

**OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARIAN**

# **CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**



## Ohio Public Librarian Certification: OVERVIEW

### Definition of Certification

The Ohio Public Librarian Certification Program 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 as a Certified Public Librarian in Ohio.

### The Goals of Certification

The goals of Public Librarian Certification include:

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 Policy and Oversight

The Professional Development Committee (PDC) appointed by the OLC Board of Directors oversees certification. The membership of the PDC represents all chapters and sizes of libraries. Additionally, at least one-third of the committee should be Certified Public Librarians. The PDC will meet as needed.

### Administration

Certification is administered by the OLC staff.

## Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification: Requirements and Procedures

### Requirements for Initial Ohio Public Librarian 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). An official copy of a transcript showing completion of the degree is preferred. In cases where transcripts cannot be obtained, a copy of the diploma and contact information for the applicant's library graduate school may be submitted.
2. Two years of experience working in a library. The candidate must submit documentation of work experience and/or formal internship in the form of a letter on library letterhead from a supervisor, board president, or human resources 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.

### Application Procedure for Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification

A candidate for Ohio Public Librarian Certification must complete the Application for Initial Ohio Public Librarian Certification and submit it to the OLC with evidence of educational achievement, professional experience, and the Certification fee. All information must be submitted together.

Applications are screened for completeness by OLC staff. Incomplete applications will be returned. The OLC staff will work with the PDC to review those applications about which there are questions concerning the applicant's qualifications for certification.

### Notification of Decisions

Upon successful completion of the application process, Certified Public Librarian certificates, bearing the inclusive dates of certification, will be issued.

# Renewal of Ohio Public Librarian Certification: Requirements and Procedures

## Requirements for Renewal of Ohio Public Librarian Certification

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

## Procedure 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 75 continuing education contact hours (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 participation in state, regional, national, and community professional organizations; teaching; publishing in the field; and attending 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 PDC to be equivalent to courses offered for academic credit may be included in this category.

## Category B: Noncredit Continuing Education Activities:

This category includes activities for which no academic credit is awarded, but 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 presented by approved providers qualify for certification renewal credit. For example, the OLC Expo, OLC Legislative Day, OLC Trustee Dinners, OLC Leadership Conference, interest groups, annual meetings, or similar events without a formal instructor-led program do not qualify as continuing education events.)

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.

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 in the continuing education plan for certification renewal. Technology training may include professional development activities provided by approved providers or individual libraries.

## 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 pre-planned continuing activities offered by agencies, organizations, and professional activities.

For example, the OLC's online tutorials qualify for recertification under this category. Ohio Reference Excellence (ORE) Online qualifies for six contact hours and includes 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.

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

- Exchange of position programs: Working outside of your regular position in order to gain a broader understanding of other areas of the library profession.
- Internships for which no academic credit or CE units are awarded.
- Publications authored and published 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.
- Lynda.com [Max. 6 hours of credit for each course taken, regardless of the number of hours required to complete the course].

- 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 50 contact hours must be earned in Categories A and B; no more than 25 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 PDC. The PDC 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 PDC and OLC assume no responsibility for accumulating or retaining records of continuing professional development for individual librarians.

There is no employment requirement for renewal.

<b>Continuing Professional Development Activities</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Contact Hours</b>
<b>A</b>	<b><i>Credit Continuing Education Activities</i></b> - 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>B</b>	<b><i>Noncredit Continuing Education Activities</i></b>		
	Workshops; seminars; institutes; lecture series; national, state, or regional library association conferences	60 minutes	1
		1 day	6
		1/2 day	3
	semester audit	1 credit equivalent	15
trimester audit	1 credit equivalent	14	
quarter audit	1 credit equivalent	10	
<b>C</b>	<b><i>Self-Directed Continuing Education Activities</i></b>		
Other learning experiences, participation in community organizations and committees, etc. (not to exceed 6 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 PDC. The committee 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 PDC. Applicants should submit relevant course information prior to enrollment to OLC staff 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, and 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

A candidate for renewal must submit the following:

- Application
- Record of continuing professional development activities\*
- Certification renewal fee

Renewal applications are screened for completeness by OLC staff, and incomplete applications will be returned.

\*Official documentation and proof of continuing professional development activities should be submitted only upon request. This documentation 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. Upon successful completion of the application process, Certified Public Librarian certificates, bearing the inclusive dates of certification, will be issued.

## Lapsed Certification

Individuals whose certifications have lapsed may renew their certification. Certification may lapse as the result of denial of a renewal application or failure to seek renewal.

### Requirements for Lapsed Renewal

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

## Ohio Public Library Certification: EMERITUS CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

### Purpose of Emeritus Certification

Emeritus Certification allows professional librarians who have officially retired and, if applicable, whose regular certification is coming to an end to maintain their status as a certified librarian. If an individual retires and is rehired as a professional librarian, that individual is not eligible for emeritus status, but is eligible for regular certification. Library consultants may apply for regular certification.

### Requirements for Emeritus Certification

Individuals seeking Emeritus Certification must earn 15 continuing education contact hours from any category in a five-year period. These contact hours must be related to the library profession.

# Application for Certification

**Certified Public Librarian**

**Initial Certification:**

- OLC Member (\$25.00)
- Non-Member (\$50.00)

**Documentation Required\*:**

- Evidence of Master's degree
- Evidence of 2 yrs exp w/ job desc.

**Certification Renewal:**

- OLC Member (\$25.00)
- Non-Member (\$35.00)

**Documentation Required:**

- Evidence of 75 CE hours

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

OLC ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a Member? Y N Are you applying for Emeritus status? Y N

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Library Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ H W

Contact Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ H W M

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Make check payable to: Ohio Library Council

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ V MC AmEx

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Bill Library Please use PO# \_\_\_\_\_

\*Send completed application, payment and evidence of educational achievement and professional experience (initial) or Record of Continuing Professional Development Activities (renewal) to : Ohio Library Council, 495 Metro Place South, Suite 350, Dublin, OH 43017  
EMAIL: olc@olc.org, FAX: 614-410-8098

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date application received \_\_\_\_\_ Certification recorded \_\_\_\_\_

Certification approved \_\_\_\_\_ Fee invoiced \_\_\_\_\_

Date Certificate mailed \_\_\_\_\_



