



Idaho  
Commission  
*for* Libraries

## **Best Practices Section 4: Human Resources**

# **Toolkit**

Last modified: 20211005

In this toolkit you will find value-added information that includes definitions, examples, and links to useful resources to help you respond to the questions in the corresponding Best Practices Checklist.

## Core Level

### 4.1. My library complies with federal and state laws pertaining to human resources, including:

- 4.1.1. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA): Establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments. Covered nonexempt workers are entitled to a minimum wage of not less than \$7.25 per hour effective July 24, 2009. Overtime pay at a rate not less than one and one-half times the regular rate of pay is required after 40 hours of work in a workweek for covered employees. For more information, visit <https://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/index.htm>;
- 4.1.2. Equal employment opportunity is fostered by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which was established by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to assist in the protection of employees in the United States from discrimination. Employment discrimination entails areas including hiring, firing, promotions, transfer, or wage practices, discrimination in advertising, referral of job applicants, or classification. For more information, visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/index.cfm>;
- 4.1.3. Workers' compensation is a form of insurance providing wage replacement and medical benefits to employees injured in the course of employment in exchange for mandatory relinquishment of the employee's right to sue the employer for the tort of negligence. For more information, visit <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/workcomp>;
- 4.1.4. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. It affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, and other characteristics illegal. Unlike the Civil Rights Act, the ADA also requires covered employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities and imposes accessibility requirements on public accommodations. For more information, visit <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/ada>;
- 4.1.5. The Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) is a U.S. federal payroll (or employment) contribution directed towards both employees and employers to fund Social Security and Medicare, federal programs, and provide benefits for retirees, people with disabilities, and children of deceased workers. For more information, visit <https://www.irs.gov/government-entities/federal-state-local-governments/employer-and-pay-related-issues> or <https://www.labor.idaho.gov/dnn/Portals/0/Publications/wagehour.pdf>.

- 4.1.5.1. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a federal labor law that entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take

unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave. The program is administered by the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor:

4.1.5.2. In order to be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must meet all of the following: 1) Works for an FMLA-covered employer; 2) Has been employed by the employer for at least 12 months; 3) Has at least 1,250 hours of service for the employer during the previous 12-month period; 4) Is employed at a worksite with 50 or more employees at that site or within 75 miles of the worksite. For more information, visit [https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/FOH\\_Ch39.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/legacy/files/FOH_Ch39.pdf).

4.1.5.3. More information on the Family Medical Leave Act is available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>.

4.1.5.4. The Idaho Counties Risk Management Program (ICRMP) includes FMLA guidance in their Public Library District Sample Personnel Policy: <https://www.icrmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Sample-Public-Library-District-Sample-Personnel-Policy.docx>.

4.2. My library provides a safe and pleasant working environment free from harassment<sup>1</sup>, abuse<sup>2</sup>, and unnecessary hazards<sup>3</sup>, and bullying<sup>4</sup>. For more information on bullying and how to prevent it, visit [StopBullying.gov](http://StopBullying.gov), a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>.

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<sup>1</sup> Harassment is a form of employment discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 and older), disability, or genetic information. For more information on harassment, visit the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/harassment.cfm>.

<sup>2</sup> Document abuse is when an employer, when verifying employment eligibility, requests more or different documents than federal law requires, rejects valid documents, or asks for specific documents based on the worker's citizenship status or national origin. Document abuse may also occur if your employer discriminates against you when using E-Verify. One example of document abuse is if you choose to show a driver's license and Social Security card when hired, but your employer also asks to see your Permanent Resident Card (green card). For more information, visit [https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/upload/english\\_osc-eeoc\\_flyer.pdf](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/upload/english_osc-eeoc_flyer.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Working conditions usually consist of two factors: 1) surroundings, and 2) hazards. A workplace hazard refers to a situation within the workplace that has the potential to cause injury or adverse health effects for people and damage to the workplace and/or equipment. Hazards are present at every workplace and come from a wide number of sources. Identifying and eliminating them is a major component of maintaining a safe workplace.

