

## Trustee Handbook

Chapter 27: Trustee Orientation and CE

### Trustee Orientation

- To carry out their duties effectively, new trustees need information about the library's services, needs, and plans. They also need some understanding of the legal responsibilities of the library board and the relationship of the board to the municipality, and to the library director and other library staff. A good orientation will provide new trustees with the answers they need to undertake their duties confidently.

### Trustee Continuing Education

- Even the most knowledgeable and experienced library trustee needs continuing education to stay informed about new laws, new technologies, and new possibilities for library service. Library services and library policies must constantly change to keep pace with changing community needs, new laws, and new technologies. Library leaders, including library trustees, who stay informed of these changes, will be better able to provide high-quality library service to their community.

### Trustee Continuing Education

- Probably the most valuable type of continuing education experience for trustees is attendance at system or statewide workshops or at conferences such as the annual Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL) and Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) conferences. One of the most rewarding aspects of system and statewide workshops is the opportunity to share experiences and ideas with trustees from other libraries. Information about these workshops and conferences is available in your system newsletter

### Newsletters and Discussion Lists

- One of many benefits to membership in Wisconsin Library Trustees and Friends (WLTF) is the WLTF newsletter, which contains news and information important to Wisconsin library trustees.

### Other Continuing Education Ideas

- Short continuing education sessions can be held during library board meetings. This is a way to reach every trustee on the board (hopefully) and also a way to involve the board in brainstorming or problem-solving discussions on issues that may be important to the library. The Trustee Essentials that make up this handbook can be used for short continuing education sessions held during regular or special board meetings. The meeting agenda should alert board members that a particular Trustee Essential will be reviewed at the next board meeting.

## Other Continuing Education Ideas

- Visit the reference section on Public Libraries on DPI's website.  
<https://dpi.wi.gov/libraries/public-libraries>
- Keep in mind that your library system offers professional consulting services to member library staff and member library boards. These consultants are knowledgeable about a wide range of library practices and issues, as well as new laws and new technologies that may be of interest to your library. Consider inviting a library system consultant or other expert to lead a continuing education session at a regular or special board meeting.

## Budgeting for Trustee Continuing Education

- The annual library budget should include funding for trustee continuing education. Funding should be provided to pay the expenses for trustees to attend library system workshops and send at least one trustee per year to the annual WAPL and/or WLA conferences. Funding should also be provided for at least one trustee's membership in WLTF (and WLA).

## Discussion Questions

1. What issues do you want to learn more about? Where can you turn to learn more about those issues?
2. Should the Wisconsin Library Trustees and Friends look into voluntary certification for library trustees? If so, what should be required to earn certification?