



Idaho  
Commission  
*for* Libraries

## **Best Practices Section 6: Services and Programming**

# Checklist

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Library services and programs are planned and delivered in order to achieve the objectives of the library's strategic plan. Services and programming are often developed in response to the community's wishes and so are often referred to as service responses. A few examples of library services include bookmobile service, books by mail, one-on-one computer help. Some examples of library programs include story times for children, book discussion groups for adults, and STEM programs and/or spaces for all ages.

*Best Practices for Public Libraries in Idaho* is a tool developed by the Idaho Commission for Libraries for the public library community to use in planning, staff and trustee development, orientation, and advocacy.

Together with an advisory group of practicing librarians, ICfL has developed a set of suggested Best Practices which are presented in seven content areas:

1. Collection Development and Maintenance
2. Facilities
3. Governance and Board Service
4. Human Resources
5. Marketing and Advocacy
- 6. Services and Programming**
7. Technology

Each of the seven checklists is supported by a toolkit which further defines or supports the Best Practices statements.

Checklist statements are divided into categories designed to assist the participant:

- Core – Statements in this category are fundamental to public library service in Idaho.
- Enhanced – Statements in this category add value to core library services.
- Stretch – Includes nationally trending library practices.

A good way to approach these tools is to work through each checklist, ticking off the boxes for those Best Practices currently maintained by the library. The remaining unchecked Best Practices present opportunities for local development, planning, and education.

The Idaho Commission for Libraries does not require attainment of levels for eligibility in any ICfL programs or services. The Best Practices are intended to be a tool for continuous improvement, not a library certification program. ICfL encourages public libraries to use the Best Practices in conjunction with ICfL's *Best Practices Improvement Plan*.

The Idaho Commission for Libraries is introducing a companion program for *Best Practices for Public Libraries in Idaho*. The *Best Practices Improvement Plan* will provide financial support, through a grant process, to assist libraries in improving identified areas of Best Practice.

## Core Level

- Yes  No  6.1. My library's services and programs are directly connected to the library's mission and its strategic plan.
- Yes  No  6.2. My library's services and programs are consistently evaluated by patrons using simple feedback mechanisms.
- Yes  No  6.3. My library evaluates services and programs to gain information that will improve planning and delivery.
- Yes  No  6.4. My library's hours are determined by community need and include a mix of morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours, the total of which places the library above the [50<sup>th</sup> percentile](#) for hours open per week according to the *Idaho Public Library Statistics*.
- Yes  No  6.5. My library does not charge residents of the library's taxing district for basic library services, such as borrowing materials, interlibrary loan, computer use, and basic library programs.
- Yes  No  6.6. My library has considered or is considering going fine-free, except for lost or damaged items.
- Yes  No  6.7. My library provides reference and reader advisory services to all of its patrons in person and by telephone during open hours of operation.
- Yes  No  6.8. My library provides information and instruction on the use of the library, its materials, and its equipment.
- Yes  No  6.9. My library makes reasonable accommodations in order to provide access to its collections and services to the deaf, the hard of hearing, the blind and visually disabled, and persons with disabilities.
- Yes  No  6.10. My library develops and hosts educational, informational, and cultural programs across all age groups, abilities, and backgrounds which are informed by a strategic plan and designed to meet the diverse needs and interests of the communities it serves at times and locations which best meet patron needs.

## Enhanced Level

- Yes  No  6.11. My library's services and programs take place in the library as well as out in the community.
- Yes  No  6.12. My library brings outreach services to the underserved and unserved in the community.

- Yes  No  6.13. My library has gone fine-free, except for lost or damaged items, to eliminate barriers to access for library patrons.
- Yes  No  6.14. My library's services and programs are developed in collaboration with external partners whenever possible.
- Yes  No  6.15. My library provides reference and reader advisory services through multiple channels of communication, such as telephone, live chat, e-mail, and other innovative mechanisms.

### **Stretch Level**

- Yes  No  6.16. My library's services and programs are designed, deployed, and reviewed in consultation with stakeholder advisory groups.
- Yes  No  6.17. My library provides training and equipment for digitization of community history and individual assets and artifacts.