developed this proposal based on our own (necessarily limited) understanding, we would especially appreciate hearing Sarah Forster's thinking.

Please feel free to reach out if we can provide further information.

SER

Sarah E. Redfield
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Look for *Enhancing Justice: Reducing Bias* at shop.americanbar.org and *Extending Justice: Strategies to Increase Inclusion and Reduce Bias* available from [Carolina Academic Press](#) and [Amazon](#).



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