

# Wisconsin Librarian Certification overview

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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
**Public Instruction**  
Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent


# Why certify public library directors?

- “Wisconsin’s public librarian certification law reflects a continuing interest in ensuring that qualified personnel direct Wisconsin’s public libraries and regional public library systems.”
- It’s required by state statute  
[Wis. Stat. § 43.09\(1\)](#)  
[PI 6.03](#)



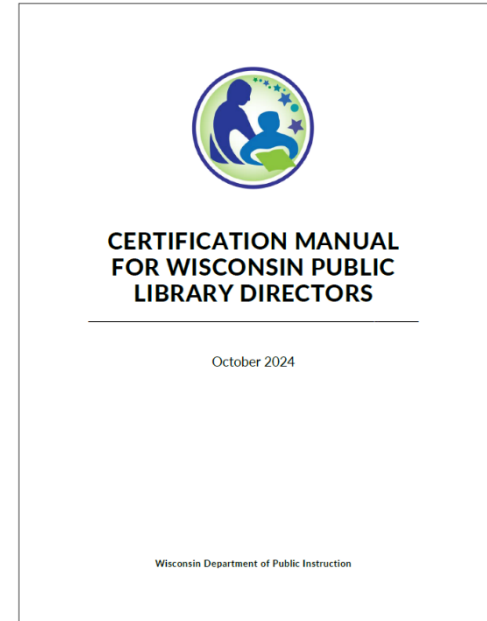
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# Today's overview

- **New Certification Manual** released November 2024
  - **Who needs to be certified?**
  - **When should I apply?**
  - **Certification grade and status**
  - **Application & Renewal**
  - **Continuing Education**
  - **Non-compliance**
  - **Questions?**
- 

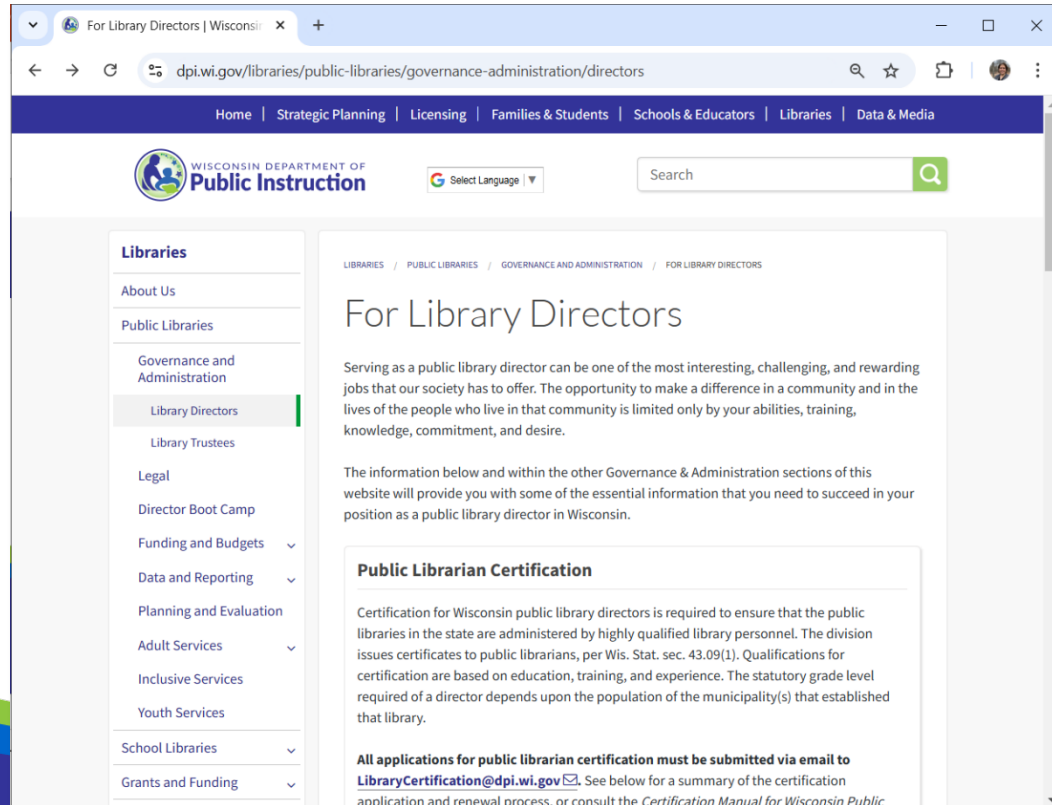
# Certification Manual for WI Public Library Directors