<sup>4</sup> Bullying is the use of force, coercion, or threat, to abuse, dominate aggressively, or intimidate. The behavior is often repeated and habitual. One essential prerequisite is the perception (by the bully or by others) of an imbalance of physical or social power. This imbalance distinguishes bullying from conflict. Bullying is a subcategory of aggressive behavior characterized by the following three minimum criteria: (1) hostile intent, (2) imbalance of power, and (3) repetition over a period of time. Bullying is the activity of repeated, aggressive behavior intended to hurt another individual, physically, mentally, or emotionally.

#### 4.3. My library provides basic staff training, including:

- 4.3.1. Reference: Answering questions posed by library patrons at a reference desk, by telephone, via e-mail, or by other electronic means. Reference may also include providing point-of-use instruction on the use of library resources and information technology.
- 4.3.2. Reader advisory: Services provided by an experienced public services librarian who specializes in the reading needs of patrons of a public library. A reader advisor (or *reader's advisor* or *readers' advisor*) recommends specific titles and/or authors, based on knowledge of the patron's past reading preferences, and may also compile lists of recommended titles and serve as liaison to other education agencies in the community.
- 4.3.3. Technical assistance: Assistance or support to users of equipment and software when problems arise. Staff can find self-paced tutorials on computer software at LearningExpress Library, which is provided by the Idaho Commission for Libraries as part of the LiLI Databases:  
<https://lili.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://www.learningexpresslibrary3.com/>.
- 4.3.4. Children's services: Collection development, reference, reader advisory, and programming for patrons from zero to eighteen years of age. Staff serving children should have a basic understanding of child development in addition to training in collections, services, and programs. See ICfL Library Learning Online (formerly SABLE) for the children's services sequence: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/continuing-education/library-learning-online/>. Additional training is required for teaching early literacy<sup>5</sup> and lapsit<sup>6</sup> skills: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/rtm/>.

#### 4.4. My library provides training<sup>7</sup> and plans for managing any disaster or emergency situations that may occur. Once the library's emergency plans are in place, it is recommended that you back these plans up to the cloud as well as keeping a physical copy of each off-site. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- 4.4.1. First aid: The first and immediate assistance given to any person suffering from either a minor or serious illness or injury, with care provided to preserve life,

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<sup>5</sup> Two conditions found essential for creating a reader are 1) an early environment that offers literary experience, that is, a print-filled environment (books, magazines, newspapers, *etc.*), and adults reading these materials, and 2) a caring adult to introduce the child to literary pleasure. The public library meets both requirements. For more information on early literacy and its importance to success in life, visit <https://libraries.idaho.gov/rtm/>

<sup>6</sup> Lapsit services and programs are designed for very young children (12-24mo) in conjunction with their adult caregivers, including nursery rhymes, songs, finger plays, and storytelling, often with the aid of a flannel board or puppets.

<sup>7</sup> The American Library Association maintains a LibGuide with help on how to be prepared. Visit <https://libguides.ala.org/disaster> to start researching what plans to have in place, what to do when disaster strikes, and how to start the recovery process. The Library of Congress maintains a site with disaster preparedness and emergency management resources at <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/plan/index.html>.

prevent the condition from worsening, or to promote recovery. The Red Cross and hospitals are a good source of first aid training. <https://www.redcross.org/>

4.4.2. Drug overdose or overdose or OD: The ingestion or application of a drug or other substance in quantities greater than are recommended. Typically, the term is used for cases when a risk to health will potentially result. An overdose may result in a toxic state or death. Your local hospital can direct you to the best source of training for dealing with overdoses. Idaho Code protects those seeking or providing medical assistance for an overdose:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title37/T37CH27/SECT37-2739C/>.

4.4.3. Fire or fire drill: A fire drill is a method of practicing how a building would be evacuated in the event of a fire or other emergencies. Whether the library is staging a fire drill or experiencing a genuine fire, the building's alarm system is activated, and the building is evacuated. It is important to have the library's fire alarm systems checked on a regular basis to ensure that the system is working and that people in the building are familiar with the sound of the fire alarm while they are at work. Your local fire department can help you work out an evacuation plan for the library.

