

REVISED STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES OF SERVICE

for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

2005

ASSOCIATION OF SPECIALIZED AND COOPERATIVE LIBRARY AGENCIES
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
CHICAGO, 2005

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REVISED STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES OF SERVICE

for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

2005

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Foreword

History

The Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LC/NLS) cooperative network includes fifty-seven regional libraries, seventy-seven subregional libraries, four separate machine-lending agencies, two multistate centers and the LC/NLS itself. The goal of this network is serving eligible readers and is the result of more than one hundred years' development and experience.

Before the turn of the twentieth century, library service for blind people was initiated by several public libraries throughout the United States. The Boston Public library established a department for the blind in 1868 after receiving eight embossed volumes. Between 1882 and 1903 public libraries in Philadelphia, Chicago, New York City, and Detroit established circulating collections of embossed books for the blind. New York was the first state to create a department for blind in a state library.

During the same period the concept of a national library for the blind was developed in 1897 by John Russell Young, Librarian of Congress, when he established a reading room with about five hundred books and music items in raised type. In 1913, Congress provided that one copy of each book in raised type made for educational purposes under government subsidy by the American printing House for the Blind in Louisville, Kentucky, was to be deposited in the Library of Congress. Other materials were acquired by gift and purchase.

These early steps led to the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LC/NLS), which came into existence with the enactment of the Pratt-Smoot Act on March 3, 1931. The Pratt-Smoot Act mandated that the Librarian of Congress provide books for the use of adult blind residents of the United States, including the states, territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia. It also authorized the Librarian of Congress to make arrangements with other appropriate libraries to serve as local or regional centers for circulating these books. Eighteen libraries were selected to participate, forming one of the first "national networks" of libraries in the United States.

A 1933 amendment to the act expanded the service to include books on records, which precipitated establishment of an additional eight regional libraries. The network remained at twenty-six regional libraries until 1950 when a regional library was established in Florida. Expansion continued through the 1960s and 1970s, the late 1960s seeing the first subregional libraries, a concept that spread across the country

in the 1970s and first half of the 1980s. Regional library expansion continued until 1976 with the establishment of regional libraries in Alaska and Vermont. Subregional library expansion continued until the mid 1980s when expansion began to plateau and then to decline.

In the years since 1931, there have been a number of significant additions and changes in the services offered. In 1952 the word “adult” was deleted to allow services to children. In 1962 music services were added and in 1966 service was extended to persons with physical disabilities other than blindness. Also in 1966, the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) authorized libraries to use federal funds distributed through state libraries to serve blind and physically handicapped persons; this change was a catalyst for network library migration to an automated circulation system, the development of additional services, and in some states the establishment of subregional libraries.

Development of Standards

This edition of the *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* (hereinafter referred to as the *Standards*) is the most recent in a series of standards addressing library service for the network of cooperating libraries serving persons who are blind or have physical disabilities that prevent them from using traditional print materials. The development of standards for this service began nearly fifty years ago in 1957 when the American Foundation for the Blind commissioned and published Francis R. St. John’s *Survey of Library Services for the Blind, 1956*.¹ It summarized the state of the art as it existed in 1956, contained recommendations for the future development of library service for the blind, and established the need for a set of basic standards.

St. John’s recommendation for the development of basic standards for library service for the blind led in 1961 to the development of *Standards for Regional Libraries for the Blind*.² This cooperative venture of the Library of Congress Division for the Blind and the American Library Association (ALA) Round Table on Library Services to the Blind resulted in a five-page mimeographed publication with a modest statement of goals.

In 1965–66 a Committee on Standards for Library Services of the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind, later the National Accreditation Council, developed standards. Ralph R. Shaw served as chair, Lowell A. Martin as vice-chair. These standards were designed for all types of libraries at the federal, state, and community levels, as well as for school libraries and libraries for agencies serving blind and visually impaired persons. They were adopted by the American Library Association in 1967.³

In 1977, the successor to the ALA Round Table for the Blind, the Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LSBPH) Section of the Health and Rehabilitative Library Services Division (HRLSD) of ALA, appointed a committee to draft new standards for library service for individuals who were blind or had physical

disabilities. The members of HRLSD and the committee agreed that standards were needed not only for the national network of libraries but also for the services provided by all types of libraries to people who were blind or had physical disabilities. However, they decided to focus on the LC/NLS network in the initial phase of standards development and to encourage the development in the future of guidelines or standards for the related services in state library agencies, public libraries, elementary and secondary school libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, and libraries in institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, and correctional facilities. LC/NLS funded the development of the first edition of the standards through a contract with HRLSD, and the project began in September 1977.

The first *Standards* were approved by the board of directors of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA), formally HRLSD and ASCLA, a division of the ALA, on January 7, 1979. At the time, the ASCLA Standards for Library Service to the Blind and Physically Handicapped Subcommittee recommended that the implementation of the standards be monitored with the goal of revising the *Standards* within five years.

In 1980, LC/NLS contracted with Battelle Columbus Laboratories to conduct several activities associated with the standards. Among them was a study comparing the regional libraries in the network and LC/NLS against the 1979 *Standards*. This study, called the standards survey, resulted in individual detailed reports for each regional library, LC/NLS and its multistate centers, as well as an executive summary describing national findings in general. Battelle also was charged with recommending an ongoing process for monitoring network libraries' success in meeting the existing standards. The standards survey was completed in December 1982.

By 1982, conditions were favorable for the revision of the 1979 *Standards* as recommended by the ASCLA Standards for Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Subcommittee. The Battelle standards survey and the activity of the ASCLA Standards Subcommittee (charged with monitoring the implementation of the 1979 standards) resulted in information about the need for revision of the *Standards* as well as the extent and nature of the revision process. In fact, no other known set of national library standards had been examined so thoroughly and tested so quickly in the field. The finding of the various studies and the opinion of network practitioners emphasized the need to revise the *Standards*.

Aware of the need for a new standards document, ASCLA submitted to LC/NLS in 1982 a proposal for a contract to revise the *Standards*. LC/NLS awarded the contract to ASCLA in November 1982.

The 1984 *Standards* provided network libraries, state library agencies, administering and funding agencies with a useful tool for assessing the current status of library services for blind and physically handicapped persons. In addition, and taking advantage of a benchmarking survey that had been sponsored by LC, they provided staffing

and space guidelines for achieving specific standards. The *Standards* stressed the importance of planning and evaluation as a basis of providing and assessing library services. The ASCLA Board of Directors adopted these *Standards* in January 1984.

ASCLA has a policy of reviewing standards every five years. The 1984 standards also recommended review in the same time frame. In 1991, informal discussion about a revision moved forward with LC/NLS indicating to the ASCLA Standards Review Committee its willingness to again support a process to revise the standards. The ASCLA Standards Review Committee, after determining the 1984 standards would benefit from revision, submitted a proposal for financial support to LC/NLS. The proposal was accepted, a committee formed, and a second revision of the *Standards* was developed. These were adopted by the ASCLA Board of Directors in February 1995.

The 1995 document reflected the fundamental changes to the environment in which LC/NLS services are provided, resulting primarily from the impact and effects of technological advances and from the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The document recognized that local conditions, always varied, engendered significant variations from agency to agency in how services were provided. In addition, the document reflected the awareness that conditions at each level of service had become more volatile, with the final effects of major influences such as ADA and technology not yet known, and with changes occurring with increasing rapidity.

After eight years of use, the ASCLA Standards Review Committee recommended that these standards be revised again. In discussions with ASCLA, LC/NLS agreed to underwrite the cost of bringing the appropriate parties together to expedite the process. The contract was signed in 2003 and with the selection of a project director and identification of an advisory committee and working team by ASCLA, the project began in the summer of 2003. Public discussion sessions were held at ALA Annual Conferences in Toronto and Orlando and at the Midwinter Meeting in San Diego. The project director attended and spoke at the LC/NLS national conference in Rapid City, South Dakota, in May 2004. Two drafts were circulated for comments and the final draft was taken to the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston and was approved by the ASCLA Board of Directors.

The effects of each set of these *Standards* on the improvement of library services and the development of network libraries have been reviewed and documented consistently. It is clear that each revision has resulted in improvements in the quality and level of service offered. It is the intention of these *Standards* to describe standards of service for network libraries to achieve, in the context of unpredictable effects and of rapidly changing environments.

Structure of the National Network

The structure of the LC/NLS national network of libraries facilitates service and contributes to the development of local enhancements to the basic program. An under-

standing of that structure helps to clarify the purpose and scope of these *Standards*. Currently, the major components of the network are the LC/NLS and its Multistate Centers (MSC), regional and subregional libraries, separate machine-lending agencies, and their respective administering and funding agencies.

The *Standards* cover those for which LC/NLS, regional libraries, and subregional libraries are responsible. Within the network, network libraries and their administrative and funding agencies have a variety of contractual arrangements for the provision of goods and services. Where those services products or processes are those named in these standards, the contracting agencies are expected to comply with the *Standards*.

Within the *Standards*, when the phrase “network libraries” is used, it is applicable to LC/NLS, regional libraries, and subregional libraries. Where a standard is specific to one of these entities, it is so stated.

No network library is a wholly independent agency. Each has an administering agency of which the network library is a unit. In the case of LC/NLS, that administering agency is the Library of Congress. The administering agency of a regional library may be a state library or agency, a public library, a commission for the blind, a state department of education, or a private service agency. At present, each subregional library is a unit of a public library or library system.

The agency that funds the regional or subregional library may also be the administering agency. In other cases, the funding agency and the administering agency are different agencies. While the singularity or combination of administering and funding agencies vary from state to state, in all cases the network library follows the administrative policies and procedures of its administering agency. In all cases, local law, ordinances, and contract or labor agreements take precedent over the *Standards*.

The state library agency may or may not have a direct or formal relationship to the administering or funding agencies or to the regional or subregional libraries in its service area. Because it is responsible for overall library service and development in the state, however, the state library agency has an indirect or advisory relationship with agencies administering, funding, or providing library service to blind and physically handicapped persons even where no formal, direct relationship exists.

Various local elements contribute to the development of enhancements to the basic service at the regional and subregional levels. The nature of the administrative or funding agency, the structure of services in the state, and the level or variety of local resources are among the controlling factors. The variety of locally developed services is potentially infinite and precludes the *Standards* addressing any specificity. For this reason, the *Standards* emphasizes the importance of developing these enhancements as a way to improve service.

Services in addition to providing LC/NLS-generated recorded materials, Braille, and music materials are closely associated with the network and its member libraries. Among these are radio reading services, dial-in newspapers, large print materials,

descriptive videos, and commercial sound or spoken-word recordings. The provision or administration of these associated services is not universally the responsibility of regional or subregional libraries. In some cases, these services are provided through separate and independent agencies and, in other cases, they are a traditional service provided to the general community by the local public library. Because these services are not always provided through network libraries, but sometimes are part of the traditional services of non-network agencies, they are not specifically addressed in the *Standards*.

References

1. Francis R. St. John, *Survey of Library Service for the Blind, 1956* (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1957).
2. American Library Association, Round Table on Library Service to the Blind, *Standards for Regional Libraries for the Blind*, mimeographed (Washington, D.C.: Division for the Blind, Library of Congress, 1961).
3. American Library Association, Library Administration Division, *Standards for Library Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped* (Chicago: ALA, 1967).

Acknowledgments

Developing the *Standards* would have been impossible without the contributions of numerous participants, past and present. That the final document was produced on schedule while allowing significant inputs and deliberations among group members and various constituencies is a testament to the efforts of all involved.

The members of the advisory committee gave time, consideration, and thoughtful input into each phase of the document. These team members were key to eliciting feedback from broad-based constituent groups, and to providing information on the purpose and scope of the standards to community members. Participating in person as well as via telephone and e-mail, the advisory committee members consistently and generously demonstrated their commitment to making the *Standards* reflect the LC/NLS goal of providing consistently excellent services to all eligible users.

ASCLA staff members Lillian Lewis, Eileen Hardy, and Cathleen Bourdon were indispensable in handling the complex logistics and publications support requirements engendered by the project and in facilitating rapid review of the document. At working meetings and public comment sessions, the team was able to focus on the task at hand and accomplish our working goals with minimal distractions thanks to their efforts.

Working team members Kim Charlson, Stephen Prine, Rahye Puckett, and Deborah Toomey demonstrated their commitment by rolling up their sleeves and pitching in even when working meetings grew long and the setting sun beckoned. Steve Prine deserves recognition for his unerring memory, willingness to contribute at every step of the process, and endless supply of bad jokes. Thanks also go to Kim Charlson for transitioning from the advisory committee to the working team when Deborah Toomey joined LC and became ineligible to participate, and to Deborah for subsequently pinch-hitting for Steve as the LC liaison at the final working team meeting.

Special mention also goes to all the participants at the LC/NLS meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota, who stretched a planned forty-five-minute session to over two hours in order to walk through the entire draft document, providing invaluable comment, insight, and discussion.

Finally, the team must recognize Donna Dziejczak, the working team, and the advisory committee responsible for the 1995 *Standards*. The thorough and thoughtful work that went into that document gave our team our own standard to meet and provided us with a solid foundation on which to build.

Introduction

Courtney Deines-Jones, Project Director

The *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*, 2005, continues the tradition of collaboration between ASCLA and the LC/NLS in developing and promulgating these standards. The current project, structured similarly to that of the 1995 revision, began with the selection of a project director and the appointment of a working team and advisory committee to help guide the process and to provide ongoing input into the *Standards* by diverse stakeholders and communities.

ASCLA, LC/NLS, and the project director agreed that all constituents had to be involved from the beginning of the effort. For this reason, although scheduled to begin in the early spring of 2003, initial activities were delayed pending appointment of all advisory committee and working team members. Once all participants were identified, the groups met by conference call in late May 2003 to discuss the general working principles and timeline; this meeting was followed by a full meeting in Chicago in August 2003 during which the team thoroughly reviewed the 1995 document, discussed potential changes, and drafted the working paper considerations. The committee also committed to an aggressive schedule of review and revision so that the team could meet the original deadline despite the late start.

Because of the success of using the Internet to facilitate document exchange and solicit comments, the advisory committee unanimously agreed to adjust the draft and comment cycle to allow for three comment periods—one for the working paper and one for each of two drafts, with the first draft comment period expanded so that the draft could be presented at major consumer group meetings. This schedule permitted the team to honor the original due date without compromising constituent input.

The working paper, explaining the foundation on which the standards revision would be based, was finalized and released in September 2003. It was posted on the ASCLA Web site and distributed nationally to LC/NLS members, community groups, associated agencies, and interested individuals. LC/NLS and advisory committee members further solicited input from their constituencies. In addition, an open public comment session was held at ALA's Midwinter Meeting and electronic feedback was solicited through the ASCLA Web site.

From the feedback to the working paper and with input from the advisory committee, the working team completed the first draft. *Standards* at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Diego, California. The draft document was released in February 2004 with the comment period extending through August 31. Thoughtful comments were received both at the two sessions facilitated by the project director (notably at the LC/NLS Network biennial meeting) and at numerous state, regional, and consumer group meetings throughout the spring and summer.

The advisory committee met again in late September 2004 to review these comments and give final direction to the working team, which completed the final revisions at an early October working meeting. The final draft was distributed to network libraries and final changes were discussed and agreed upon during a December teleconference with the advisory committee and working team. The final version was prepared and presented for acceptance at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in January 2005, meeting the original target date.

Purpose of this Document

The *Standards* are meant to help LC/NLS network libraries maintain the best service levels for eligible individuals. The scope is similar to that represented in both the 1995 and 1985 *Standards*, and aims to provide appropriate service standards for day-to-day operation of LC/NLS network library services and activities including direct patron service, collection development, outreach, and production of local materials. It has been the conscious intent of the working team and advisory committee to present neither a utopian vision nor a reflection of bare-bones services. Instead, the standards have been crafted to represent a level of excellence that we believe the LC/NLS constituency deserves, and to which all network libraries can aspire.

The *Standards* are meant to address standards of service. To the greatest extent possible, we have focused on the outcomes of an action rather than the specific means to achieve that outcome. In this way, we hope that the document will remain relevant over time, especially as the LC/NLS begins a major format shift and provides ever more digitally based services.

The guidelines portion of the document has not been updated from the 1995 version, which in turn was based on the 1984 document. The working team and advisory committee recognize the need for new quantitative guidelines and would have liked to include updated, specific guidelines in terms of staffing, space, and other resources required to meet the *Standards*. Unfortunately, the necessary research and independent benchmarking needed to provide such quantitative guidance has not been conducted; further, we suspect that both space and staffing guidelines relevant in 2004 may prove outdated once the migration to digital talking books is complete. We believe that the current guidelines are sound for the services they address and can be used as a starting point to gauge current infrastructure adequacy, and so we have included them again in

this document. At the same time, we strongly encourage LC/NLS to conduct a new resource study once the digital conversion is complete and in time for the results to be included in the next standards revision.

How the Document Is Organized

Following these introductory sections, the standards are presented as summarized:

- Section 1, Provision of Services, addresses service issues related to day-to-day operation of the LC/NLS program—from registration to providing talking books, information and referrals and other direct services.
- Section 2, Resource Development and Management, addresses the provision of recording and playback devices, and collection development and management.
- Section 3, Public Education and Outreach, provides standards for promoting LC/NLS services.
- Section 4, Consulting Services, covers both LC/NLS network consultants and regional library consultants and consulting visits, as well as more informal local and peer consulting.
- Section 5, Volunteers, addresses issues related to the use of volunteer services.
- Section 6, Administration and Organization, discusses the responsibilities of various agencies, administrative units, and network library types within the system.
- Section 7, Budget and Funding, provides standards for managing and administering network library finances.
- Section 8, Planning and Evaluation, addresses long-range and strategic planning efforts and associated evaluation efforts.
- Section 9, Policies and Procedures, relates to policies both for patrons and for library operations.
- Section 10—Reports, Statistical and Narrative—covers reporting standards required to monitor LC/NLS use and performance and to plan future initiatives.
- Section 11, Personnel, covers staffing and employee development standards for network libraries.
- Section 12, Research and Development, provides standards for LC/NLS in both developing new technologies and improving library service.

After the standards section, the guidelines are presented. These provide quantitative staffing and space guidelines for network libraries based on the benchmarking study conducted in the 1980s.

Numerous appendixes have been included to help the reader both to better understand the document and to have a single source of information regarding LC/NLS services. These include:

- The working paper containing the considerations that went into creation of the document
- LC/NLS Service Eligibility Criteria for both individuals and institutions
- The Lending Agency Service Agreement for Sound Reproducers and Other Reading Equipment, which sets forth the responsibilities of LC/NLS participants who lend books or equipment
- A copy of the Pratt-Smoot Act and major amendments
- A copy of the ALA Patron Bill of Rights and its Policy on Confidentiality
- A copy of the Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy
- A glossary of terms used in the document

How to Use this Document

We recommend that all people involved in providing network library services or in administering these services use this document as follows:

1. First, review all of the sections (or, for those involved in only selected service areas, the relevant sections) of the standards to become familiar with the standards of service recommended.
2. Next, examine the guidelines, keeping in mind that while these have not been modified for some time, they provide a basic reference to the resources needed to provide excellent service, particularly for areas not heavily impacted by the move to digital services and digital talking books.
3. Identify areas in which you believe your library is meeting and exceeding the standards as well as those where improvement may be a goal. At the same time, identify any standards that are not applicable to your particular institution.
4. Briefly annotate the standards, using the wide margins of this publication,

or create a separate document that summarizes your analysis, paying special attention to areas where the library is exceeding expectations, where improvement is indicated, and where standards are not deemed applicable.

5. Focusing on the end service goals advanced in the standards, prioritize areas for improvement with input from all stakeholder groups and assistance as needed from regional or national LC/NLS consultants.
6. Use this prioritized “laundry list” as one of the primary inputs for strategic planning, for developing action plans for process improvement, and for requesting funding or applying for grants.
7. Use the analysis of standards met or exceeded to develop and promote success stories, and to create best practices that can be used in the future and shared with other LC/NLS members.

Who Should Use this Document

LC/NLS participants, staff, volunteers, and members of advisory groups should use this document to review and analyze services and as a tool for strategic planning. Equal consideration should be given to areas where service could be improved and to areas where standards are being met or exceeded.

Service users should use this document as a guide to the service goals of the LC/NLS network. Administrative structures, operating plans, and support provided to network libraries vary greatly from state to state, and can affect a library’s ability to meet service standards. Service users can be powerful advocates in improving services, whether it be by volunteering for advisory groups, lobbying for increased funding, or becoming involved in friends groups and similar initiatives.

Representatives of related consumer organizations and agencies should use this document both as an educational and awareness tool and as a way of assessing how the library services available to their constituents compare against the recommended standards. Again, consumer organizations are encouraged to work in collaboration with network libraries to promote LC/NLS use among eligible individuals and to improve service delivery.

Representatives of funding and administrative agencies are encouraged to use this document as a planning tool to identify both best practice areas and those that might benefit from procedural improvements and better resource allocation. The standards also can be used as a measure of how well library services in a particular jurisdiction compare against the recommended national standard.

Members of agencies serving potential users, such as public libraries, retirement communities and nursing homes, and schools serving students who have print disabilities,

should use this document as an awareness and educational tool. Network library services can bring truly life-changing services to eligible individuals.

Comments

The issuance of this standards revision comes on the eve of a major transition at LC/NLS—the move from analog to digital recordings. The change will impact all network library services—from distribution models to budgetary and administrative structures. We have made every effort to create outcomes-oriented standards that will stand up to this transition. At the same time, we cannot predict how far-reaching the pending changes will be, and recognize that some standards and many of the guidelines may become obsolete once the digital program is fully in place. For this reason, we encourage LC/NLS and ASCLA to continue their tradition of viewing the standards as a living document, of reviewing the standards every five years, and of leading a new revision effort to be completed for publication no later than 2015. In addition, we strongly encourage LC/NLS to conduct a benchmarking survey similar to the 1984 study that led to the current guidelines after full implementation of the digital program and in time for results to be incorporated into the next revision.

Standards

1

Provision of Services

- 1.1 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall register patrons in compliance with PL 85-522 (Pratt-Smoot Act as amended and extended).
 - a. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall maintain information about patrons to meet LC/NLS requirements and to provide service.
 - b. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall, within 3 (three) business days of receiving an application for service, verify that the application is complete, initiate contact for additional information, or return the application for proper certification.
 - c. Once a completed application is verified, network libraries and machine lending agencies shall initiate service within 2 (two) business days.
 - d. Network libraries and machine lending agencies that have in their service areas schools serving eligible children shall develop a relationship with these schools to ensure that all eligible children are registered for LC/NLS services.
 - e. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall ensure the confidentiality of patron records, following applicable laws as well as the guidelines presented in the ALA policy on confidentiality of patron records.
- 1.2 Machine lending agencies and sublending agencies shall comply with the MLA agreements and the sublending agency agreement.
 - a. LC/NLS shall provide each MLA and SLA with a procedures manual.
 - b. Network libraries shall provide analog or audiocassette playback equipment and accessories within two business days of a patron application or request.
 - c. As developed and made available, network libraries shall provide digital playback equipment and accessories using an equitable distribution policy.

- 1.3 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall maintain their circulation and machine lending functions electronically.
- 1.4 Network libraries shall establish loan periods for reading materials.
 - a. Network libraries shall levy no fines on overdue, damaged or lost materials in the national collection.
 - b. Network libraries shall develop and communicate to their patrons appropriate loan policies for materials not in the national collection such as large print and descriptive videos.
- 1.5 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall ensure convenient access to materials and services.
 - a. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide materials and information about these services in appropriate formats.
 - b. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide hours of service that meet patrons' needs.
 - c. Network libraries shall ensure that library service meets individual readers' preferences and patterns.
 - d. Network libraries shall provide reader advisors to assist patrons in identifying specific materials in their areas of interest by title, author, subject, or genre.
- 1.6 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide services in languages other than English to the greatest extent possible and as appropriate to their communities. Network libraries shall maintain resources and collaborate with other institutions to serve patrons who speak or read languages other than English.
- 1.7 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall promote independent access to materials and services through appropriate online, telephonic, and other means, and shall develop and communicate processes and procedures for using these accessible tools.
- 1.8 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall process patron requests for materials and information by the next business day. Requests for materials generated through *Talking Book Topics* or *Braille Book Review* and similar promotional activities shall be processed within 5 (five) business days.
 - a. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall have the capability to accept patron requests via toll-free voice and TDD/TTY; voice mail; and messaging capabilities, with toll-free telephone service that is answered by staff members during all business hours. During hours in which the library is closed the toll-free number shall provide voice mail or messaging capability.

- b. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall offer patrons the option to make requests and receive service via e-mail and online access that is fully accessible.
 - c. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall have the capability to accept patron requests via facsimile and regular mail.
 - d. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall have the capability to serve walk-in patrons.
- 1.9 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall process all returned materials within 2 (two) business days.
- a. Network libraries shall ensure that circulating materials are inspected, in good condition, and fully prepared for the next reader.
- 1.10 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall respond to patron requests for contact by the next business day.
- 1.11 Network libraries shall respond to patron requests for information, including reference requests.
- a. Network libraries shall fulfill ready reference requests from their patrons the same business day.
 - b. Network libraries shall fulfill in-depth reference requests from their patrons within five business days.
 - c. Network libraries shall collaborate with public and other libraries as appropriate to facilitate fulfillment of reference requests.
 - d. Network libraries shall refer their patrons to public, university, and other libraries or resources if appropriate.
 - e. Network libraries shall provide patrons with information about and referrals to other service agencies.
- 1.12 Network libraries shall provide newsletters at least quarterly and other direct communications as appropriate in accessible formats.
- a. Network libraries shall provide newsletters and other direct mass communications in hard copy and electronic formats as appropriate and shall have the capability to deliver electronic format materials via e-mail.
 - b. Network libraries shall make electronic copies of newsletters and other direct communications available on a fully accessible Web site.
- 1.13 Network libraries shall maintain a fully accessible public Web site.
- a. Network library Web sites shall provide OPACs and other appropriate bibliographic finding aids including links to union catalogs.

- b. Network libraries shall accept patron requests for materials and information via their Web sites or e-mail.
 - c. Network libraries shall accept patron feedback via their Web sites or e-mail.
 - d. Network libraries shall post downloadable copies of all forms, patron policies and procedures; annual reports and other public documents; electronic copies of newsletters and other communications; hours of operation; links to LC/NLS; and other relevant information on their Web sites.
 - e. Network libraries shall frequently review all information and links on their Web sites to ensure information is current and correct.
 - f. Network libraries shall include supplemental information relevant to their patrons, such as links to consumer groups and other libraries and service agencies, on their Web sites.
 - g. Network libraries providing Internet-based virtual reference services shall work to ensure that these services are fully accessible.
- 1.14 Network libraries shall maintain information about national, state, and local reading programs and book discussion groups and shall facilitate patron participation in these activities.
- a. Network libraries shall make bibliographies available to public and other libraries describing titles in the collection related to national, statewide, and regional reading program themes.
 - b. Regional libraries shall participate in national, state, and regional reading programs and book discussion groups. Subregional libraries shall support such initiatives within their service areas.
 - c. Network libraries shall develop customized reading programs and book discussion groups as appropriate.
- 1.15 Network libraries shall promote literacy services for young (pre-reading) children through collaboration with public and other libraries, schools, and agencies promoting family literacy initiatives, early intervention programs, etc.
- a. Materials and services developed by network libraries to serve young (pre-reading) children shall be provided in accordance with these standards.
- 1.16 Network libraries shall establish deposit collections and demonstration collections to extend services.
- 1.17 Network libraries shall provide access to library materials through interlibrary loan or other resource sharing options within the United States.

- 1.18 LC/NLS shall coordinate alternative media book exchange and interlibrary loan with libraries and other agencies outside the United States.
- 1.19 LC/NLS shall provide services to United States citizens residing abroad in compliance with these standards.
- 1.20 LC/NLS shall provide music service to patrons in compliance with these standards.
- 1.21 LC/NLS shall provide direct service to patrons who need titles in obsolete, experimental or little-used formats in compliance with these standards. Examples include TB and Grade 3 Braille.
- 1.22 LC/NLS shall provide a fully accessible public Web site.
 - a. LC/NLS shall provide access to the international union catalog via the Web site.
 - b. LC/NLS shall accept patron requests for music services and requests from U.S. citizens living abroad via e-mail.
 - c. LC/NLS shall accept and respond to patron feedback via its Web site or e-mail.
 - d. LC/NLS shall post downloadable copies of all forms, patron policies and procedures; annual reports and other public documents; electronic copies of newsletters and other communications; hours of operation; links to Network libraries; and other relevant information on its Web site.
 - e. LC/NLS shall frequently review all information and links on its Web site to ensure information is current and correct.

2

Resource Development and Management

- 2.1 Network libraries shall acquire or produce reading materials to supplement the national collection as appropriate to their service communities.
 - a. Network libraries that produce reading materials in a specialized format shall do so in accordance with appropriate copyright laws, in response to patron demand and emphasizing titles of regional and local importance.
 - b. Network libraries shall maintain non-circulating masters of all locally produced materials.
 - c. Network libraries shall share locally produced materials with other Network libraries.
 - d. Network libraries shall submit bibliographic information for locally produced titles to LC/NLS for inclusion in the International Union Catalog.
- 2.2 Network libraries that duplicate accessible format materials produced for the national collection shall do so according to LC/NLS quality control standards.
- 2.3 Network libraries shall maintain or provide access to collections of sufficient quantity and condition to meet patron demand in a timely and responsive manner.
 - a. Network libraries shall alter or discontinue circulation of any format of material only with input from and in collaboration with LC/NLS, network library advisory committees, and patrons.
- 2.4 Network libraries shall develop and implement procedures to determine the number of copies of new titles to request from the national collection.
 - a. Regional Libraries shall maintain, in each format they circulate, a minimum of one copy of each title they distribute that is provided by LC/NLS.
 - b. Subregional libraries shall maintain in each format they circulate at least one copy of each title distributed by LC/NLS in the preceding 24 (twenty-four) months.
 - c. LC/NLS, in collaboration with network libraries, shall develop and implement appropriate retention policies for digital materials.

- 2.5 Network libraries shall use the bibliographic standard adopted by LC/NLS when cataloging materials.
- 2.6 Network libraries shall, within their collection maintenance policies, systematically review and weed their collections and dispose of excess copies or withdraw titles in accordance with LC/NLS procedures.
- 2.7 Network libraries shall maintain information about national, state, and local organizations and programs concerned with services to eligible users.
- 2.8 Network libraries shall maintain or have access to professional materials and resources that support the development and provision of library services including a collection of standard reference works and of reader advisory reference materials.
- 2.9 LC/NLS shall develop directories and other appropriate tools to facilitate collaborations and resource sharing and shall provide them online.
- 2.10 LC/NLS shall make available audio playback equipment and accessories.
 - a. LC/NLS shall develop and implement methods of quality control.
 - b. LC/NLS shall ensure equitable distribution of playback equipment and accessories.
 - c. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall maintain sufficient inventories to ensure provision of analog audiocassette playback equipment and accessories within 2 (two) business days of a patron application or request.
- 2.11 LC/NLS shall develop and implement a systematic process of obtaining input from network librarians and patrons on the ongoing development of audio playback equipment and on equitable distribution methods for this equipment.
- 2.12 LC/NLS shall make available the national library collection.
 - a. LC/NLS shall develop and implement methods of quality control.
 - b. LC/NLS shall ensure equitable distribution.
 - c. LC/NLS shall provide a minimum of 2,000 titles annually.
- 2.13 LC/NLS shall develop and implement a systematic process of obtaining input from network libraries, advisory committees, and patrons on collection development and quantity of materials selected in addition to using standard collection development materials.
- 2.14 LC/NLS shall make available in limited quantity other reading materials in accessible formats to supplement the national library collection in addition to

materials produced for distribution to the network. Examples of these materials include BRAs, BRFs, and RCFs.

- 2.15 LC/NLS shall establish, promulgate, and monitor quality assurance standards for materials in accessible formats produced by network libraries.
 - a. Network libraries shall meet LC/NLS quality assurance standards in producing accessible format materials to be added to the local collection.
 - b. LC/NLS shall review locally produced materials submitted by network libraries to determine whether they meet LC/NLS quality assurance standards.
 - c. LC/NLS shall facilitate the distribution of locally produced materials that meet LC/NLS quality assurance standards.
- 2.16 LC/NLS shall provide network libraries with updated bibliographic information reflecting changes to the collection.
 - a. LC/NLS shall provide bibliographic information in MARC 21 format for titles produced for the national collection.
 - b. LC/NLS shall provide network libraries with online access to bibliographic data for all titles in the collection.
 - c. LC/NLS shall, on a continuous basis, advise network libraries of titles that LC/NLS has produced in quantity and titles that may be withdrawn from the collection.
- 2.17 LC/NLS shall maintain a circulating collection of titles in obsolete, experimental, or little-used formats. Examples include TB and Grade 3 Braille.
- 2.18 LC/NLS shall maintain an archival collection of titles produced for the national collection.
- 2.19 LC/NLS shall inform network libraries of basic and current professional literature pertaining to the physical conditions described in the LC/NLS eligibility requirements.
- 2.20 LC/NLS shall provide network libraries with information pertaining to resources for or of interest to eligible users and shall make this resource information available in accessible formats, including electronic formats.

3

Public Education and Outreach

- 3.1 Network libraries shall develop and implement a coordinated public awareness, education, and outreach plan for use in their service areas.
 - a. Network libraries shall collaborate with public and other libraries, schools, veterans' organizations, senior organizations, and other organizations and agencies as appropriate to promote their services.
 - b. Network libraries shall develop and implement awareness programs and materials to reach students in library science, education, social service, and similar college and university programs as appropriate in their local service areas.
 - c. Network libraries shall conduct awareness activities and events as appropriate to promote a climate of public awareness favorable to the development, expansion, and improvement of library services. Examples include author and narrator events and open houses.
- 3.2 LC/NLS shall continually review network public awareness programs, and shall develop and implement national advertising, awareness, and education programs to effectively reach potential patrons. Examples include the anniversary of events such as the birth of Helen Keller or Louis Braille and the passage of the 1931 enabling legislation.
- 3.3 LC/NLS shall develop and disseminate a model for community analysis that can be adapted for use by network libraries.
 - a. Network libraries shall conduct a community analysis based on the LC/NLS model.

4

Consulting Services

- 4.1 LC/NLS shall provide a minimum of 2 (two) full-time consultants to advise and assist network libraries.
 - a. LC/NLS network consultants shall conduct biennial consulting visits to each regional library and machine lending agency.
 - b. LC/NLS consultants shall prepare and submit a final written report of observations and recommendations and shall send a copy to the regional library or machine lending agency visited and its administering agency within 3 (three) months of the consultant visit.
 - c. Visited regional libraries and machine lending agencies shall prepare a written response within 3 (three) months of receiving the consultant report and shall send a copy to their administering agency and the consultant.

- 4.2 Regional libraries shall advise and assist subregional libraries as well as other libraries and agencies in the development and implementation of services in their geographic areas.
 - a. Regional libraries shall conduct biennial consulting visits to each subregional library.
 - b. Regional libraries shall prepare and submit a final written report of observations and recommendations and shall send a copy to the subregional library and its administering agency within 3 (three) months of the consultant visit.
 - c. Visited subregional libraries shall prepare a written response within 3 (three) months of receiving the regional library report and shall send a copy to the LC/NLS regional consultant, administering agency and the regional library.

- 4.3 Machine lending agencies shall advise and assist sublending agencies in the development and provision of services in their geographic areas.
 - a. Machine lending agencies shall conduct biennial consulting visits to each sublending agency.

- b. Machine lending agencies shall prepare and submit a final written report of observations and recommendations and shall send a copy to the sub-lending agency and its administering agency within 3 (three) months of the machine lending agency visit.
 - c. Visited sub-lending agencies shall prepare a written response within 3 (three) months of receiving the machine lending agency report and shall send a copy to their administering agency and the machine lending agency.
- 4.5 Subregional libraries shall advise and assist local libraries and related agencies in their geographic service areas.
- 4.6 Network libraries shall participate in peer consulting through NLS, ASCLA, regional conferences, and other professional exchanges as appropriate.
- 4.7 LC/NLS shall serve as a clearinghouse for information related to network services and operations.

5

Volunteers

- 5.1 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall use volunteers to assist in the performance of activities that supplement its basic program of services.
- 5.2 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall not use volunteers in place of paid employees.
- 5.3 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall not replace paid employees with volunteers.
- 5.4 Network libraries' and machine lending agencies' volunteer programs shall be managed in accordance with administering agency policy and practice.
- 5.5 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall develop and implement an organizational structure that formally incorporates administration of the volunteer program.
- 5.6 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide training, orientation programs, and materials for volunteers that include sensitivity to blindness and disabilities that qualify individuals to use this service, as well as the structure and philosophy of service.
- 5.7 Network libraries and machine lending agencies will develop and implement programs that recognize volunteer activities at least annually.

6

Administration and Organization

- 6.1 The regional library shall be responsible for machine lending agency functions as described in the Lending Agency Service Agreement (Appendix C).
 - a. The regional library or machine lending agency may designate sublending agencies with LC/NLS concurrence.
 - b. Each machine lending agency shall be responsible for ensuring that its sublending agencies comply with machine lending policy and procedure.
- 6.2 Each network library and machine lending agency shall comply with laws and regulations pertaining to rights of and services to persons with disabilities.
- 6.3 The state library agency or other administering agency shall be responsible for the development and coordination of this library service either directly through its administration and budget or indirectly through cooperation with the administering and the funding agency.
- 6.4 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide means of rapid communication with cooperating units.
- 6.5 Network libraries shall continually administer, monitor, and evaluate deposit collection and demonstration collection operation and service.
- 6.6 These standards shall apply as appropriate to all network cooperating units, including contractors, institutional borrowers, and any others who perform services or functions covered in the standards.
- 6.7 The network shall be composed of no fewer than four regional conferences. Regional conferences should collaborate to sponsor joint meetings and events as appropriate.
- 6.8 Network libraries shall encourage advice and input from a full spectrum of patrons and patron constituency groups through mechanisms including, but not limited to, advisory committees, focus groups, and patron forums that shall convene at least once a year. Network libraries shall make appropriate use of

communications technologies to facilitate consumer participation in patron and patron constituency groups.

- 6.9 Network libraries shall support friends groups or the functional equivalent to support and promote library services.

7

Budget and Funding

- 7.1 Federal, state, and local units of government shall contribute funds, resources, and services to network libraries for the provision of library services to eligible users. Funds intended for seed funds, demonstration projects, and similar grants shall not be used to fund long-term ongoing operations.
- 7.2. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide all LC/NLS-mandated services at no charge to the patron.
- 7.3 Network libraries should provide supplemental services to LC/NLS patrons at no charge to the patron.
- 7.4 Administering and funding agencies shall commit resources to enable network libraries and machine lending agencies to effectively operate, administer, and facilitate services as defined by these standards.
- 7.5 The head of each network library shall have primary responsibility for the planning and administration of the budget as well as the presentation or justification of the budget to appropriate groups or individuals.
- 7.6 The funding agency or administering agency shall consult with the head of its network library or machine lending agency before any action is taken affecting the finances of the program.
- 7.7 Network libraries shall work with administering and funding agencies to obtain outside funding for non-operational functions. Examples include grants and in-kind donations.

8

Planning and Evaluation

- 8.1 Network libraries shall develop comprehensive long-range plans designed to develop, implement, maintain, and improve services and programs and to optimize resource use.
 - a. The long-range plans shall be developed in cooperation with appropriate constituencies, especially patrons, administering and funding agencies.
 - b. The long-range plan shall include measurable objectives and a timetable for accomplishments.
 - c. The long-range plan shall be developed in accordance with PL 89-522 (Pratt-Smoot Act as amended and extended) as well as other appropriate statutes, codes, and legislation.
 - d. The long-range plan shall be produced in accessible formats and shall be advertised and made available to patrons.
- 8.2 Network libraries shall review long-range plans at least annually and shall assess progress toward meeting objectives.
- 8.3 Network libraries shall develop and implement methods for evaluating patron satisfaction at least every 3 (three) years. When patron satisfaction is evaluated, the results shall be used to improve services.
- 8.4 LC/NLS shall obtain consumer and network librarian input to its long-range planning activities and shall make the resulting plan available to consumers as well as to network libraries.
- 8.5 LC/NLS shall develop and recommend methods for evaluating patron satisfaction with network libraries.
- 8.6 LC/NLS shall develop and implement methods for evaluating network library satisfaction with LC/NLS services that include input from all network libraries at least every 3 (three) years.

9

Policies and Procedures

- 9.1 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall have written policies and procedures for library operations designed to meet service goals.
 - a. Network libraries shall have written statements of policy for collection development and maintenance; for materials selection; for the reproduction of materials in accessible formats; and for interlibrary loan.
 - b. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall have written statements of policy for service provision to patrons including patron confidentiality and for patron behavior and library usage.
 - c. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall make available service policies and procedures in accessible formats.
 - d. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall communicate any changes in policies, procedures, or services offered to other libraries and units affected by the change in a timely manner.
- 9.2 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall review their policies and procedures biennially.
- 9.3 Regional libraries and machine lending agencies shall include LC/NLS in the development and review of policies.
- 9.4 Subregional libraries shall include regional libraries in the development and review of service policies.
- 9.5 Regional libraries with subregional libraries shall include representatives of subregional libraries as advisors in the development and review of operational policies.
- 9.6 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall provide staff and cooperating units with an up-to-date manual that includes policies and procedures.
- 9.7 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall inform patrons of service policies and shall notify patrons of changes that will affect them.

Up-to-date copies of service policies shall be maintained on fully accessible Web sites.

- 9.8 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall develop or make available instructional materials in accessible formats to assist patrons in the use of this library service.
- 9.9 Regional libraries shall work with subregional libraries to develop strategies that contribute to a consistent range and quality of service in the geographic area served.
- 9.10 LC/NLS shall work with each region to develop strategies that contribute to a consistent range and quality of service for all LC/NLS patrons.
- 9.11 LC/NLS shall develop model policies and shall make them available online.
- 9.12 LC/NLS shall include patrons and representatives of network libraries as advisors in the development and review of policies that affect the network.

10

Reports, Statistical and Narrative

- 10.1 Network libraries shall maintain current and accurate statistical records to document use, services, and acquisitions; to meet the requirements of the administering agency, the funding agency, and LC/NLS; and to generate information for planning purposes.
- 10.2 Network libraries shall prepare an annual narrative and statistical report and shall make it available in accessible formats to the administering agency, the funding agency, patrons, LC/NLS, and other interested parties.
- 10.3 LC/NLS shall define, collect, verify, analyze, publish, and distribute comparable data for the network on an annual basis and shall make this information available to network libraries online.

11

Personnel

- 11.1 Network libraries shall operate under a written equal employment opportunity or affirmative action plan.
- 11.2 Network libraries shall make every effort to advertise to, solicit applications from, and employ qualified persons with disabilities.
- 11.3 Network libraries shall maintain a commitment to cultural diversity.
- 11.4 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall prepare an organizational chart describing clear lines of authority.
- 11.5 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall develop and maintain a position description for each title or each category of position.
- 11.6 Network libraries and their administrative agencies shall, at minimum once every 5 (five) years, jointly review and determine staffing patterns and requirements based on, but not limited to, the following: long-range plans; demographics of service population; geography; services provided; service patterns; physical facility; use of technologies; support provided by the administrative agency; and the guidelines included in these standards.
- 11.7 The administrative head of a network library shall possess a master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited program and shall be on the same administrative level as comparable unit heads within the administering agency.
- 11.8 Staff performing reader advisory service shall possess a bachelor's degree.
- 11.9 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall plan and conduct formal orientation programs for employees that include information about blindness and disabilities that qualify individuals to use this service, as well as on the structure and philosophy of service.

- 11.10 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall send appropriate staff members who have completed at least 6 (six) months on the job to the LC/NLS orientation program.
- 11.11 The regional library shall provide training and orientation for appropriate sub-regional library employees within the first 6 (six) months of employment.
- 11.12 Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall encourage and support relevant continuing education activities for staff at all levels of the organization.
 - a. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall encourage and support staff participation in professional organizations
 - b. Network libraries and machine lending agencies shall encourage and support site visits and staff exchanges to other libraries as appropriate.
 - c. Appropriate staff of network libraries and machine lending agencies shall participate in computer system user group and other professional meetings and seminars.
- 11.13 Appropriate staff of network libraries and machine lending agencies shall participate in meetings of patron organizations.
- 11.14 Appropriate staff of network libraries and machine lending agencies shall participate in network conferences.
- 11.15 An LC/NLS network consultant shall visit new directors of regional libraries within the first 6 (six) months of employment.

12

Research and Development

- 12.1 LC/NLS shall conduct and encourage research and development efforts relating to all aspects of this library service and shall serve as a clearinghouse for research and development findings.
- 12.2 LC/NLS shall collect and analyze data relating to elements of the standards for the purpose of planning and to identify quantitative norms for network library performance. LC/NLS shall disseminate the results of these analyses to network libraries and shall make these results available online.
- 12.3 Network libraries shall test, evaluate, and use new technologies, equipment, services, and materials to improve access to information and library services as well as to improve library services and operations.
- 12.4 Network libraries shall use compatibility with local or national systems as a criterion for evaluating and selecting technologies, equipment, services, and materials.

Guidelines

1

Personnel

These numbers are to be used as a guideline in determining appropriate and optimal levels of personnel. They assume a network library is performing all functions and meeting all standards presented. It is important to interpret this formula in the light of local conditions such as organizational structure, structure and philosophy of service, categories of staff and responsibilities assigned to specific titles and levels of staffing, and specific functions performed by the individual network library.

1. Categories of staffing
 - a. **Professional librarian:** Possesses a master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited program.
 - b. **Reader advisor:** Possesses at minimum a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Full-time responsibility is to work directly with the patron to determine reading patterns and preferences in order to ensure that individual needs are met.
 - c. **Other professional paraprofessional:** Positions that do not require a library degree, but may require appropriate degrees or certification in another field. Responsibilities do not include reader advisory service. Position responsibilities and qualifications are greater than those for technical support staff. Examples may include but are not limited to system manager, studio manager, volunteer coordinator, production specialist or manager, outreach coordinator.
 - d. **Technical/support staff:** Positions responsible for traditional library clerical functions as well as functions and activities associated with network library services. Examples may include but are not limited to shipping and receiving, inspection and repair, production services, and receptionists.

1.2 Levels of Staffing

A patron is an individual, a deposit collection, or an institution registered for service. FTE means full time equivalent. When a network library's number of patrons is not equal to the number in the guideline or its multiple, the staffing FTE will be calculated on a percentage basis.

1.2.1 Regional libraries

- a. Professional librarian
1 FTE administrator
1 FTE librarian for each 2,500 patrons
- b. Reader Advisor
1 FTE for each 1,500 patrons
- c. Other Professional Paraprofessional
1 FTE for each 2,500 patrons
- d. Technical support staff
3 FTE for each 2,500 patrons

1.2.2 Subregional libraries

- a. Professional librarian
1 FTE librarian for each 2,500 patrons
- b. Reader Advisory
1 FTE for each 1,500 patrons
- c. Other Professional Paraprofessional
1 FTE for each 3,000 patrons
- d. Technical Support staff
1 FTE for each 1,000 patrons

2 *Space*

2.1 Guidelines for Determining Minimum Space Requirement:

Area	Minimum Size (sq.ft.)	Comments
Reception	200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously staffed and properly furnished
Reading room	400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located near the reception area • Stocked with catalogs, brochures, books, and magazines on disc, cassette, and Braille • Includes tables with talking book and cassette machines equipped with earphones for private listening • Aids for eligible users
Work area for clerical staff and volunteers	150–175 per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space required for desks, user files and records, automated equipment, and passageways
Offices	125 for each person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private offices for at least the head and the assistant head • Librarians and others may share
Recording, tape duplicating, and storage	600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes space for recording booth, duplicating units, and shelving for master and blank tapes
Shipping and receiving	1,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a loading dock accessible to the postal truck
Equipment and supply storage	800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For storage of catalogs, brochures, and a 3-month supply of machines
Equipment repair	500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have adequate electrical outlets

Area	Minimum Size (sq.ft.)	Comments
Conference room	500	• Should be available
Staff lounge	300	• Should be available
Book stacks	See 2.2	• Square footage required must be estimated after calculating linear feet of shelving

Note: Network libraries located in the administering library may adapt the square footage requirement for shared spaces.

2.2 Linear Feet of Shelving Needed

Material	Maximum Number of Containers of Volumes (per 3-ft. shelf)
Braille	12 volumes
Recorded disc	24 containers
Flexible disc	10 boxes
Recorder cassette (regional libraries—double stack end out)	6 cassette 84 containers 98 cassette containers
Recorded cassette (subregional libraries—single row)	24 containers

2.3 Reading Formats

Formats	Circulated from:			
	LC/NLS	MSC	RL	SRL
Moon type	x			
Braille				
Grade 1	x			
Grade 1 ^{1/2}	x			
Grade 2	x	x	*	
Grade 3	x			
Jumbo braille	x			
Disc, 33 ^{1/3} rpm	x			

* Only Braille lending libraries

Formats	Circulated from:			
	LC/NLS	MSC	RL	SRL
TB and RD (16 ² / ₃ and 8 ¹ / ₃ rpm and FD (flexible disc)	x	x	x	x
Cassette tape (15/16 ips. 2- and 4-track)	x	x	x	x
Music (recorded, Braille, and large type) scores and institutional material	x			

Appendix A. Working Paper

Project to Revise *Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* Working Paper

September, 2003

In 1995, the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), published the *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*. Now almost ten years old, this standards document once more is under review. A project director, working team, and advisory committee have been appointed, with a goal of developing a new standards and guidelines document to be adopted by ALA and published in 2005.

This working paper and principles are the first product. Rather than present proposed standards, it is designed to enumerate the considerations and principles that will go into the effort of the advisory committee and working team over the next sixteen months.

Comments are welcome from all constituents—consumers, librarians, administrators, and all who have an interest in providing excellent library services to every eligible resident of the United States, and eligible U.S. citizens living abroad.

Please send your comments and ideas directly to the project director at the address below:

Courtney Deines-Jones
The Grimalkin Group, LLC
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Silver Spring, MD 20910
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Considerations

1. The goal of the standards should be to promote the best library services possible for all eligible individuals.

- a. The standards should describe components of quality library services that every eligible user should have a right to expect.
 - b. The standards should be clearly written in language that is easily understood by all constituents.
 - c. The standards should be available in alternative formats including Braille, large print, audio and electronic formats.
2. The standards should be designed with maximum input from consumers and other constituents throughout the process.
3. The standards are library standards developed by a professional library association for the cooperating LC/NLS network of libraries. Librarians have the responsibility to use the standards for the improvement of service to patrons.
4. The scope of the standards should include all components of the LC/NLS national network: regional and subregional libraries and multistate centers.
5. Specific statements in the standards should outline the responsibilities of the network library's administrative or funding agency, including but not limited to the financial responsibilities of that agency.
6. It should be recommended that LC/NLS make every effort possible to encourage adherence to the standards by network libraries.
7. The standards should focus on core services, while recognizing that services and resources vary greatly from library to library.
 - a. The standards should encourage every library to offer services beyond the core required services whenever possible. Examples of such services include but are not limited to large print, descriptive videos, and radio reading service.
8. The standards should incorporate sufficient flexibility to accommodate emerging technologies such as the digital talking book, which will change the service in ways we cannot anticipate.
9. The standards should address changing service delivery methods, such as the provision of audio and Braille through a Web site, which may affect the service delivery methods employed by network libraries.
 - a. The standards should be mindful of the broad range of technological expertise possessed by patrons and by differences engendered by patron affluence, age, and age at which a disability was acquired.
 - b. The standards should consider changing methods of requesting services, such as receiving requests via the Internet.

- c. The standards should consider that many patrons may not be able to access the equipment necessary to use Web-based or other electronic services, and to ensure that as LC/NLS and the network go digital, these individuals are not left without access to materials.
10. The standards should take into account the broad variety in demographics, needs, and interests of constituents.
 - a. The standards should encourage network libraries to review constituent demographics on a regular basis.
 - b. The standards should take language diversity into account.
11. The standards should consider the implications of public library and other community services, resources, and activities.
12. The standards should reflect the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other pertinent laws as applicable.
 - a. The standards should continue to follow the spirit of relevant laws giving preference to veterans.
13. The standards should take into account the changes in volunteer resources available to network libraries.
14. The standards should be applicable and usable regardless of individual economic, funding, or legislative situations.
15. The standards should address privacy considerations for network users.
16. The standards should include quantifiable measures where possible and appropriate.
17. The standards should address centralization of services.
 - a. The standards should recognize the possibility that existing or emerging services may be centralized to eliminate duplication of effort and as the result of changes in economic conditions and technologies.
 - b. Standards for centralization should have as their primary purpose the improvement of service to readers.
 - c. Standards should promote patron and constituent input into any centralization effort.
 - d. Standards should promote network library involvement in the planning, development, and implementation of any centralization efforts.

18. The development of the new standards should not be constrained by the existing standards document. The new standards should reflect the current environment rather than simply rework the existing document.

Appendix B. LC/NLS Service Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility of Blind and Other Physically Handicapped Persons for Loan of Library Materials

Eligibility for Service

The following persons are eligible for service:

1. Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
2. Other physically handicapped persons are eligible as follows:
 1. Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material
 2. Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.
3. Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.

Certifying Authority

In cases of blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations, “competent authority” is defined to include doctors of medicine; doctors of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or private welfare agencies (for example, social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In the absence of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library of Congress.

In the case of reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine and doctors of osteopathy who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

Residency or U.S. Citizenship

Eligible readers must be residents of the United States, including the several states, territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia; or American citizens domiciled abroad.

Lending of Materials and Classes of Borrowers

Veterans. In the lending of books, recordings, playback equipment, musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials, preference shall be given at all times to the needs of the blind and other physically handicapped persons who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States.

Institutions. The reading materials and playback equipment for the use of blind and physically handicapped persons may be loaned to individuals who qualify, to institutions such as nursing homes and hospitals, and to schools for the blind or physically handicapped for the use by such persons only. The reading materials and playback equipment may also be used in public or private schools where handicapped students are enrolled; however, the students in public or private schools must be certified as eligible on an individual basis and must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment.

Appendix C. Lending Agency Service Agreement for Sound Reproducers and Other Reading Equipment

Lending Agency Service Agreement for Sound Reproducers and Other Reading Equipment

WHEREAS, under Section 135, a, a-1, and b, of Title 2, U.S.C., the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the Library of Congress is responsible for planning and conducting a national program of bringing free reading materials to the nation's blind and physically handicapped residents; and

WHEREAS, execution of such program includes selection and procurement of reading materials and their distribution through a network of cooperating libraries and agencies; and

WHEREAS, pursuance of this program involves the loan to and use by blind and physically handicapped readers of reading material in a variety of nonprint formats and appropriate equipment for their use which is the property of the Library of Congress and is distributed by cooperating libraries and agencies; and

WHEREAS, _____,
(hereinafter "Lending Agency") is particularly suited to assist in the execution of the program entrusted to the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (hereinafter "Library of Congress") in the state or region of _____.

NOW THEREFORE, in order to cooperate in making sound reproducers and other reading equipment available to the blind and physically handicapped, the parties hereby agree as follows:

A. Eligibility

Eligibility, its determination and certification, is specified in 36 CFR 701.10.

B. Eligibility Approval

The regional library, because of its responsibility for the ongoing provision of library service, is the agency responsible for final approval of eligibility within a state or region.

Implementation, in area where agencies operate separately from regional libraries, will normally be limited to regional library review of applications, which the lending agency has evaluated as ineligible. The lending agency, within one working day, will forward these applications to the regional librarian for review, signature, and return to the agency. Should the regional librarian judge the applicant eligible, the agency must act upon the application immediately upon its return from the regional library. Application for service may not be denied without the signed concurrence of the regional librarian. The Library of Congress is responsible for determining final eligibility at the national level and for resolving questionable instances of eligibility when agreement cannot be reached at the local level.

C. Designation of Lending Agency

1. The Library of Congress may designate, in coordination with a State Library Agency, Regional Library, and Machine-Lending Agency (if separate) for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, as many lending agencies in a state or region as it deems necessary to furnish expeditious service to blind and physically handicapped persons.
2. With prior approval of the Library of Congress and in coordination with the State Library Agency and the Regional Library, sublending agencies may be designated by the Lending Agency to assist in the distribution of sound reproducers and other reading equipment.
3. Any sublending agencies so designated will enter into a written agreement (approved by the Library of Congress) with the Lending Agency and the State Library Agency assuring all provisions of this agreement are adhered to. A copy of the signed agreement will be furnished to the Library of Congress for each sublending agency assisting in the program.

D. Transfer of Sound Reproducers and Other Reading Equipment

Sound reproducers and other reading equipment remains the property of the Library of Congress. Upon receipt of written instruction from the Library of Congress, the Lending Agency will ship all or any portion specified of unassigned inventory as requested by the Library of Congress.

E. Responsibility of the Library of Congress

Subject to availability of funds and statutory provisions, the Library of Congress will procure and distribute sound reproducers and other reading equipment and accessories to the Lending Agency.

The Library of Congress will instruct the Lending Agency as to repair and maintenance of furnished sound reproducers and other reading equipment and accessories.

The Library of Congress will reimburse the Lending Agency on a per purchase basis, for the cost of replacement parts actually required for equipment repair and not furnished by the Library of Congress, PROVIDED THAT the Lending Agency has first requested and obtained written approval from the Library of Congress prior to purchase.

- a. Request for said prior approval will indicate the following:
 1. Item description
 2. Item unit cost
 3. Number of units needed
- b. Parts purchased by the Lending Agency will be invoiced to the Library of Congress on Form 73-43 with original invoices attached, within thirty (30) days of said purchase. Form 73-43, attached as Appendix Two (2) to this agreement, is available in quantity from the Library of Congress.
- c. The Library of Congress reserves the right to withhold said prior approval when it determines that indicated purchase parts or costs are unreasonable.
- d. The Library of Congress will supply the following:
 1. Replacement parts for reading equipment used in the program;
 2. Replacement parts for equipment accessories used in the program;
 3. Replacement parts for repairing Library of Congress produced cassettes; and
 4. Specialized tools and maintenance equipment, provided their need can be adequately justified. In cases of doubt regarding the provision of any item mentioned above, the Lending Agency shall ask the Library of Congress for a decision.

The Lending Agency using the free mailing privilege will employ the United States Postal Service as carrier for the transportation of Library of Congress supplies, equipment, and accessories.

In cases where it can definitely be shown that a hardship exists at the Lending Agency whereby the program will suffer the Library of Congress upon prior written approval, will reimburse the Lending Agency for costs incurred for transportation of sound reproducers and other reading equipment. Costs incurred without the prior written approval of the Library of Congress will not be reimbursed. Requests for approval must be in writing and must include:

- a. a justification as to why the Postal Service cannot be employed,
- b. the cost involved per trip, and
- c. the cost per article transported.

Invoices for reimbursement shall be forwarded to the Library of Congress within thirty (30) days of invoice date. In the event that conditions causing the hardship improve the Library of Congress shall be notified immediately.

The Library of Congress will provide mailing cartons for sound reproducers and other reading equipment.

The Library of Congress will not reimburse for state or local taxes included in cost of articles purchased.

F. Responsibility of the Lending Agency

The Lending Agency will serve all persons eligible for service within the designated geographical service area.

The Lending Agency will have custodial responsibility for all sound reproducers, other reading equipment, and accessories assigned to it, and will take normal security precautions for their safekeeping.

The Lending Agency will maintain inventory control over all sound reproducers and other reading equipment assigned to it, and will provide the following information with reasonable promptness:

- a. the number of machines received, date of receipt, and the number on hand awaiting assignment by model number and serial number;
- b. the number of machines being repaired, model number, and serial number;
- c. the number of machines assigned, providing access to location information by type of machine, serial number, and name of the person or institution holding the machine; and
- d. the number of accessories received, assigned, and on hand, by type of accessory.

The Lending Agency will make available all pertinent files to duly authorized representatives of the Library of Congress or of the General Accounting Office if requested.

Records relating to recipients of Library of Congress reading equipment are confidential except for those portions defined by local law as public information. It is the responsibility of the Lending Agency to inform the reader at the time he makes application for service of the extent to which the information provided may be released to other individuals, institutions, or agencies.

Theft of equipment will be simultaneously reported to the local police and the Library of Congress as soon as discovered.

Subject to availability the Lending Agency will assign and ship reading equipment and accessories to eligible persons within three (3) working days of receipt of an acceptable application and adequate information for service. When personal delivery of machines is furnished, delivery time may be extended to a period not to exceed ten (10) working days following receipt of application. Within three (3) days of the application's acceptance the applicant is notified of the agency's intention to deliver and offered the alternative of delivery by the U.S. mail.

Lending Agency may produce its own application form for use within its service area, however, a Lending Agency electing to do so will have such forms approved by the Library of Congress prior to use. No forms will require more personal or medical information than the official Library of Congress form, attached as Appendix Three (3) to this agreement, and all forms will include a listing of the entire range of sound reproducers and accessories furnished by the Library of Congress.

Lending Agency that is not a Regional Library will:

- a. maintain effective liaison with the appropriate Regional Library in their joint effort to communicate with eligible persons and provide them with the best service possible;
- b. notify the appropriate Regional Library of each new reader added and likewise of each reader being taken from the rolls, immediately upon completion of the transaction; and
- c. coordinate with and assist Regional Library in retrieving sound reproducers and other reading equipment and accessories from inactive readers.

The Lending Agency will repair and maintain sound reproducers and other reading equipment preferably through the use of volunteer agencies.

Completed reports will be submitted to the Library of Congress by the Lending Agency as required and in the time specified. Copies of regularly occurring reports are Appendix Four (4) of this agreement.

It will be the responsibility of the Lending Agency to instruct the readers regarding:

1. reasonable care of sound reproducers and other reading equipment;
2. free repair service and the procedure for availing themselves of it;
3. transfer of eligibility to another Lending Agency's service area when reader moves;

4. necessity of notifying the Lending Agency when taking sound reproducers and other reading equipment to another Lending Agency's service area; and
5. necessity of notifying the Lending Agency of changes of address, change of eligibility status, or desire to discontinue service permanently.

In the case of interstate moves, the Lending Agency from whose jurisdiction the reader has moved will notify the Lending Agency to whose area the reader has moved, and furnish copies of such notification of the Library of Congress and to the reader's new regional library. Notification will be accomplished on the Library of Congress form designed for this purpose. This form, Appendix Five (5) of this agreement, is available in quantity from the Library of Congress.

Termination

It is understood that this agreement may be terminated by either party upon six (6) months written notice. Failure by either party to adhere to the provisions of this agreement will be considered just cause for its termination.

This agreement is subject to annual review.

Accepted for:

The Library of Congress

Director, National Library Service for the
Blind and Physically Handicapped

Date

State Library Agency
(in states where State Library Agency is
funding agency or program administrator)

By

Title

Date

Accepted for:

Agency

By

Title

Date

Appendix D. Pratt-Smoot Act and Major Amendments

Act of March 3, 1931 (Pratt-Smoot)

An Act

To provide books for the adult blind.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That there is hereby authorized to be appropriated annually to the Library of Congress, in addition to appropriations otherwise made to said Library, the sum of \$100,000, which sum shall be expended under the direction of the Librarian of Congress to provide books for the use of the adult blind residents of the United States, including the several States, Territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia.

Sec. 2. The Librarian of Congress may arrange with such libraries as he may judge appropriate to serve as local or regional centers for the circulation of such books, under such conditions and regulations as he may prescribe. In the lending of such books preference shall at all times be given to the needs of blind persons who have been honorably discharged from the United States military or naval service.

Approved, March 3, 1931.

Chap. 400. Sec. 1, 46 Stat. 1487

71st Congress

Public Law 89-522

An Act

To amend the Acts of March 3, 1931, and October 9, 1962, relating to the furnishing of books and other materials to the blind so as to authorize the furnishing of such books and other materials to other handicapped persons.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the Act entitled “An Act to provide books for the adult blind”, approved March 3, 1931, as amended (2 U.S.C. 135a, 135b), is amended to read as follows: “That there is authorized to be appropriated annually to the Library of Congress, in addition to appro-

priations otherwise made to said Library, such sums for expenditure under the direction of the Librarian of Congress as may be necessary to provide books published either in raised characters, on sound-reproduction recordings or in any other form, and for purchase, maintenance, and replacement of reproducers for such sound-reproduction recordings, for the use of the blind and for other physically handicapped residents of the United States, including the several States, Territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia, all of which books, recordings, and reproducers will remain the property of the Library of Congress but will be loaned to blind and to other physically handicapped readers certified by competent authority as unable to read normal printed material as a result of physical limitations, under regulations prescribed by the Librarian of Congress for this service. In the purchase of books in either raised characters or in sound-reproduction recordings the Librarian of Congress, without reference to the provisions of section 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (41 U.S.C. 5), shall give preference to nonprofit making institutions or agencies whose activities are primarily concerned with the blind and with other physically handicapped persons, in all cases where the prices or bids submitted by such institutions or agencies are, by said Librarian, under all the circumstances and needs involved, determined to be fair and reasonable.

“Sec. 2. (a) The Librarian of Congress may contract or otherwise arrange with such public or other nonprofit libraries, agencies, or organizations as he may deem appropriate to serve as local or regional centers for the circulation of (1) books, recordings, and reproducers referred to in the first section of this Act, and (2) musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials referred to in the Act of October 9, 1962, as amended (2 U.S.C. 135a-1), under such conditions and regulations as he may prescribe. In the lending of such books, recordings, reproducers, musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials, preference shall at all times be given to the needs of the blind and of the other physically handicapped persons who have been honorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States.

“(b) There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.”

Sec. 2. The Act entitled “An Act to establish in the Library of Congress a library of musical scores and other instructional materials to further educational, vocational, and cultural opportunities in the field of music for blind persons”, approved October 9, 1962 (2 U.S.C. 135a-1), is amended to read as follows: “That (a) the Librarian of Congress shall establish and maintain a library of musical scores, instructional texts, and other specialized materials for the use of the blind and for other physically handicapped residents of the United States and its possessions in furthering their educational, vocational, and cultural opportunities in the field of music. Such scores, texts, and materials shall be made available on a loan basis under regulations developed by the Librarian or his designee in consultation with persons, organizations, and agencies engaged in work for the blind and for other physically handicapped persons.

“(b) There are authorized to be appropriated such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.”

Approved July 30, 1966.

Sec. 1, 80 Stat. 330

89th Congress. S. 3093

July 30, 1966

Legislative History

- House Report No. 1600 accompanying H.R. 13783 (Committee On House Administration).
- Senate Report No. 1343 (Committee On Rules and Administration).
- Congressional Record, Vol. 112 (1966):
- June 29: Considered and passed Senate.
- July 18: Considered and passed House, in lieu of H.R. 13783.

Appendix E. ALA Library Bill of Rights and Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries, which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,

inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records

The Council of the American Library Association strongly recommends that the responsible officers of each library, cooperative system, and consortium in the United States:

1. Formally adopt a policy which specifically recognizes its circulation records and other records identifying the name of library users to be confidential in nature.*
2. Advise all librarians and library employees that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power.
3. Resist the issuance or enforcement of any such process, order, or subpoena until such time as a proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.**

*Note: See also ALA Code of Ethics, point III: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received, and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted."

**Note: Point 3, above, means that upon receipt of such process, order, or subpoena, the library's officers will consult with their legal counsel to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in proper form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance; if the process, order, or subpoena is not in proper form or if good cause has not been shown, they will insist that such defects be cured.

Adopted January 20, 1971; revised July 4, 1975, July 2, 1986, by the ALA Council.

Appendix F. ALA Policy on Services for People with Disabilities

Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy

The American Library Association recognizes that people with disabilities are a large and neglected minority in the community and are severely underrepresented in the library profession. Disabilities cause many personal challenges. In addition, many people with disabilities face economic inequity, illiteracy, cultural isolation, and discrimination in education, employment and the broad range of societal activities.

Libraries play a catalytic role in the lives of people with disabilities by facilitating their full participation in society. Libraries should use strategies based upon the principles of universal design to ensure that library policy, resources and services meet the needs of all people.

ALA, through its divisions, offices and units and through collaborations with outside associations and agencies is dedicated to eradicating inequities and improving attitudes toward and services and opportunities for people with disabilities.

For the purposes of this policy, “must” means “mandated by law and/or within ALA’s control” and “should” means “it is strongly recommended that libraries make every effort to . . .”

1. The Scope of Disability Law

Providing equitable access for persons with disabilities to library facilities and services is required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, applicable state and local statutes and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA is the Civil Rights law affecting more Americans than any other. It was created to eliminate discrimination in many areas, including access to private and public services, employment, transportation and communication. Most libraries are covered by the ADA’s Title I (Employment), Title II (Government Programs and Services) and Title III (Public Accommodations). Most libraries are also obligated under Section 504 and some have responsibilities under Section 508 and other laws as well.

2. Library Services

Libraries must not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to library resources. To ensure such

access, libraries may provide individuals with disabilities with services such as extended loan periods, waived late fines, extended reserve periods, library cards for proxies, books by mail, reference services by fax or email, home delivery service, remote access to the OPAC, remote electronic access to library resources, volunteer readers in the library, volunteer technology assistants in the library, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or real-time captioning at library programs, and radio reading services.

Libraries should include persons with disabilities as participants in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of library services, programs, and facilities.

3. Facilities

The ADA requires that both architectural barriers in existing facilities and communication barriers that are structural in nature be removed as long as such removal is “readily achievable” (i.e., easily accomplished and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.)

The ADA regulations specify the following examples of reasonable structural modifications: accessible parking, clear paths of travel to and throughout the facility, entrances with adequate, clear openings or automatic doors, handrails, ramps and elevators, accessible tables and public service desks, and accessible public conveniences such as restrooms, drinking fountains, public telephones and TTYs. Other reasonable modifications may include visible alarms in rest rooms and general usage areas and signs that have Braille and easily visible character size, font, contrast and finish.

One way to accommodate barriers to communication, as listed in the ADA regulations, is to make print materials available in alternative formats such as large type, audio recording, Braille, and electronic formats. Other reasonable modifications to communications may include providing an interpreter or real-time captioning services for public programs and reference services through TTY or other alternative methods. The ADA requires that modifications to communications must be provided as long as they are “reasonable,” do not “fundamentally alter” the nature of the goods or services offered by the library, or result in an “undue burden” on the library.

4. Collections

Library materials must be accessible to all patrons including people with disabilities. Materials must be available to individuals with disabilities in a variety of formats and with accommodations, as long as the modified formats and accommodations are “reasonable,” do not “fundamentally alter” the library’s services, and do not place an “undue burden” on the library. Examples of accommodations include assistive technology, auxiliary devices and physical assistance.

Within the framework of the library’s mission and collection policies, public, school, and academic library collections should include materials with accurate and up-to-date information on the spectrum of disabilities, disability issues, and services for people with disabilities, their families, and other concerned persons. Depending on

the community being served, libraries may include related medical, health, and mental health information and information on legal rights, accommodations, and employment opportunities.

5. Assistive Technology

Well-planned technological solutions and access points, based on the concepts of universal design, are essential for effective use of information and other library services by all people. Libraries should work with people with disabilities, agencies, organizations, and vendors to integrate assistive technology into their facilities and services to meet the needs of people with a broad range of disabilities, including learning, mobility, sensory, and developmental disabilities. Library staff should be aware of how available technologies address disabilities and know how to assist all users with library technology.

6. Employment

ALA must work with employers in the public and private sectors to recruit people with disabilities into the library profession, first into library schools and then into employment at all levels within the profession.

Libraries must provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities unless the library can show that the accommodations would impose an “undue hardship” on its operations. Libraries must also ensure that their policies and procedures are consistent with the ADA and other laws.

7. Library Education, Training and Professional Development

All graduate programs in library and information studies should require students to learn about accessibility issues, assistive technology, the needs of people with disabilities both as users and employees, and laws applicable to the rights of people with disabilities as they impact library services.

Libraries should provide training opportunities for all library employees and volunteers in order to sensitize them to issues affecting people with disabilities and to teach effective techniques for providing services for users with disabilities and for working with colleagues with disabilities.

8. ALA Conferences

ALA conferences held at facilities that are “public accommodations” (for example, hotels and convention centers) must be accessible to participants with disabilities.

The association and its staff, members, exhibitors, and hospitality industry agents must consider the needs of conference participants with disabilities in the selection, planning, and layout of all conference facilities, especially meeting rooms and exhibit areas. ALA Conference Services and division offices offering conferences must make every effort to provide accessible accommodations as requested by individuals with special needs or alternative accessible arrangements must be made.

Conference programs and meetings focusing on the needs of, services to, or of particular interest to people with disabilities should have priority for central meeting locations in the convention or conference center or official conference hotels.

9. ALA Publications and Communications

All ALA publications, including books, journals, and correspondence, must be available in alternative formats including electronic text. The ALA Web site must conform to the currently accepted guidelines for accessibility, such as those issued by the World Wide Web Consortium.

Appendix G. Glossary

The meaning of terms varies in practice. This glossary is not intended to establish standard definitions but to explain usage in this document and in LC/NLS and network libraries.

Access. Freedom or ability to obtain or make use of.

Accessible. Able to be independently used by people who have disabilities. A fully accessible Web site, for example, is designed so that the site can be navigated and all functions can be used by a person who is blind or who uses an adaptive interface.

Accessories. Equipment used with talking book playback equipment to facilitate listening.

Agency. A public or private organization providing some form of service.

ALA. American Library Association.

Archival collection. Material preserved for historical record.

ASCLA. Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, a division of American Library Association.

Bibliographic control. A term which covers a range of bibliographic activities: complete bibliographic records of all bibliographic items as published, standardization of bibliographic description; provision of physical access through consortia, networks, or other cooperative endeavors; and provision of bibliographic access through the compilation and distribution of union lists and subject bibliographies and through bibliographic service centers.

BRA. Designation on older titles, with most titles only having one copy. Available in limited number of copies, some are thermoform, some press Braille. BRA 1 through 12999 are housed at Multistate Center West. BRA 13000 and higher are housed at both multistate centers.

Braille. A system for tactile reading and writing devised by Louis Braille for blind persons in which print characters are represented by raised dots. The Braille system is based on a six-dot cell, arranged in two columns of three dots each, sixty-three possible combinations in all. The alphabet, numerals, punctuation marks, and a wide variety of symbols are

represented by one or more Braille cells. Uncontracted Braille (sometimes called Grade 1) is written letter for letter, while English contracted Braille in the United States (sometimes called Grade 2) uses 189 contractions or symbols to represent letter combinations, prefixes, suffixes, or words which appear frequently in the language. There is also Braille for representing music, foreign languages, chemistry, computer, and scientific notation. English Braille, American Edition, adopted by the Braille Authority of North America, is the official code for Braille observed in the United States and Canada. Grade 3 Braille is an unofficial form of highly contracted Braille used by some students and professionals for note taking. Jumbo or large-cell Braille is a form of Braille using enlarged dots and increased spacing for individuals experiencing neuropathy or tactile insensitivity.

BRF. Designation for Special Braille Foreign Language Library Collection. Housed at the Multistate Center East.

BRJ. Designation for Braille titles formerly held by Jewish Guild for the Blind, primarily hand-copied. Most titles have one copy. Housed at Multistate Center West.

BRI. Designation for Braille titles formerly held by the Jewish Braille Institute, primarily hand-copied. Most titles have one copy. Housed at Multistate Center West.

BRM. Designation for Braille music and books about music. Housed at NLS Music Section.

BRX. Designation for mostly hand-copied and one copy only titles. Housed at Multistate Center West.

Catalog. A file of bibliographic records arranged according to a definite plan which records, describes, and indexes the resources of a collection, a library, or a group of libraries. When provided electronically, often called an online catalog or OPAC (online patron access catalog).

CB. Cassette book. See Talking book.

CBM. Designation for instructional cassettes about music. Housed at the NLS Music Section.

Circulation. The loan cycle of material from a library to the user and back. The number of items loaned during a given period of time is also termed the circulation.

Circulation transaction. The act of charging an item from the library collection to a patron for use outside or within the library and discharging the item upon its return.

Clearinghouse. A service for the collection, organization, storage, and dissemination of information and materials.

Consultant. An expert in a specialized field brought in by a library or other agency for professional or technical advice.

Container. A box or envelope manufactured to store and ship the discs, tapes, Braille, or other formats that make up a copy of the title.

Conventional Print. Material printed in less than fourteen-point type.

Cooperating unit. General term for the agencies in the service area that work with the network libraries in providing service. Those agencies may include administering and funding agencies, regional and subregional libraries, and machine lending and sub-lending agencies.

Cultural diversity. Representative of race, color, creed, sex, age, physical or mental disability, individual life-style, or national origin.

Demonstration collection. Library materials and sound reproduction equipment furnished by a network library to agencies whose clientele might include persons with disabilities. They are a vehicle for raising public awareness and advertising availability of services.

Deposit collection. A collection of library materials and sound reproduction equipment furnished by a network library to an agency with a number of eligible users such as a nursing home, a convalescent center, hospital, or library.

Digital book. A collection of electronic files, compliant with the ANSI/NISO Z39.86 standard, that presents digitally recorded material in a form that is accessible and navigable by blind and physically handicapped readers.

Downloadable. Material available for transfer from the Internet or a computer network to a desktop or other computer workstation or device. Examples include but are not limited to Web-Braille, Web-based audio recordings, and forms that may be printed and completed by patrons.

Electronic access. The ability to obtain or make use of information through a broad spectrum of electronic formats, devices, systems, or interfaces.

Eligible user. An individual who meets the established eligibility requirements for this service.

FD. Flexible disc. See Talking book.

Format. The layout and rules for transcribing materials in various media and the physical means used, for example a cassette. In the latter sense, format may be used interchangeably with media.

Hardcopy. A paper printout of information, either in print or in Braille.

HRLSD. Health and Rehabilitative Library Services Division of ALA. Superseded by ASCLA in 1978.

IMLS. The Institute of Museum and Library Services, an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities. Created by the Museum and Library Services Act of 1996, P.L. 104-208, IMLS administers the Library Services and Technology Act and the Museum Services Act.

Inspect. To check book containers for completeness and order of contents, damage, and foreign matter.

Interlibrary loan (ILL). The activity of a network library relating to requesting and obtaining, from other sources, materials requested by users.

Jumbo Braille. See Braille.

Large type. Material printed in fourteen-point or larger type.

LC/NLS. Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Librarian. A person with a master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited library school.

Limited-production material. Titles produced by LC/NLS in a small number of copies to provide supplementary titles to meet specific demand. Such titles are not duplicated generally for the network, but copies can be reproduced when the need arises. See also Quantity (production).

LPM. Designation for large print music and books about music. Housed at the NLS Music Section.

Locally produced materials. Those items produced in special formats by regional or subregional libraries emphasizing user demand and titles of local significance.

LSCA. Library Services and Construction Act.

LSTA. The Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and part of the Museum and Library Services Act of 1996. LSTA allows states flexibility in prioritizing their library needs and is the only source of federal funding that specifically targets libraries.

Machine. Specially designed playback equipment for recorded materials provided on disc, cassette, or other digital format.

Machine lending agency (MLA). An agency designated by LC/NLS to receive, issue, and control the inventory of machines and accessories essential to the provision of service.

Master. The original transcription of Braille or recorded materials from which copies are produced.

Medium. Mode of transcription; Braille, recording, and large type.

Moon Type. A system of embossed reading invented by Dr. William Moon in 1845. It was based on the standard alphabet and was comprised of fourteen raised characters used at various angles, each with a clear bold outline. Production of materials in Moon Type was discontinued in the U.S. in the mid-1960s.

National collection. Titles produced in quantity by LC/NLS for distribution to the network.

Network. LC/NLS and the agencies cooperating with it under the provisions of P.L.89-522 to provide library service to eligible users who are residents of the United States.

Network library. Regional and subregional libraries cooperating with the LC/NLS in the provision of specialized library services to borrowers who are blind or have physical disabilities. Also includes the NLS where it provides direct patron service (for example, with music services or to American citizens living abroad).

Other professional or paraprofessional. Positions that do not require a library degree but may require appropriate degrees or certification in another field. Responsibilities do not include reader advisory service. Position responsibilities and qualifications are greater than those for technical or support staff. Examples may include but are not limited to system manager, studio manager, volunteer coordinator, production specialist or manager, and outreach coordinator.

Outreach services. Library and information programs that seek out potential patrons, particularly those who do not or cannot make use of traditional library services or materials. Examples include bookmobile service, service to people who are homebound, books by mail, service to hospitals and institutions, and home visits.

Patron. An individual who or institution that is registered for and uses this service.

Print disability. Any disability that impacts the ability of an individual to make use of standard printed text materials.

Processing. A term which may include everything that is done to a bibliographic item between its arrival in a library and its storage in the collection or may, in a more restricted sense, refer only to physical processing.

Quality control. Standards and procedures which ensure that Braille and recorded materials meet LC/NLS specifications.

Radio reading service. Use of a radio station or the Internet to transmit content such as newspapers, magazine articles, current books, and other materials not available to persons unable to read conventional print. This service may be provided on a commercial or public service station, or more commonly on a side band licensed by a Subsidiary Communication Authorization (SCA).

RC. Recorded cassette. See Talking book.

RD. Recorded disc. See Talking book.

Reader advisor. A staff member whose full time responsibility is to work directly with the patron to determine reading patterns and preferences in order to ensure that individual user needs are met. Possesses at minimum a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

Regional conferences. Geographic grouping of network libraries. The network is divided into four conferences: northern, southern, western, and midlands.

Regional library. A library for blind and physically handicapped individuals that is administered by a state library agency, public library, or agency for the blind. It must be designated by LC/NLS to administer services to the residents of a specific geographic area, typically a state. Usually provides direct services to patrons.

Selection. (1) A book title chosen to fill a patron request or substitute sent to keep a patron supplied with books if no specific requests are on hand at the time the books are sent. The latter service is given with the permission and wish of the user. (2) The process of deciding which specific titles should be added to a library collection.

Stack. (1) Frequently used in the plural (stacks), a series of bookcases or sections of shelving, arranged in rows or ranges, freestanding or multitiered, for the storage of the library's principal collection. (2) The space in a library designated and equipped for the storage of its collections.

Standards. Criteria by which library services and programs may be measured or assessed. Established by professional organizations, accrediting bodies, or governmental agencies, the criteria may variously reflect a minimum or ideal, a model procedure or process, a quantitative measure, or a qualitative assessment.

State Library Agency. An independent agency or a unit of another state government unit, such as the state department of education, created or authorized by a state to extend and develop library services in the state through the direct provision of certain services statewide and through the organization and coordination of library services to be provided by other libraries of one or more types. Also called library commission, state library commission, and state library extension agency.

Sublending agency (SLA). An agency designated by a machine lending agency to receive, issue, and control the inventory of specially designed record players, cassette machines, and accessories essential to the provision of service.

Submaster. First copy of a master; used to duplicate circulating copies.

Subregional library. A department or unit of a library agency that provides service to the blind and physically handicapped residents of a specified area of the regional library's total service area. Designation requires approval of LC/NLS, the regional library, and the state library agency.

Talking book. A recording of print material on disc, cassette tape or in a digital format produced for exclusive use of those individuals with disabilities eligible for the LC/NLS program.

Designations include (in alphabetical order):

33¹/₃—A title recorded on disc at 33¹/₃ revolutions per minute.

CB—A title recorded on a cassette at 1⁷/₈ inches per second on two tracks of the tape.

DB—A title produced in a digital format and scheduled to be released by LC/NLS in 2008.

FD—Flexible disc collection, 8¹/₃ rpm, issued 1974–1994.

RC—A title recorded on a cassette at 1⁵/₁₆ inches per second on two or four tracks of the tape.

RCF—Special foreign library collection cassettes.

RCN—Network library cassette books accepted in the quality assurance program.

RCX—Volunteer-produced cassettes.

RD—Disc collection issued 1973–1987, 8¹/₃ rpm.

RDF—Special foreign language library collection on disc.

TB—Disc collection issued 1962–1973, 16²/₃ rpm.

TB. See Talking book.

TM. Designation for tactile map collection available for circulation. Housed at LC/NLS.

Technical or support staff. Positions responsible for traditional library clerical functions as well as functions and activities associated with network services. Examples may include but are not limited to shipping and receiving, inspection and repair, production services, receptionist.

Title. The distinguishing name of a written, printed, or spoken work. By extension, the term is used to denote the work in general as differentiated from the variable number of copies of a book or magazine.

Trade book. A book that is produced by a commercial publisher for sale to the general public primarily through bookstores as distinguished from textbook editions, subscription books, or a book meant for a limited public because of its technical nature, specialized appeal or high price.

Union catalog. A catalog which includes all titles held by the network and by cooperating agencies, often provided online. Items produced through the network that meet LC/NLS reproduction quality standards may be deposited at multistate centers and will be so identified.

User. A registered individual or institution. See also Eligible user and Patron.

Weed. To select items from a library collection for discard or for transfer to a storage area.

Web-Braille. Web-Braille is an Internet, Web-based service that provides, in an electronic format, many Braille books, some music scores, and all Braille magazines produced by LC/NLS. The service also includes a growing collection of titles transcribed locally by network libraries. The Web-Braille site is password-protected, and all files are in an electronic form of contracted Braille, requiring the use of special equipment for access.

Withdrawal. The process of removing a title no longer in the library collection from the library's records of holdings.