- **New edition released November 2024**
- **No major changes to certification requirements or procedures**
- **Changes to continuing education requirements:**
  - CE may be credited in fractions of an hour.
  - Beginning 1/1/2025, Category C continuing education activities must be pre-approved.



# Resources on DPI Website

- [dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors)
- PDF copy of certification manual
- Overview of application process & application instructions
- Forms and reference documents



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the DPI website page for Library Directors. The browser address bar shows the URL [dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors). The website header includes the DPI logo, the text "WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF Public Instruction", a language selection dropdown, and a search bar. The navigation menu includes Home, Strategic Planning, Licensing, Families & Students, Schools & Educators, Libraries, and Data & Media. The main content area is titled "For Library Directors" and includes a sub-header "LIBRARIES / PUBLIC LIBRARIES / GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION / FOR LIBRARY DIRECTORS". The page content describes the role of a public library director and provides information about public librarian certification. A sidebar on the left lists various library-related topics, with "Library Directors" highlighted.

**Libraries**

- About Us
- Public Libraries
  - Governance and Administration
    - Library Directors**
    - Library Trustees
  - Legal
  - Director Boot Camp
  - Funding and Budgets
  - Data and Reporting
  - Planning and Evaluation
  - Adult Services
  - Inclusive Services
  - Youth Services
- School Libraries
- Grants and Funding

**For Library Directors**

Serving as a public library director can be one of the most interesting, challenging, and rewarding jobs that our society has to offer. The opportunity to make a difference in a community and in the lives of the people who live in that community is limited only by your abilities, training, knowledge, commitment, and desire.

The information below and within the other Governance & Administration sections of this website will provide you with some of the essential information that you need to succeed in your position as a public library director in Wisconsin.

**Public Librarian Certification**

Certification for Wisconsin public library directors is required to ensure that the public libraries in the state are administered by highly qualified library personnel. The division issues certificates to public librarians, per Wis. Stat. sec. 43.09(1). Qualifications for certification are based on education, training, and experience. The statutory grade level required of a director depends upon the population of the municipality(s) that established that library.

**All applications for public librarian certification must be submitted via email to [LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov).** See below for a summary of the certification application and renewal process, or consult the *Certification Manual for Wisconsin Public*

# Who must be certified?

- **Directors of public libraries**
- **Directors of public library systems**
- **Voluntary certification**



Photo by [Angelina Yan](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# When should I apply?

- **Regular certification:** Apply immediately, within one month of your date of hire.
- **Temporary certification:** Apply within three months of your date of hire ([PI 6.03\(6\)](#))
- **Certificate renewal:** Apply during the month in which your certificate expires.
- **To “upgrade” your certificate:** Choose to apply when you qualify or wait until your current certificate expires.



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# What should I apply for?

