

**OHIO PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF**

# **CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**



## Ohio Public Library Staff Certification: OVERVIEW

### Definition of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

The Ohio Public Library Staff Certification Program recognizes individual library staff 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 Certified Public Library Staff in Ohio.

Ohio Public Library Staff Certification is only for library staff who do not have a master's degree in library and information science. If you have a MLIS degree, please refer to the Ohio Public Librarian Certification Program. If you obtain an MLIS after initial certification, you will not be eligible to apply for renewal of your Ohio Public Library Staff Certification. However, you may apply for Ohio Public Librarian Certification at any time after obtaining an MLIS

### The Goals of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

The goals of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification include:

1. To encourage and recognize staff members for being proactive by seeking out educational opportunities that help them stay on top of new trends, support career development, enhance leadership skills, improve services to patrons, strengthen the profession, give the library credibility, and grow professional networks.
2. To meet Ohio's public library service standards;
3. To establish a coordinated approach to and enhance support for meeting the education and training needs of Ohio's public library staff.

### Administration of the Ohio Public Library Staff Certification Program

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 or Certified Public Library Staff. The PDC will meet as needed.

Certification is administered by the OLC staff.

## Initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification: REQUIREMENTS and PROCEDURES

### Requirements for Initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

Certification is conferred on the basis of evidence of library experience and commitment to continuing education.

The basic requirements for initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification are:

1. A minimum of a high school degree or its equivalency. Please provide your year of graduation, school name and school contact information.
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.
3. A minimum of 10 hours of documented continuing education from any of the categories listed below within the past two years. A letter from your supervisor on library letterhead will be accepted as documentation.

Initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification may be granted only once to any individual and is valid for five years.

### Application Procedure for Initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

A candidate for Ohio Public Library Staff Certification must complete the Application for Initial Ohio Public Library Staff Certification and submit it to the OLC with evidence of educational achievement, library experience, continuing education, 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, a Certified Public Library Staff certificate, bearing the inclusive dates of certification, will be issued.

# Renewal of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification: REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

## Requirements for Renewal of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

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

## Procedure for Renewal of Ohio Public Library Staff Certification

Continuing education encompasses learning experiences beyond the initial certification requirements and is designed to keep Ohio public library staff abreast of new knowledge and developments within the field, and to enhance job competence. Ohio Public Library Staff Certification is renewed on the basis of documentation of sustained, purposeful continuing education as evidenced by the accumulation of 50 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 library staff's present job description.

Also, continuing education can involve participation in state, regional, national, and community professional organizations; 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 on-site 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, 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.)

Continuing education 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 library staff are continually changing. Therefore, technology training may be included in the continuing education plan for certification renewal. Technology training may include continuing education 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 preplanned 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. Library staff 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 continuing education 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.
- LinkedIn Learning [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 continuing education activity to one or more of these three areas: at least 25 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 education 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 Library Staff 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 education for individual library staff.

There is no employment requirement for renewal.

<b>Continuing Education Activities</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>Unit of Measure</b>	<b>Contact Hours</b>	
<b>A</b>	<b>Credit Continuing Education Activities</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>Noncredit Continuing Education Activities</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>Self-Directed Continuing Education Activities</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 Education Providers

### Responsibilities of approved providers

Approved continuing education providers are charged with designing, creating, and delivering education and training experiences that meet the needs of Ohio's 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 education 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 and 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 and 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 Library Staff 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 Library Staff 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 Library Staff Certification.







**Certified Public Library Staff**

**INITIAL CERTIFICATION**

- OLC member fee: \$30
- Non-member fee: \$60

**Documentation required**

- Evidence of HS diploma
- Evidence of 2 yrs of experience w/job description
- Evidence of 10 CE hours

**CERTIFICATION RENEWAL**

- OLC member fee: \$30
- Non-member fee: \$60

**Documentation required**

- Evidence of 50 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 \_\_\_\_\_