



OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARIAN CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



Ohio Public Librarian Certification: OVERVIEW

Definition of Certification

Ohio Public Librarian Certification is the process that recognizes individual librarians who have met minimum standards established by the Ohio Library Council. An individual who meets these standards and has successfully completed the certification process is recognized in the state of Ohio as a Certified Public Librarian.

The Goals of Certification

The goals of public library certification are:

1. to enhance, expand, and improve public library services;
2. to publicly recognize and encourage librarians who, on a continuing basis, engage in professional development activities in the interest of providing better library services;
3. to assist public librarians in developing and improving their ability to provide leadership in a rapidly changing information and service environment;
4. to encourage and support the career development of librarians who want to prepare themselves as future library leaders;
5. to meet Ohio's public library service standards;
6. to underscore the dynamic nature of the profession in terms understandable to constituents, boards, government agencies, and legislative bodies;
7. to establish a coordinated approach to and enhance support for meeting the education and training needs of Ohio's public librarians; and
8. to provide general standards to public library boards for use in personnel matters.

Administration of the Certification Program

1. Policy and Oversight
A Certification Review Panel appointed by the OLC Board oversees certification. The membership of the Certification Review Panel shall include seven (7) Certified Public Librarians appointed from the Library Education and Library Development Committees and will be representative of all sizes of libraries. They shall serve for staggered terms of three years and may serve no more than two successive terms. A liaison from the OLC offices shall be an ex officio member of the Panel. The Certification Review Panel will meet quarterly.
2. Administration
Certification is administered by the (OLC) Director of Professional Development.

Requirements for Certification

Certification is conferred on the basis of evidence of professional education and professional experience. The basic requirements for initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification are:

1. A master's degree in library and information studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA).
2. Two years post-master's professional library experience.

Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification is for a five-year period.

Renewal of Certification

Renewal is based on documented evidence of continuing professional development as defined in the renewal procedure. Ohio Public Librarian Certification requires renewal at five-year intervals.

Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification: PROCEDURES

Requirements for Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification

The basic requirements for initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification are:

1. A master's degree in library and information studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA). An official copy of a transcript showing completion of the degree is required for initial certification.
2. Two years post-master's professional library experience. The candidate must submit documentation of experience in the form of a letter on library letterhead from a supervisor, board president, or personnel department accompanied by a formal job description for the position(s) held.

Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification may be granted only once to any individual and is valid for five years. Renewal requires documentation of continuing professional development, as described under Ohio Public Librarian Certification Renewal: Procedures.

Application Procedure for Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification

A candidate for Ohio Public Librarian Certification must complete the appropriate form (Application for Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification) and submit the form to OLC with evidence of educational achievement, professional experience, and Certification fee.

Applications are screened for completeness by OLC staff, and incomplete applications will be returned. The Certification Review Panel will meet quarterly to review those applications about which there are questions concerning the applicant's qualifications for certification.

Notification of Panel Decisions

Certified Public Librarian certificates, bearing the inclusive dates of certification, will be issued upon successful completion of the application process. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified via regular mail with details of why the application was not successful.

Appeals Process

An application for initial certification may be denied, usually as a result of an incomplete application or invalid documentation. Failure to comply with application requirements does not constitute valid grounds for appeal. An applicant who wishes to contest a non-certification decision must initiate an appeal (within 6 weeks of receiving the non-certification decision) by submitting a letter detailing the basis for the appeal to the Chairperson of the Certification Review Panel. Appeals will be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Certification Review Panel.

Ohio Public Librarian Certification Renewal: PROCEDURES

Requirements for Renewal of Ohio Public Librarian Certification

Continuing professional development encompasses learning experiences beyond the initial certification requirements and is designed to keep Ohio public librarians abreast of new knowledge and developments within the field, update their basic library-oriented education, and enhance job competence. Ohio Public Librarian Certification is renewed on the basis of documentation of sustained, purposeful continuing professional development as evidenced by the accumulation of 100 continuing education contact hours; a contact hour is 60 minutes of continuous participation in a learning activity. Contact hours must be earned during the five-year period immediately preceding renewal of the certificate.