4.4.4. Active shooter or active killer: The perpetrator of a type of mass murder marked by rapidity, scale, randomness, and often suicide. The United States Department of Homeland Security defines an active shooter as "an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims." Similar situations may involve mass stabbings or attacks with vehicles, explosives, incendiary devices, slashing, or acid attacks. Such situations are known as Mass Casualty Attacks (MCA). Your local police or sheriff can provide training on handling an active shooter or MCA situation.

4.5. My library employs staff at a level to provide reasonable open hours and services for the community and reasonable workloads for the staff, while working within budgeted funds. It is also important to fund staffing during closed hours, as there are some jobs that can only be accomplished during this quiet time.

4.6. My library is above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for levels of staffing (FTE<sup>8</sup>) according to the most recent collection of *Idaho Public Library Statistics*: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-statistics/>.

4.7. My library requires staff to adhere to a confidentiality agreement to protect patron privacy.

4.7.1. The American Library Association defines intellectual freedom as "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without

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<sup>8</sup> Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a unit that indicates the workload of an employee in a manner that makes workloads comparable across contexts. An FTE of 1.0 is equivalent to a full-time worker. An FTE of 0.5 indicates half of a full workload.

restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through with any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement can be explored.”

4.7.2. Because proponents of intellectual freedom value an individual’s right to choose informational concepts and media to formulate thought and opinion without repercussion, restrictions to access, and barriers to privacy of information constitute intellectual freedom issues. Such issues include data mining, surveillance, data protection, information privacy laws and practices, confidentiality of library users’ records of access, legislation that suspends civil liberties in the name of national security such as the Patriot Act<sup>9</sup> and the Homeland Security Act<sup>10</sup>.

4.7.3. Idaho Code section 74-108(4) exempts from disclosure “The records of a library which, when examined alone, or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out, requesting, or using an item from a library.”

4.7.4. ALA’s *Freedom to Read* statement is a key library policy that endorses an individual’s civil rights to free expression and intellectual freedom through the exchange of ideas through reading and writing.

4.8. My library provides access to training and professional development opportunities that support staff job descriptions and all policies and procedures.

4.8.1. There are many professional development opportunities available to library staff; they may be free or require a fee, offered face-to-face, online, or in print. Whatever

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<sup>9</sup> The USA PATRIOT Act (or Patriot Act) is an act of the United States Congress that was signed into law by President George W. Bush on October 26, 2001. In response to the September 11 attacks and the 2001 anthrax attacks, Congress passed this legislation to strengthen national security. [Butch Otter, member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Idaho’s 1<sup>st</sup> District, was one of three Republicans to vote “no.”] The acronym USA PATRIOT Act stands for Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001. Those opposing this law have criticized its authorization of indefinite detentions of immigrants; the permission given to law enforcement agents to search a home or business without the owner’s or the occupant’s consent or knowledge; the expanded use of National Security Letters, which allows the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to search telephone, e-mail, and financial records without a court order; and the expanded access of law enforcement agencies to business records, including library and financial records. Since its passage, several legal challenges have been brought against the act, and federal courts have ruled that a number of provisions are unconstitutional.

<sup>10</sup> The Homeland Security Act (HSA) of 2002 was introduced in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks and subsequent mailings of anthrax spores. After approval by the U.S. Senate, it was signed into law by President George W. Bush in November 2002. The HAS created the United States Department of Homeland Security and the new cabinet-level position of Secretary of Homeland Security. It also includes many of the organizations under which the powers of the USA PATRIOT Act are exercised. The HAS is the foundation for many other establishments, including 1) The Department of Homeland Security, headed by the Secretary of Homeland Security; 2) an established Directorate for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection within the Department of Homeland Security, headed by the Under Secretary for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection; 3) the Critical Infrastructure Information act of 2002; and 4) the Cyber Security Enhancement Act of 2002. A 2012 report by the DHS Inspector General indicated that DHS “lacks an effective governance structure to ensure interoperable communications across divisions.” See [http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2013/OIG\\_13-06\\_Nov12.pdf](http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2013/OIG_13-06_Nov12.pdf) for more information.

the format, library staff with up-to-date tools and knowledge are essential to a successful library.

