

## North Central Library District Board Bulletin

We've been hearing that board members would like to learn more about the district, their role on the board, within the library, and library-related news across the state. We're excited to share news and information with District member library Trustees on a quarterly basis.

Welcome to the new NCLD Board Bulletin!

Visit our  
Website

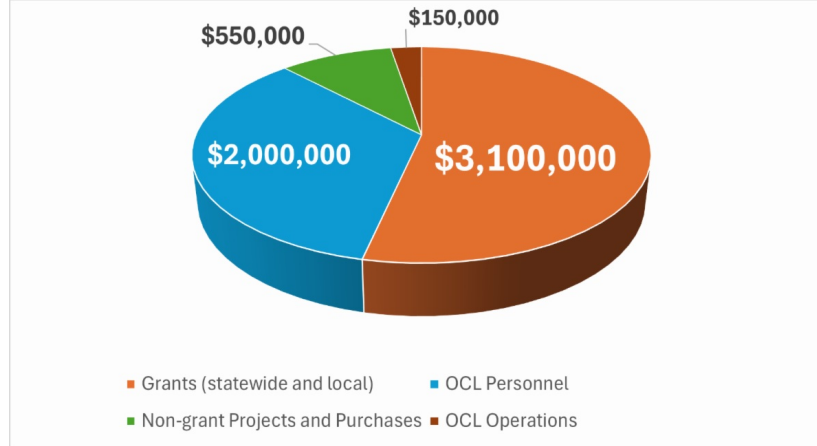
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### Federal Funds and Pennsylvania Public Libraries

Through the Grants to States Program of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Office of Commonwealth Libraries deploys federal funds for many services to Pennsylvania residents. A recent [Executive Order](#) is threatening that funding. Consider calling your [Senators and Representatives](#) and urge them to protect IMLS funding. Federal funds pay for:

- AccessPA and Power Library (statewide interlibrary loan system and statewide databases)
- PA Forward (initiative of the Pennsylvania Library Association that is a framework for communicating the value of libraries)
- Family Place and Play and Grow local library grants
- Teen Reading Lounge
- Professional Development and Training for library personnel
- Summer Library Program manuals
- 19 positions within the Office of Commonwealth Libraries and the State Library

See the full list [here](#). Click on Federal Funding.



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## Pennsylvania State Budget 2025-26



The Governor's proposed budget was released in February and did not include an increase in the Public Library Subsidy. State Aid to local libraries comes from the Public Library Subsidy. Currently at \$70.47 million, the Subsidy funding is roughly \$17 per Pennsylvania library card holder (barely the cost of a book). The Pennsylvania Library Association is asking for a \$6.2 million

increase. Please contact your legislators and ask them to support an increase in the Public Library Subsidy.

See the "Ask" document [here](#). Find your legislator [here](#).

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## Annual Report to the Department of State

It has always been important to know the origin story of your library but it's even more important now to know how your library was set up and what documents gave life to your organization. Is the library an unincorporated nonprofit? A domestic nonprofit corporation? An association? A department of local government? A municipal authority?

There is a new requirement for libraries that are incorporated in the state of Pennsylvania to file an annual report, not to be confused with the PA Public Library Data Survey, also referred to as an annual report. This affects the majority of libraries in the North Central Library District. If your library is listed as a domestic nonprofit corporation or a "county orphan" (having to do with filings before the Department of State existed), the library will need to file.

Check your entity type [here](#).

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## Library Laws and State Aid Past and Present

Library laws and the state aid system in

UPDATED: DECEMBER 2024

# LIBRARY LAWS

PAST & PRESENT



## LEGISLATION HIERARCHY

There are many layers to Pennsylvania library laws for state-aided libraries.

- **Statutes** are laws enacted by the Commonwealth's legislature and are held to the highest order.
- **Regulations** are written by administrative agencies, which in this case is the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) in the PA Department of Education (PDE). They are designed to explain the implementation of the statute and to increase flexibility and efficiency in the operation of laws. They hold the power of law, but do not override the statute.
- **Policies** are how the agency, OCL, interprets and implements the regulations.
- The **Governor's Advisory Council** develops guidelines to provide libraries with procedures and guidance for implementing laws, regulations, and policy. The GAC assigns work groups to research and discuss topics and releases additional guidance.

HAVE QUESTIONS? CONTACT YOUR DISTRICT CONSULTANT OR SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS.

## TIMELINE

**1840s:** First legislation permitting the existence of libraries.

**Late 1800s - Early 1900s:** Laws encouraging municipal support.

**1961:** Library Statutes were established, outlining state aid distribution and initial standards.

**1997:** "Libraries in Distress," a series of articles published to highlight the struggling state of public libraries. A five year plan was set in motion to increase the Public Library Subsidy, with strong encouragement of local funding support.

**Commonwealth Budget 2002-2003:** With a roughly 50% cut to the Public Library Subsidy line, the formula was frozen based on the 2000 Census figures. "The formula doesn't run currently because of legislative language that supersedes the formula outlined in the statute. It's not related to a certain threshold of funding."

**2012:** A legislator was approached, prompting changes to the Statutes. These changes were not thoroughly addressed with the library field before enacting. Following the enactment of the Statutes, the Regulations were supposed to be updated to align with the Statutes.

**2022:** OCL formed a work group to review the existing statute and regulations and begin the process of writing new regulations.

Pennsylvania are complicated.

Here's a [basic reference](#) to help you understand how we got to where we are.

You'll also find all of the categories of state aid in this document. Please note that the state aid funding formula has not been in use since the 2003-2004 funding year due to a significant cut in state aid that year. State aid is now distributed based on the language passed in each year's state budget.

James V. Brown Library  
Headquarters of Lycoming County Library System & North Central Library District  
19 East Fourth Street  
Williamsport, PA 17701 US

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