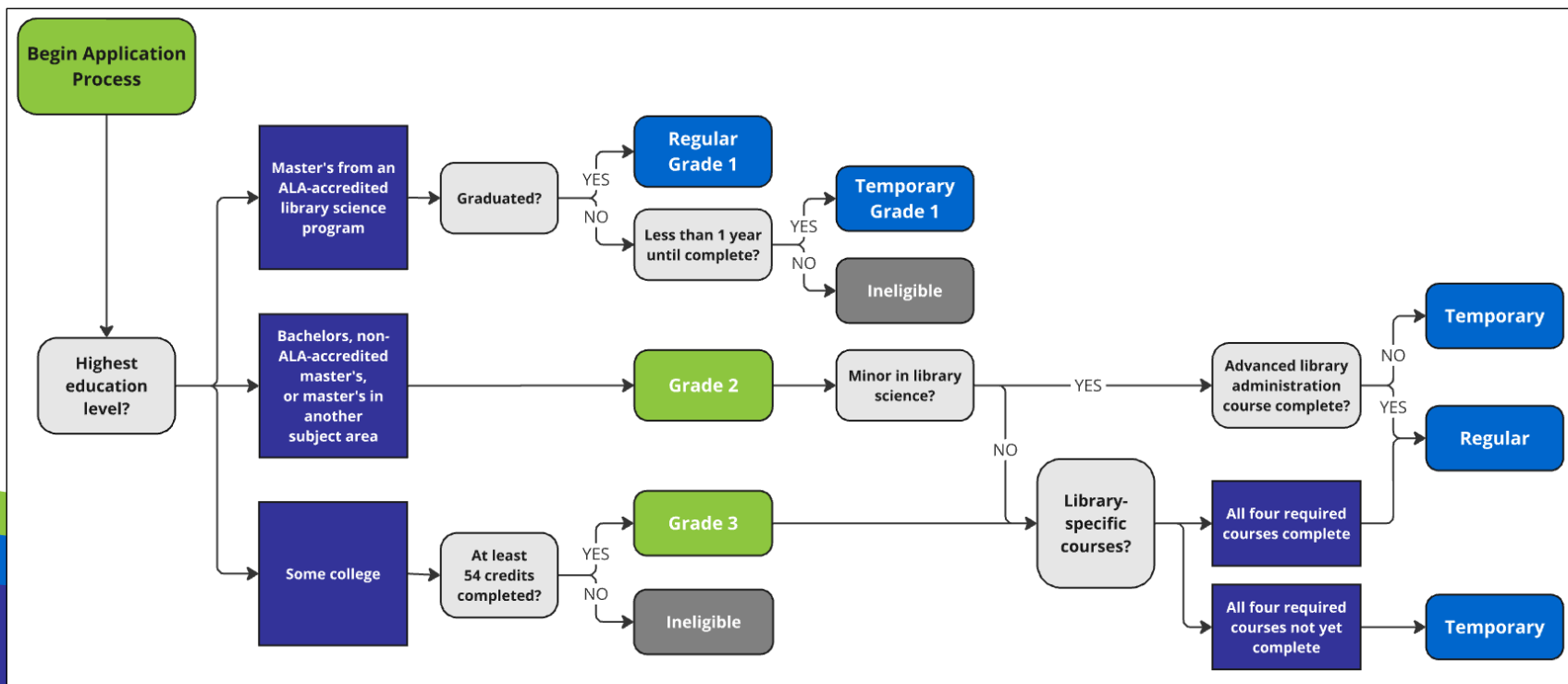
## • Grade and Status

- **Grade:** Determined by education level. Requirement is dependent on your community size.
  - **Grade I:** master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited school
  - **Grade II:** bachelor's degree (or higher) + 4 library courses  
or bachelor's degree with a library science minor + Advanced Admin course
  - **Grade III:** 54 college credits, at least half in liberal arts & sciences + 4 library courses
- **Status:** Can be Regular, Temporary, Provisional, or Lapsed
  - You must be at least temporarily certified at the appropriate grade when hired. Temporary certification allows time to complete your library-specific education.