- 4.8.2. The ICfL Continuing Education page offers free and low-cost professional development with ABLE and Library Learning Online modular courses, webinars, and online courses, along with a collection of professional eBooks for library staff use. Face-to-face training options are available through CE Grants to help defray the costs of attending classes and conferences, along with professional development programs like Trustee Connections, LiLAC, Futures Camp, Directors' Summit, and SPLAT. Visit <https://libraries.idaho.gov/continuing-education/partner-training-opportunities/> for more information.
- 4.8.3. Annie Gaines, the Idaho Commission for Libraries Continuing Education (CE) Consultant is available to assist with finding professional development resources and guiding you through the process of applying for CE grants. You can contact Annie at [Annie.Gaines@libraries.idaho.gov](mailto:Annie.Gaines@libraries.idaho.gov) or at 208-691-4151.
- 4.8.4. Additional professional development is available through the Idaho Library Association at the ILA Annual Conference each October and its regional conferences each spring, the Pacific Northwest Library Association Conference each August, WebJunction<sup>11</sup>, and many other regional and national conferences happening throughout the year.
- 4.9. My library adheres to formal, written hiring processes and practices. For procedural information on hiring a new director, see the toolkit from the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies/COSLA [https://www.cosla.org/content.cfm/id/trustee\\_toolkit\\_hiring\\_a\\_new\\_library\\_director](https://www.cosla.org/content.cfm/id/trustee_toolkit_hiring_a_new_library_director).
- 4.10. My library maintains written job descriptions for the director and all staff positions. The standard components of a job description are 1) Title, 2) Classification<sup>12</sup>, 3) Job Summary, 4) Tasks and Responsibilities, 5) Qualifications, 6) Who Supervises the Position, 7) Working Conditions, 8) Salary and Benefits. See resources and information about job descriptions from the Society of Human Resource Management/SHRM: <https://www.shrm.org/>
- 4.11. My library displays on its premises the poster "Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law."<sup>13</sup> Every employer covered by the nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> WebJunction builds the knowledge, skills and confidence of library staff to power strong libraries that are the heart of vibrant communities. A program of OCLC Research, WebJunction is free and welcome to all libraries to use, regardless of size, type or location. <https://www.webjunction.org/home.html>

<sup>12</sup> Some employees are exempt from the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). For more information, visit <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/whd/flsa/screen75.asp>.

<sup>13</sup> Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws prohibit specific types of job discrimination in certain workplaces. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has two agencies which deal with EEO monitoring and enforcement, the Civil Rights Center and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. The Civil Rights Center oversees EEO in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. CRC also assures equal opportunity for all applicants to and employees of DOL. For more information, see <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/centers-offices/civil-rights->



(EEO) laws is required to post on its premises the poster “Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law.” The notice must be posted prominently where it can be readily seen by employees and applicants for employment. For more information, visit <https://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/posters/ofccpost.htm>.

- 4.12. My library’s director provides periodic evaluations for each staff member, aligned with the appropriate job description and annual performance goals. Because a staff evaluation should never contain surprises, it is important to check in with staff members periodically throughout the year to discuss progress toward achieving their objectives for the year. Annual performance evaluations should reflect an employee’s performance only during the reporting period.
- 4.13. My library provides a grievance procedure, a step-by-step process that employees must follow to ensure that their complaints are addressed satisfactorily. In this process, the formal (written) complaint moves from one level of authority to the next higher level. For more information, take a look at <https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/grievance-procedures-five-step-guide-employers/>. And always check with your library’s attorney if you have questions or concerns about your grievance process.
- 4.14. My library provides employee benefits to the extent that it is able, recognizing the importance of benefits in recruitment and retention.
  - 4.14.1. Offering employees the best benefits the library can afford can go a long way toward supplementing low salaries. This is true not only for recruiting, but for employee retention as well.
  - 4.14.2. Check out the reasons why at <https://www.themissionhr.com/post/2019-employee-benefits-engagement-retention-and-recruitment-statistics>.

## Enhanced Level

- 4.15. My library provides trauma-related training for its public service staff. This is about learning to ask, “What happened?” and not “What’s wrong?”. As more libraries bring social workers on staff, these new trauma-informed approaches are changing not just policies and protocols that affect patrons, but those involving staff as well. This training will involve community partnerships. Your local hospital’s social work department is a great first step. If they are unable to provide training, they will be able to recommend the appropriate organization. For more information: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2019/06/03/toward-trauma-informed-model/>.

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[center](#). The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs oversees employers holding federal contracts and subcontracts. To learn more about OFCCP, visit <https://www.dol.gov/ofccp/>.



- 4.16. My library develops and maintains a recruitment, training, and retention plan for volunteers.
- 4.16.1. While they are not free, volunteers are an inexpensive way for libraries to build capacity. Community members hold a wealth of experience, information, and a bit of time they may be willing, even eager, to share with the library.
- 4.16.2. Visit Get Involved Powered by Your Library at <https://getinvolvedclearinghouse.org/> for information, webinars, and advice from experienced volunteer coordinators on starting a volunteer program, recruiting volunteers, and managing volunteers in the library.
- 4.16.3. Volunteer Match is a recruiting tool that helps organizations find highly qualified volunteers with a large array of skill sets: <https://www.volunteermatch.org/>.
- 4.16.4. Please see the FSLA guidelines on staff and volunteering at [https://www.dol.gov/whd/opinion/FLSA/2006/2006\\_01\\_27\\_04\\_FLSA.htm](https://www.dol.gov/whd/opinion/FLSA/2006/2006_01_27_04_FLSA.htm)
- 4.17. My library's staff rereads the library's policies and procedures annually. Over time, we all forget exactly what each policy and procedure says. A periodic refresher will help staff be better equipped to follow and enforce library policy while providing equitable treatment to all patrons.
- 4.18. My library's staff is encouraged to pursue professional development and is supported in and recognized for such pursuits. For more information, visit <http://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/staff-development> and [https://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncp/f/stafftraining2\\_anthonyholderied.pdf](https://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncp/f/stafftraining2_anthonyholderied.pdf).
- 4.19. My library encourages and supports staff membership and participation in local organizations by planning for paid time out of the building and budgeting for costs associated with memberships. A *librarian at every table*, the notion of library staff belonging to community organizations and building community, has been a longstanding practice in the library profession. The concept of a librarian at every table has been enhanced and deepened with the idea of an *embedded librarian*, one who is focused "on the needs of one or more specific groups, building relationships with these groups, developing a deep understanding of their work, and providing information services that are highly customized and targeted to their greatest needs." Schumaker, D. (2009). Who Let the Librarians Out? Embedded librarianship and the library manager." *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 48(3), 239-242, 25

## Stretch Level

- 4.20. My library has developed a classification and salary schedule for each position in the library.

4.21. My library provides tuition assistance for staff members who are pursuing additional formal education.

4.21.1. Tuition assistance<sup>14</sup>, also known as tuition reimbursement, is a win-win not only for the employee, but also for the employer, as this employee retention tool helps employers build employee loyalty and longevity.

4.21.2. Tuition assistance is a recruiting tool that benefits employers with high-potential employees who are focused on growth and learning. And tuition assistance is a benefit that many potential employees are looking for.

4.21.3. The most widespread form of tuition assistance requires employees to pay for their own tuition and books. Employees are then reimbursed after submitting receipts and evidence of earning a C or higher grade upon completion of the course.

4.21.4. In most cases, employers cap the amount of tuition assistance available for each employee, sometimes as a dollar limit per employee per year.

4.21.5. Some employers require an employee to sign an agreement to pay back the tuition assistance if he or she leaves the organization within a certain period of time. In this type of situation, the employer forgives a percentage of the tuition assistance for every year the employee stays with the organization following the final disbursement of employee assistance funds to the employee. There is generally a written contract stating what the employee is legally required to fulfill on separation from the employer who has provided him or her with tuition assistance.

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<sup>14</sup> In a tuition-assistance program, an employer pays all or part of an employee's cost to attend college or university courses.