



Idaho
Commission
for Libraries

Best Practices Section 7: Technology

Toolkit

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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

7.1. My library has Internet connection speeds of at least 4 Mbps (download) at each building. In the context of Internet access, the term “broadband” is used loosely to mean “access that is always on and faster than the traditional dial-up access.” In 2010, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) set a standard of 4 Megabits (Mbps) per second downstream (download speed) and 1 Mbps upstream (upload) as the definition of broadband.

7.1.1. Measurement Lab: <https://www.measurementlab.net/tests/ndt>

7.1.2. SpeedTest.net: <http://www.speedtest.net>

7.2. My library is aware of the federal E-rate Schools and Libraries program and the state broadband reimbursement (EOR) program that, when combined, can fully cover public library Internet service costs. For more information on E-Rate: <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/universal-service-program-schools-and-libraries-e-rate>. For more information on EOR: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/grants-funding/e-rate-broadband/>.

7.3. My library has wireless Internet access available to the public at each building.

7.4. My library has an Internet Safety Policy that has been formally reviewed by the board at an open meeting within the last three years and notice of the availability of the policy has been posted in a conspicuous place in the library for all to observe.

7.4.1. Idaho Code section 33-2741(4) requires that each public library’s policy shall be developed under the direction of the library’s board of trustees, adopted in an open meeting, and shall have an effective date.

7.4.2. The board of trustees is required to review the policy at least once every three years and the policy must reflect the most recent date of review.

7.4.3. Notice of the availability of the policy must be posted in a conspicuous place within the library for all patrons to observe.

7.4.4. The library’s board of trustees may issue any other public notice it considers appropriate to inform the community about the policy.

7.4.5. For more information on the requirements of this law, see <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title33/T33CH27/SECT33-2741/>.

7.5. My library is above the 50th percentile for the number of computers available for public use according to the most current edition of the *Idaho Public Library Statistics*. <https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-statistics/>

- 7.6. My library's computer usage is above the 50th percentile for public libraries in Idaho according to the current edition of the *Idaho Public Library Statistics*. [link to Patrick's spreadsheet]
- 7.7. My library has Internet content filters in place for public computers accessible to minors and for public wireless Internet access. For more information, visit <https://libraries.idaho.gov/broadband/internet-compliance-filtering/>.
- 7.8. My library maintains a web presence that includes useful content for the public. Such content may include, but is not limited to:
- 7.8.1. Basic information, including open hours, physical address, telephone number, and director's name;
 - 7.8.2. Meeting notice and agenda notice of upcoming board meetings (as required by law) and minutes of previous meetings. This is discussed in Idaho Code section 74-204: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/Title74/T74CH2/SECT74-204/>. *The Idaho Open Meeting Law Manual*, published by the Attorney General's office offers checklists for complying with Idaho's Open Meetings Law: <https://www.ag.idaho.gov/content/uploads/2018/04/OpenMeeting.pdf>.
 - 7.8.3. A link to the library's online catalog (if the library has one); and
 - 7.8.4. Links to LiLI and any other online resources provided by the library. Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) is a group of projects and services providing networked library services to the residents of Idaho. The LiLI Databases provide easy online access to the full text of thousands of magazines, professional journals, reference materials, and newspapers. Also included are databases for personal and professional development including auto repair, reader advisory, and health information. These tools are brought to you by the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) and made possible with funding from the State of Idaho. Additional support comes from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). You can learn more about LiLI at <https://lili.org/>.
- 7.9. My library offers public access to a functioning printer, scanner, and photocopier.
- 7.10. My library has a technology plan that includes a computer replacement and rotation schedule and that plan is reviewed annually in conjunction with budget development. See TechSoup for a course on technology planning: <https://techsoup.course.tc/catalog>
- 7.11. My library provides one-on-one technology assistance to the public.
- 7.11.1. LearningExpress Library, one of the LiLI Databases, is a comprehensive collection of test preparation tools, skill-building materials, and career resources. These tools are just the thing for preparing for college, tutoring, software tutorials, and workforce development.

7.11.2. You can access LearningExpress Library at

<https://lili.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://www.learningexpresslibrary3.com/?AuthToken=FE9457E4-F387-4289-B9D7-521FA25C63FF>.

Enhanced Level

7.12. My library has Internet connection speeds of at least 25 Mbps (download) and 3 Mbps (upload) at each building. These are the FCC's current definitions of minimum speeds to qualify as broadband.

7.13. My library participates in the federal E-rate Schools and Libraries program and the state broadband reimbursement (EOR) program to cover my library's Internet service costs.

7.14. My library makes wireless Internet access available to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at each building. Wireless access 24/7 means that students and working people can still access the Internet when convenient, even when the library's doors are closed.

7.15. My library maintains a mobile-friendly web presence, including useful content for the public. Some examples:

7.15.1. Names of key staff members and library board members;

7.15.2. A way to contact library staff to obtain information or reference assistance, in addition to telephone and in person;

7.15.3. A schedule of programs and events at the library;

7.15.4. Links to copies of the library's policies and the board's bylaws, meeting postings, and meeting minutes. In order to make these public documents easily accessible to all, public and library staff, they may be placed on the library's website. Placing them on Facebook is optional, as not everyone makes use of social media;

7.15.5. Posting documents in accessible format. A file format is inaccessible when it does not provide textual information that can be used by assistive technology devices of software. A PDF is only accessible if it is created as a "tagged" PDF, and scanned PDF pages should use optical character recognition (OCR) so that text on the page is read as text and not an image¹. Additional information on creating accessible documents are available at <https://www.washington.edu/accessibility/documents/>.

7.16. My library offers access to a color printer and color photocopier.

7.17. My library provides technology assistance in a group setting.

¹ "PDF Issues & Recommendations." *Accessibility at Penn State*, 26 August 2019: <https://accessibility.psu.edu/pdf/pdfissues/>.

- 7.18. My library has completed the Broadband Toolkit Improvement Program (BTIP) to understand and document the library's current broadband and network information, resulting in a broadband improvement plan with short- and long-term action items to improve broadband and IT performance. For more information, see <https://libraries.idaho.gov/broadband/btip/>
- 7.19. My library annually evaluates and updates major technology as budget allows.
- 7.19.1. TechSoup.org (<http://www.techsoup.org>) is a website serving nonprofits that provides training webinars, community forums, and other resources about the use of technology in nonprofit organizations and public libraries. TechSoup partners with Microsoft to distribute Microsoft's product donations globally and helps to connect nonprofits and libraries to corporate donors such as Adobe, Symantec, Cisco, and Intuit.
- 7.19.2. TechSoup.org also verifies the nonprofit status of organizations seeking donations and matches them to the donated technology products they need at significantly reduced cost.
- 7.20. My library has adopted sustainable practices related to reusing and recycling technology-related equipment and products.

Stretch Level

- 7.21. My library has Internet connection speeds of at least 100 Mbps (download) if serving a population of fewer than 50,000 people or at least 1 Gbps (download) if serving a population of 50,000 people or greater at each building. This is the bandwidth target set by the FCC's E-rate Modernization Order and recommended by the American Library Association.
- 7.21.1. <https://www.fcc.gov/general/summary-e-rate-modernization-order>
- 7.21.2. http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/ALA%202015%20priorities_USAC%203_26_15.pdf
- 7.22. My library utilizes Category 2 federal E-rate program funding to receive discounts on network hardware, such as:
- 7.22.1. Firewalls
- 7.22.2. Switches
- 7.22.3. Network cabling
- 7.22.4. Wireless access points) and/or network maintenance services.

- 7.23. My library's web presence utilizes responsive web design and includes useful content for the public, including (in addition to the above):
- 7.23.1. A link to the library's digital materials, such as eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, digital magazines, streaming video;
 - 7.23.2. A link to the library's actively maintained social media presences, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest; and
 - 7.23.3. Contact information for the library's trustees, director, and key staff members.
- 7.24. My library offers mobile hotspots for patrons to check out.
- 7.24.1. A mobile hotspot (or Mi-Fi) is a cellular modem and Wi-Fi router integrated in a single device.
 - 7.24.2. Libraries may circulate these devices so that patrons who do not have Internet access at home may make use of this library resource without being in the library building.
- 7.25. My library examines and evaluates emerging technologies and selects those that are suitable for the community it serves.
- 7.25.1. *Computers in Libraries* is a monthly magazine that provides complete coverage of the news and issues in the rapidly evolving field of library information technology. Focusing on the practical application of technology in community, school, academic, and special libraries, *CIL* includes discussions of the impact of emerging computer technologies on library systems and services, and on the library community itself. For more information, visit <http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/default.shtml>.
 - 7.25.2. Information Today, publisher of several Internet and technology magazines, newsletters, books, directories, and online products geared toward the library and information and knowledge management community, also stages its annual Computers in Libraries Conference, billed as the world's leading library technology and innovation conference. This is a unique opportunity for library and information professionals from all over the world to gather and discuss the myriad ways technology continues to impact libraries and the people who use them. This is an opportunity to join peers to learn, share, and celebrate the technologies and people shaping the future of libraries. For more information, visit <http://computersinlibraries.infotoday.com/2020/Default.aspx>.
 - 7.25.3. *The SPLAT Curiosity Report* is a publication of ICfL's Special Projects Library Action Team (SPLAT), designed to help libraries keep up with emerging technologies. For more information, visit <http://splat.lili.org/>.

- 7.25.4. *Read for Later* is a publication compiled by Miguel Figueroa of ALA's Center for the Future of Libraries. This weekly wrap-up of news and articles is designed to help libraries think about the future of our collections, spaces, services, partners, and roles in the community. To subscribe to *Read for Later*, or view the letter's archives, visit <https://tinyletter.com/libraryofthefuture>.
- 7.25.5. The Trends section of ALA's flagship publication, *American Libraries*, includes news on technology in libraries. Take a look at <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/category/trends/>.
- 7.25.6. CNET is a source for learning about what's new in tech, culture, and science, why it matters, how it works, and what you need. To learn more, visit <https://www.cnet.com/>.
- 7.25.7. The American Library Association (ALA) offers technology-related listservs at <https://lists.ala.org/sympa/lists/subject/tech>.
- 7.25.8. And don't forget that ICfL staff can help you with emerging technologies for libraries:
- 7.25.8.1. Dylan Baker, Broadband Consultant: Dylan.Baker@libraries.idaho.gov or 208-639-4167
- 7.25.8.2. Deana Brown, Emerging Trends Consultant: Deana.Brown@libraries.idaho.gov or 208-639-4156