

Frequently Asked Questions about Library Funding

1. How are public libraries funded by the state of Ohio?

As of July 1, 2025, Ohio's public libraries receive funding from the Public Library Fund (PLF) through a line-item appropriation established in the state biennial budget (House Bill 96). Previously, the PLF received 1.7% of the state's General Revenue Fund.

2. Why are public libraries receiving less money from the state?

Due to the state legislature's change in how public libraries are funded, the overall funding allocated to the PLF has decreased. The General Assembly set the line-item appropriation for the PLF at \$490 million in FY26 and \$500 million in FY27. In addition, they added language to fund other state agencies and entities from the PLF, further reducing funding to public libraries by an additional \$10.3 million. As a result, libraries are receiving approximately \$479 million in FY26, a decrease from \$504 million in FY25.

3. Do all of Ohio's public libraries have a local property tax levy?

No, 48 public library systems do not have a local property tax levy and rely on state funding through the PLF as their primary source of funding for day-to-day operations and providing services to their communities.

4. Do public libraries receive local county sales tax revenue, local city income tax revenue or Casino revenue?

No, public libraries do not have taxing authority to implement a local sales tax or income tax. Also, unlike counties, cities and school districts, public libraries do not receive Casino revenue from Ohio's casinos.

5. How much funding for public libraries comes from the state?

Collectively, 48% of the total funding for Ohio's public libraries comes from the state through the PLF.

6. Did Ohio's public libraries receive federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding like other entities such as counties, townships, and municipalities?

No. In Ohio, public libraries are separate political subdivisions and not a division under city or county government. Therefore, libraries were not eligible to receive the billions of dollars that other local governments and schools received directly through ARPA. Additionally, libraries do not receive separate funding for facilities. Traditionally, libraries have also been excluded from appropriations through the Ohio Capital Budget and the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission.