



# STATE GRANT REQUIREMENTS POLICY

The Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS), a unit of the Board of Regents, University System of Georgia, is responsible for the administration and distribution of state grant funds to public libraries in Georgia, as set forth in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-3-39. State laws governing the operation of public libraries in Georgia are found in O.C.G.A. 20-5-40 – 20.5.59. To receive any state, federal or private library grant funds administered by GPLS and/or the benefits of any state-administered program or service, a Library System shall meet all the following Requirements.

## 1. Library Board

### 1.1 General Requirements

The Library System Governing Board of Trustees shall:

- Provide a plan for basic library services and their distribution to the library system's entire Service Area, including services beyond the physical library facilities.
- Meet a minimum of four times each year and maintain the official minutes of all meetings at the Headquarters Library.
- Review the system's Constitution and Bylaws at least once every 5 years
- Provide a plan for distribution of services to be provided to and/or for each county for each of the State Grants.
- Submit an Annual Report and Application for State Aid to GPLS annually.

### 1.2 Required Documents

The Library System Governing Board maintains these documents and updates them at least every 5 years. A current copy is on file at Georgia Public Library Service of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

1. Library System Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Collection Development Policy – A written statement for developing and maintaining the library's collection of Materials for all libraries within the Library System.
3. Facilities Use Policy – A policy on the use of the library that, as appropriate, considers any local government policies on the use of public library meeting facilities.
4. Fiduciary Bond/Proof of Insurance- All required fiduciary bonds and current proof of the bond(s) are submitted with the Annual Report.
5. Gift Policy – A policy on the administration of gifts and donations of cash, materials, equipment, furniture, art and real estate.
6. Internet Use Policy – Acceptable Internet use as defined by O.C.G.A. 20.5.5
7. Materials Reconsideration Policy -- A policy to provide a process for formal requests for reconsideration of a library resource.
8. Personnel Policy – A comprehensive policy for the personnel of the Library System detailing employment relations.
9. Technology Plan – A comprehensive plan for all facilities within a Library System showing current and planned deployment of technology and telecommunications.

## 2. State Grants

### 2.1 General Requirements

- Library System Governing Boards of Trustees have the sole authority to apply for and receive any Grants administered by GPLS.
- Library Systems shall use State Grants only for stated purposes.
- All grant expenditures must follow state procurement guidelines (e.g. personal gifts, alcoholic products, tobacco products, etc.) and State Travel Guidelines. Specific questions should be addressed to GPLS.
- GPLS reserves the right to make additional grant awards as deemed necessary for the provision of library service in Georgia.

### 2.2 State-Reimbursed Salary Grants

- Are awarded each year by GPLS to qualifying Library Systems for the reimbursement of salaries and benefits of local library employees. Grants are awarded on a formula basis.
- Library systems established on or after July 1, 2010, providing local funding support as described above, shall be allocated a salary grant for one position per county. Salary grants for second and subsequent positions may be allocated when service area population achieves increments of 75,000.
- When there is a Library Director vacancy, the recruitment of a qualified director shall begin within 30 days of the vacancy.
- At least 50% of the state-reimbursed positions must be filled with a professional librarian. The remaining positions may be filled by other personnel who support the operation of the regional offices such as a Business Manager, IT Administrator, HR Manager, etc. Specific questions about these positions should be addressed to GPLS.
- In the event of a Library Director vacancy, the remainder of the director's salary may be used to pay the salary for an Interim Director and/or the fee for a library consultant to the Board of Trustees.
- In instances where existing library systems or parts of existing library systems (a single county joining a multi-county; single county systems joining together; multi-county library systems joining together or a county from one multi-county system joining another multi-county system) join together to form a new library system, positions shall be allocated according to the currently-approved formula.
- Increases in the base allocation for state-reimbursed salary grants will be determined annually, depending on available funding

### 2.3 Materials Grants

- The Materials Grant shall be used for the purchase of Library Materials and the cataloging and processing of these materials in accordance with the Collection Development Policy. Materials Grants will be determined annually depending on available funding.
- The Materials Grant shall not be used for personnel costs.

### 2.4 System Services Grants

- Are awarded each year by GPLS to each qualifying Library System to help support the provision of Library System services. Grants are awarded on a formula basis.
- Shall be used for the general operation of library services
- Shall not be used for land acquisition or construction
- Shall not be used for the supplement of state-reimbursed salary grants

## 3. Financial Management

### 3.1 Budget

The Library System Governing Board of Trustees shall:

- Adopt and maintain an annual balanced budget that includes all local, state, federal and private funds.
- A budget showing the specific use of State Grants for the Library System shall also be submitted.
- A Budget shall be in place prior to the beginning of each Fiscal Year and be amended as needed throughout the Fiscal Year.

### 3.2 Audit/Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP)

- The Library System's financial statements shall be subject to an annual audit, when required by a granting authority, or an attestation engagement for Agreed Upon Procedures conducted by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) currently licensed to practice in the State of Georgia.
- An Agreed-Upon Procedures engagement performed by the BOR/GPLs Internal Auditors will meet the requirement for an attestation engagement.
- The report shall be directed to the Director and Library System Governing Board of Trustees.
- The Director shall provide a copy of the report to each funding agency upon request.
- If deemed necessary by GPLS, a corrective action plan must be filed and implemented for any findings or exceptions noted in the report.

### 3.3 Financial Records and Reporting

- All revenue from all sources that comes to the library system or a member library is public funds and shall be reported in the Annual Report and annual Application for State Aid and shall be subject to annual audit.
- Financial records shall be maintained in accordance with the Georgia Public Library Standard Chart of Accounts and in compliance with all GAAP regulations.
- The calculation of required Local Governmental Support includes all auditable funds provided by Local Governmental Authorities, in cash and on-behalf.
- All Local Governmental Support shall be reported in the Annual Report and annual Application for State Aid.

### 3.4 Local Funding

- Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Requirement: Total local governmental annual operating support for each library system shall be equal to or greater than that of the preceding fiscal year. Failure to sustain this maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement may result in the forfeiture of state grants and state-funded benefits to the library system, including but not limited to PINES and GALILEO. Special funds or appropriations (eg. SPLOST, Impact Fees) shall not be calculated as part of MOE. Libraries may apply for a one-year MOE waiver if all departments in a local government are cut by an equal percentage, resulting in the reduction of total local governmental support for the library system.
- All new library systems established after July 1, 2010, shall have local committed governmental operating funding (direct appropriation, in-kind or on-behalf) totaling a minimum of \$750,000 annually.

- Library System Governing Boards of Trustees may choose to charge a non-resident fee for a library card to those who reside outside the Library System's Service Area. This fee shall entitle non-residents to all Basic Library Services. PINES libraries will follow PINES policies addressing non-resident fees.
- Library System Governing Boards of Trustees may choose to recover unique, identifiable costs from customers for specific transactions that exceed basic library services, such as photocopying and faxing. They may also charge fees or deposits for the use of library facilities or property in accordance with the Facilities Use Policy.

## 4. Definitions

### A

Affiliate Library- A Member Library that belongs to a less centralized Library System. An Affiliate Library usually has one or more of the following criteria:

- Staff members are employed by local government.
- Policies may be different from the Library System's policies.
- May be a department of local government.
- Financial business may be handled by local government.

Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) – An AUP engagement uses procedures similar to an audit, but on a limited scale. It can be used to identify specific problems that require immediate action. When performing an AUP engagement, the CPA makes no formal opinion; he or she simply acts as a fact finder. The report lists the procedures performed and the CPA's findings. It's the user's responsibility to draw conclusions based on those findings.

Allied Professional – Employees such as Business Manager, Payroll Clerk, Information Technology, etc.

Annual Operating Funds – Funding provided to the Library System for the general operation of a Library System or appropriated and expended for Library System services by a local governmental agency.

- Funding by way of a direct appropriation (cash)
- Payment of expenses for library services by a local government agency (On-behalf)
- Auditable expenditures for library services included in a local government agency's line items that include expenses other than those exclusively for library services. (On-behalf)

Annual Report - A report filed each year by the Library System with Georgia Public Library Service in accordance with state law to provide statistics which reflect fiscal and library services activity for the prior fiscal year as well as directory information for the Library System.

Application for State Aid - A document filed each fiscal year by the Library System with Georgia Public Library Service requesting state aid for the Library System and agreeing to follow certain regulations and requirements in order to qualify for that state aid.

Appropriated or Levied Tax Funds – Governmental funds from a local taxing authority that have been budgeted for Library System operations by the legal body (council, commission, or board of education).

Audit – An annual review of the Library System's fund level financial statements prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for government agencies and submitted to GPLS. Documentation supporting those financial statements will be completed in accordance with either auditing or attestation standards promulgated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), as deemed appropriate by the Library System's Governing Board of Trustees or, where appropriate, Agreed-Upon Procedures.

## B

Basic Library Service-the minimum services that must be provided free to the community at large by a Library System receiving state funding. They include:

- Organized collection of library materials
- Library System-sponsored programs
- Assistance in the use of library resources from qualified staff for general reference and information purposes
- Access to Internet services

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia: (BOR) – The state agency within which the Georgia Public Library Service is administratively located.

Bond, Fiduciary - See Fiduciary Bond

Branch Library – A Member Library that belongs to a more centralized Library System. A Branch Library usually has one or more of the following criteria:

- Staff members are employed by the Library System.
- Adheres to the Library System's Policies.
- Is not a department of local government.
- Financial business is usually handled by the Library System.

## C

Central Library or Headquarters Library – The single library or a library which houses the operational center of a multiple-facility library or a separate facility that is the administrative office and/or operational center of a multiple facility Library System.

Circulation – The checking out and renewing of Library Materials or equipment to a customer for use outside of the facility

## F

Federal Grants – Grants awarded to Library System Governing Boards of Trustees by GPLS from funds received through LSTA from the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services and other Federal grants.

Fiduciary Bond/Insurance -A fiduciary bond is a legal instrument that serves as insurance in case a fiduciary fails to perform honestly or competently. The fiduciary is the Library Board, Library Director, and/or Library Staff members who hold a legal and ethical relationship of trust with their community.

Financial Statements – The Library System's annual fund level financial statements, prepared in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for governmental agencies, filed with GPLS.

Fiscal Year – The fiscal year for which the state government operates its budget. (July 1 through June 30)

## G

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) – Refers to a common set of accounting principles, standards, and procedures issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Library Systems must follow GAAP when their accountants compile their financial statements.

Georgia State Board for the Certification of Librarians – The licensing board of the Office of the Secretary of State for Professional Librarians.

Grants, Other – Grants that are administered by GPLS with the funding source being private or public funding, e.g. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities.

Grants, State see State Grants

Guidelines - Documents that provide recommendations and advice regarding the implementation of Policies.

## H

Headquarters Library see Central or Headquarters Library

## I

In-Kind see On-Behalf

Internet Acceptable Use Policy – A Library System Board policy that details the acceptable use for Internet computers, by whom and any other parameters deemed necessary, as defined by O.C.G.A. 20.5.5.

## L

Librarian see Professional Librarian

Library Materials see Materials, Library

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) – The federal grant program for library services that is provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, typically administered by GPLS.

Library System – A single library or a group of libraries from one or more counties that have been established by the governing authorities of any county or municipality by resolution or act, by approval of the voters or by contractual agreement among governing authorities to provide public library services to the constituents in the jurisdictions of the governing authorities.

Library System Director – The individual hired by the Library System Board of Trustees to administer the total library program as defined in OCGA § 20-5-45.

Library System Governing Board of Trustees – The Board that has governing authority for a county or multi-county Library System. (OCGA 20.5.41, 20.5.43, 20.5.47)

Local Governmental Authority – The governing body of any county, municipality or board of education.

## M

Maintenance of Effort – The requirement that local governmental annual operating support for library systems shall be equal to or greater than that of the preceding fiscal year to qualify for state aid.

Materials, Library – resources in a variety of formats for use by the general public or by the Library System staff.

Member Library – Any full-service library that participates in a Library System. Member libraries do not include administrative office buildings, library service outlets, book deposits, bookmobiles, separate meeting/classroom buildings, processing centers or warehouses. Member libraries may be referred to as Affiliates or Branches. Affiliates and Branches are held to the same standards but are governed differently.

## O

On-Behalf – Auditable funds (to which an object of expenditure can be assigned) spent by a local government in support of public library services, but not given in cash to the Library System.

Operating Funds see Annual Operating Funds

## P

Policy - Policies are **board-approved**, and they often satisfy legal requirements. They provide official documentation of a rule or plan of action mandated by the library's governing board. Policies are often supplemented with guidance documents such as procedures or guidelines.

Procedures - Step-by-step instructions that describe how to complete a task or do a job.

Professional Librarian – A person who holds a minimum of a Librarian's Professional Certificate grade 5B or higher from the Georgia State Board for the Certification of Librarians.

Public Information Network for Electronic Services (PINES) – The shared automation system sponsored by GPLS and used in Library Systems on a voluntary contractual basis.

## S

Special Funds – Funding that may be temporary and/or conditional including but not limited to grants and matching funds, SPLOST and impact fees.

State Grants – Grants awarded by GPLS to Library System Boards of Trustees from state funds appropriated through the Georgia General Assembly.

*Revised April 30, 2021 by the State Grant Requirements Task Force, a committee of RPLAC  
(Regents Public Library Advisory Committee)*

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