# What am I eligible to apply for?

[dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](http://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors) - Click **Certification forms and documents**



## Summary of Wisconsin Public Librarian Certification Requirements

	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III
Municipal Population	6,000 or more	3,000 to 5,999	Fewer than 3,000
General education requirement for initial certification	Bachelor's degree in any field of study	Bachelor's degree in any field of study	A minimum of 54 semester credits at a college or university, with at least 27 credits in the liberal arts.
Library-specific education requirements	Master's degree in library and information studies from an ALA-accredited program	12 semester credits of coursework or the equivalent, approved by the division, in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic public library administration</li> <li>• Advanced public library administration</li> <li>• Organization &amp; management of collections</li> <li>• Public and community services</li> </ul>	12 semester credits of coursework or the equivalent, approved by the division, in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic public library administration</li> <li>• Advanced public library administration</li> <li>• Organization &amp; management of collections</li> <li>• Public and community services</li> </ul>
Required time frame (Temporary status)	ALA-accredited master's degree in library science must be completed within one year. Nonrenewable	All four library courses must be completed within four years. A basic public library administration course must be completed within the first year, and a minimum of one course must be taken each subsequent year. May be renewed up to 3 times.	All four library courses must be completed within four years. A basic public library administration course must be completed within the first year, and a minimum of one course must be taken each subsequent year. May be renewed up to 3 times.
Special consideration for minor in library science	n/a	If an applicant possesses a minor in library science, only one course in advanced public library administration is required. It must be completed within the first year, making temporary status for this applicant nonrenewable.	n/a
Continuing education (CE) requirements for renewal with regular status	Once regular certification status is achieved, renewal requirements are the same, regardless of the grade level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total 100 contact hours of CE must be completed during the five-year period prior to recertification, at least 10 hours of which must be technology related.</li> <li>• A minimum of 70 of these CE contact hours must be from Categories A and B.</li> <li>• A maximum of 30 hours may be from Category C, with no more than 10 hours per activity. Category C activities must be pre-approved by the library system CE validator.</li> <li>• Certificants should submit CE activity reports and summations to the public library system's CE validator annually for validation. Contact your library system's CE validator for more information.</li> </ul>		


[dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors)

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# Apply for your first Librarian Certificate

## Include with your application:

- Application form (PI-2450)
- Proof of basic education requirements – transcript or diploma
- Proof of library-specific education completed, if any
- Schedule for completion of four required library courses, if applying for temporary Grade II or Grade III certification



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
**PUBLIC LIBRARIAN CERTIFICATION APPLICATION**  
PI-2450 (Rev. 01-23)  
Required by s. 43.09(1) Wis. Stats. and PI 6.03(2) Wis. Admin. Code.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete this form, and email, along with any necessary attachments, to:  
[LibrarianCertification@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibrarianCertification@dpi.wi.gov)

For information about certification for Wisconsin Public Library Directors, <https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors>

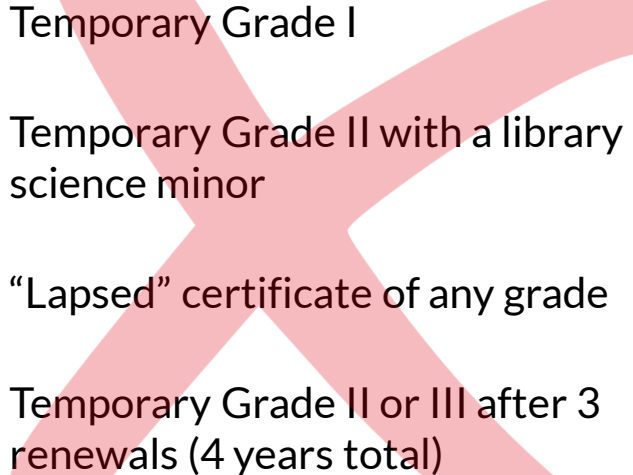
I. GENERAL			
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Other Last Name(s) Previously Used
Work Email Address	Personal Email Address	Phone Area/No.	
Current Position <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify:	Date Hired <small>If New Director</small> Mo./Day/Yr.	Library Where Currently Employed  Public Library System	
II. TYPE OF CERTIFICATION REQUESTED			
Grade Level Requested Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> II <input type="checkbox"/> III	Type of Certification Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> First Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Provisional <input type="checkbox"/> First Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Lapsed		Expiration Date of Current Certification <small>Renewal or Provisional, Mo./Yr.</small>
III. ENCLOSURES			
<small>Official documentation must be submitted for all first certification.</small>			
First Regular Certification		First Temporary Certification	
<b>General Education Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> Master's (or higher degree) in library science <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with a minor in library science * <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree ** <input type="checkbox"/> At least 54 semester credits ** <small>* Requires Advanced Public Library Administration ** Requires coursework in four designated subject areas</small>	<b>Library Course Requirements</b> Except for applicants with master's degree in library science <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of required library courses	<b>General Education Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one and submit with form <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's (or higher degree) <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with a minor in library science <input type="checkbox"/> At least 54 semester credits	<b>Library Course Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one and submit with form <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of required library courses already completed <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule for completion of certification course requirements Required
<b>Renewal of Regular Certification</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Validated Annual Summations of Continuing Education Activities (Form PI-2454)		<b>Renewal of Temporary Certification</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of library courses completed since last certification	
IV. SIGNATURE			
I CERTIFY that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false statements may result in denial or revocation of the certificate.			
Applicant Signature			Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr.
V. FOR DPI USE			
DLT Recommendation for Approval		Certification	Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr.
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> First	➤
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisional		
		Signature of DLT Certification Coordinator	Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr.

# Renew your temporary certificate

## To renew Grade II or Grade III, provide:

- Application form (PI-2450)
- Proof of completion of at least one required library course

## Cannot be renewed:

- Temporary Grade I
  - Temporary Grade II with a library science minor
  - “Lapsed” certificate of any grade
  - Temporary Grade II or III after 3 renewals (4 years total)
- 

# Regular certification: Continuing Ed requirements

All regular and provisional certificate holders must complete 100 hours of continuing education (CE) activities, including 10 hours of technology-related activities, during their 5-year certification period.

- For each activity, fill out a CE activity report ([PI-2453](#))
- If you would like to complete a Category C activity, contact your system CE validator for pre-approval first. ([Optional Category C proposal form](#))
- Each year, fill out a CE summation form ([PI-2454](#)). Submit this to your library system CE validator along with your completed activity reports for the year.
- Your CE validator will return a signed copy of your summation form. **Retain these signed forms** to submit with your renewal application.

## Summary of Required CE Contact Hours for Wisconsin Public Librarian Certification Renewal

Category	Activity Type	Measure	Contact Hours (typical)	Examples of eligible activities	Examples of ineligible activities
<b>A*</b>	For-credit courses from an institution of formal education <sup>†</sup>			Courses from a university or technical college for which grades are awarded	Incomplete courses or failing grades  General academic courses that do not have a relationship to present position or career advancement
	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>	Noncredit continuing education activities <sup>†</sup>	1.4 CEU	14	CE courses from the iSchool at University of Wisconsin-Madison	Incomplete courses  Trainings that do not have a relationship to present position or career advancement  Videos or trainings that have no clear learning objectives  Audit of general academic courses that do not have a relationship to present position or career advancement
	Workshops, seminars, institutes, lectures, technology training	60 minutes	1	Trainings and education activities with planned learning objectives such as those offered by library systems, DPI, CE consortia, Infosec cybersecurity trainings, and relevant non-library trainings	
	State or national conferences	1 day ½ day	6 3	Any conferences relevant to present position or career advancement	
	Semester course audit	1 credit equivalent	15	Audit of a course from an institution of higher education	
	Trimester course audit	1 credit equivalent	14		
	Quarter course audit	1 credit equivalent	10		
<b>C**</b>	Self-Directed continuing education activities  <i>A Self-Directed CE Proposal MUST be preapproved by the system CE validator prior to the start of a category C activity</i>	60 minutes	1	Webinars without identified learning objectives and/or creators that are not reachable, such as YouTube content and other static videos  Internships for which no academic credit is awarded  Professional association or statewide activities of a significant nature	Training or activities involving regular library operations or procedures  Program planning meetings  Regular staff meetings, including a director's orientation of new library staff  Professional association activities of a routine nature

[dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors)

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\* At least 70 contact hours must be earned in categories A and B (combined) for recertification. There is no maximum number of contact hours for either category.