Public library personnel have a number of options available to them that may include leadership, scholarship, and service activities as well as formal and informal learning experiences. Formal learning is defined as courses offered for academic credit by recognized institutions of higher education. Examples of appropriate library continuing education may include courses in library/information science, management, business administration, accounting computer systems, or public service agency management. In addition, other coursework to provide background and enhance performance may be appropriate based on the librarian's present job description.

Also, professional development can involve membership and participation in state, regional, national, and community professional organizations, teaching, publishing in the field, and attendance at workshops, seminars, institutes, and conferences. Eligible continuing education activities are grouped according to three categories as follows. Activities in these categories may be offered onsite or in a variety of other formats such as via the Internet and teleconferencing.

Category A: Credit Continuing Education Activities:

This category includes all continuing education courses for which academic credit is awarded by a college or university approved by an accrediting association of more than statewide standing. In addition, courses determined by the Panel to be equivalent to courses offered for academic credit may be included in this category. Contact hours earned in Category A must be submitted with formal documentation from the sponsoring institution.

Category B: Noncredit Continuing Education Activities:

This category includes activities for which no academic credit is awarded, but they are preplanned continuing education activities on specific topics offered by agencies, organizations, and professional associations. The activities are planned, administered, and evaluated in terms of learning objectives. (Not all activities provided by approved providers qualify for certification renewal credit, for example, the OLC Expo, interest group or annual meetings, or similar events without a formal instructor-led program.)

Professional development activities that individual public libraries arrange for themselves, instead of through approved providers, can be included in this category if these activities are broader in scope than training staff in the practices and procedures specific to the needs of a particular institution and primarily

address matters applicable to public libraries in general. Such self-arranged professional development activities can count for no more than twenty (20) contact hours out of the one hundred (100) total hours required for recertification.

Participants in activities in Category B must document their participation with a written summary that includes:

- Name of provider
- Title and description of program
- Date and location of program
- Number of contact hours

Technology skill sets for librarians are continually changing. Therefore, technology training may be included as a portion of the overall continuing education plan for certification renewal. Technology training may include professional development activities provided by approved providers or individual libraries and is limited to a total of ten (10) contact hours out of the required (100) hours.

Category C: Self-directed Continuing Education Activities:

This category includes self-directed learning activities for which no academic credit or equivalencies are awarded and which are not preplanned continuing activities offered by agencies, organizations, and professional activities.

OLC's three online tutorials qualify for recertification under this category. Contact hours may be credited as follows: Orientation: 3 contact hours; ORE on the WEB and Marketing: 6 contact hours each. All three online programs include a certificate of completion. Librarians who wish to use the online classes for recertification credit should download the certificate, print it, have their supervisor sign it to verify the course has been completed, and include it with their recertification application.

The number of contact hours to be awarded for experiences in this category will not exceed 10 contact hours per learning activity. Among the learning activities that may qualify are:

- Exchange of position programs
- Internships for which no academic credit or CE units are awarded
- Publications authored and published or produced in the library/media-related field and read primarily by those in the profession
- Published reviews of books
- Teaching/presentations
- Participation in professional association activities
- Participation in community organizations and committees

An application for renewal must explicitly indicate the relationship of each professional development activity to one or more of these three areas. At least seventy (70) contact hours must be earned in Categories A and B; no more than thirty (30) contact hours from Category C can be applied to certification renewal requirements.

Most continuing professional development activities are either offered by approved providers or are self-defining and require no explicit prior approval by the Certification Review Panel. The Certification Review Panel has absolute authority for activities sponsored by unapproved providers.

Individual Certified Public Librarians are responsible for obtaining, retaining, and organizing documentation of continuing professional development activities for submission at the time of application for renewal of certification. The Certification Review Panel and OLC assume no responsibility for accumulating or retaining records of continuing professional development for individual librarians.

There is no employment requirement for renewal.