\*\* No more than 30 contact hours, and no more than 10 per activity, from category C may be applied toward recertification.

<sup>†</sup> Requires proof of completion, such as a transcript or certificate of completion

# Renew your regular certificate

## Include with your application:

- Application form (PI-2450)
- Signed summation forms (PI-2454) demonstrating at least 100 hours of CE activities, including 10 hours of technology-related training

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
**PUBLIC LIBRARIAN CERTIFICATION APPLICATION**  
PI-2450 (Rev. 01-23)  
Required by s. 43.09(1) Wis. Stats. and PI 6.03(2) Wis. Admin. Code.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete this form, and email, along with any necessary attachments, to: [LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov)

For information about certification for Wisconsin Public Library Directors, <https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors>

I. GENERAL			
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Other Last Name(s) Previously Used
Work Email Address		Personal Email Address	Phone Area/No.
Current Position <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify:	Date Hired If New Director Mo./Day/Yr.	Library Where Currently Employed  Public Library System	
II. TYPE OF CERTIFICATION REQUESTED			
Grade Level Requested Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> II <input type="checkbox"/> III	Type of Certification Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> First Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Provisional <input type="checkbox"/> First Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Lapsed		Expiration Date of Current Certification Renewal or Provisional, Mo./Yr.
III. ENCLOSURES			
Official documentation must be submitted for all first certification.			
First Regular Certification		First Temporary Certification	
<b>General Education Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one <input type="checkbox"/> Master's (or higher degree) in library science <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with a minor in library science * <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree ** <input type="checkbox"/> At least 54 semester credits **	<b>Library Course Requirements</b> Except for applicants with master's degree in library science <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of required library courses	<b>General Education Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one and submit with form <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's (or higher degree) <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with a minor in library science <input type="checkbox"/> At least 54 semester credits	<b>Library Course Requirements</b> Official documentation Choose one and submit with form <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of required library courses already completed <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule for completion of certification course requirements Required
* Requires Advanced Public Library Administration ** Requires coursework in four designated subject areas			
<b>Renewal of Regular Certification</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Validated Annual Summations of Continuing Education Activities (Form PI-2454)		<b>Renewal of Temporary Certification</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Official documentation of library courses completed since last certification	
IV. SIGNATURE			
I CERTIFY that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false statements may result in denial or revocation of the certificate.			Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr.
Applicant Signature			
V. FOR DPI USE			
DLT Recommendation for Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Provisional		Certification To Expire on the Last Day of Mo./Yr. <input type="checkbox"/> First <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	Signature of DLT Certification Coordinator Date Signed Mo./Day/Yr.

# Non-compliance

- **Provisional certification:** If a change in population or the formation of a joint library means that you no longer hold the correct grade level, you will be granted provisional certification at the needed level.
- **Hiring transitions:** DPI will show consideration for libraries during a recruitment process. Your library must show progress towards returning to compliance.
- **Other situations:** Continued non-compliance can result in loss of state and federal grant opportunities, reduction in system services, or expulsion from library system.

*Please communicate with your library system and with DPI if you suspect your library will fall into non-compliance!*



# Thank you!

## For Library Directors

[dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors](https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries/governance-administration/directors)

Includes the 2024 Certification Manual for Library Directors; forms for certification application; forms for CE reporting; and more instructions on how to apply for certification.

**Send certification applications OR questions to:**  
[LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:LibraryCertification@dpi.wi.gov)

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### With thanks to

Jeni Schomber, Public Library Consultant,  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction,  
for her help today!

**Questions?**