Continuing Professional Development Activities Table

Category	Type of Activity	Unit of Measure	Contact Hours
A	<i>Credit Continuing Education Activities</i>		
	Academic courses		
	Semester credit	1 credit	15
	Trimester credit	1 credit	14
	Quarter credit	1 credit	10
	Approved credit equivalency courses	60 minutes	1
B	<i>Noncredit Continuing Education Activities</i>		
	Workshops, seminars, institutes, lecture series, national, state or regional library	60 minutes	1
	Association conferences	1 day	6
	Semester audit	½ day	3
	Trimester audit	1 credit equivalent	15
	Quarter audit	1 credit equivalent	14
		1 credit equivalent	10
C	<i>Self-directed Continuing Education Activities</i>		
	Other learning experiences, participation in community organizations and committees, etc. (Not to exceed 10 contact hours per learning activity)	60 minutes	1

Approved Continuing Professional Development Providers

Responsibilities of approved providers

Approved continuing professional development providers are charged with designing, creating, and delivering education and training experiences that meet the needs of Ohio's professional library community and the citizens served by them. Each approved provider is responsible for supplying participants with documentation of topic and content, participant attendance, number of contact hours earned, and the date(s) of the activity.

Approved providers

Approval of continuing professional development providers is the responsibility and prerogative of the Certification Review Panel. The Panel reserves the right to revoke approval. The following categories and specific providers have been approved based upon prior performance. Other programs and providers must be approved by the Certification Review Panel. Applicants should submit relevant course information prior to enrollment to OLC's Director of Professional Development for review.

- The State Library of Ohio
- State Library and Information Networks, including: OPLIN, INFOhio, OhioLINK, OHIONET
- State Level Membership Associations, including: Ohio Library Council, Ohio Education Library Media Association, The Academic Library Association of Ohio
- Ohio Regional Library Associations, including: NEO-RLS, NORWELD, SERLS, and SWON
- National and International Library and Information Science Associations and their divisions and chapters, including: American Library Association, American Society for Information Science, Special Libraries Association
- Institutions of Higher Education accredited by the Ohio Board of Regents or by an appropriate regional accrediting agency.

Application Procedure for Renewal of Ohio Public Librarian Certification

Ohio Public Librarian Certification is granted for a period of five years, with unlimited renewal based on satisfactory completion of the renewal process at five-year intervals. A candidate for renewal must complete the appropriate form (Application for Renewal of Ohio Public Librarian Certification) and submit the form, with evidence of continuing professional development,

and a recertification fee of \$25.00 to Ohio Library Council, 1105 Schrock Rd, Suite 440, Columbus, Ohio 43229. Renewal applications are screened for completeness by OLC staff, and incomplete applications will be returned. The Certification Review Panel will meet quarterly to review those applications about which there are questions concerning the applicant's continuing education activities and/or documentation of those activities.

Certified Public Librarian certificates, bearing the inclusive dates of certification, will be issued upon successful completion of the process. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified via regular mail.

Documentation of continuing professional development may include but is not limited to transcripts for courses and workshops offered by educational institutions, certificates of completion for development activities offered by professional associations, bibliographic information for publications, and letters of appointment or recognition for professional or community service activities. The OLC will provide examples of suggested documentation for specific professional development activities.

Appeals Process

An application for renewal may be denied, usually as the result of an inadequate record of continuing professional development. Failure to comply with application requirements, particularly with regard to documentation of professional development activities, does not constitute valid grounds for appeal. An applicant who wishes to contest a nonrenewal decision must initiate an appeal (within 6 weeks of receipt of the nonrenewal decision) by submitting a letter detailing the basis for the appeal to the Chairperson of the Certification Review Panel. Appeals will be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Panel, which has responsibility for appeals decisions.

Ohio Public Librarian Certification: RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Purpose of Recertification

Recertification allows an individual whose credentials have lapsed the opportunity to regain status as a Certified Public Librarian. Certification may lapse as the result of denial of a renewal application or failure to seek renewal.

Requirements for Recertification

Individuals seeking recertification must meet the requirements and follow the procedures for Renewal of Public Librarian Certification.

APPLICATION FOR INITIAL OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARIAN CERTIFICATION/RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION

Name/Title _____

Library Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact Phone #: _____

Email Address: _____

OLC Member? Yes or No If yes, Membership ID# _____

Is this Initial Certification-\$50.00 or Renewal of Certification - \$25.00? *PO's please indicate which.

Form of payment:

Check# _____ (Make payable to Ohio Library Council)

Visa, MC, American Express # _____

Credit Card Expiration: _____ Security Code _____

Authorized Signature: _____

*PO#: _____

Mail complete application with evidence of educational achievement and professional experience to: **OLC, 1105 Schrock Rd, Suite 440, Columbus, Ohio 43229 Attention: Christopher Korenowsky**