

Certification: What It Is, Who Needs It, and How to Get It

What is certification, and why does it exist?

Maryland law (COMAR Title 13A.05.04.02) requires individuals working in public libraries whose job classifications fall under one of three categories – library director, librarian, or library associate – to maintain certification within their profession in order to be eligible for the Maryland state retirement system. It is a process of professional development that requires eligible employees to earn 90 contact hours of continuing education every 5 years.

Who has to be certified?

Individuals working in positions classified as director or librarian, and are: (1) employed by a county public library and (2) enrolled in the state retirement system, are required to have a Public Library Director Certificate or a Professional Public Librarian Certificate, respectively. These individuals must have a master's degree from an American Library Association (ALA) accredited library science program.

Library associates who are (1) employed by a county public library and (2) enrolled in the state retirement system, are required to have a Library Associate Certificate. These individuals must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and must complete the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) within 2 years of initial employment.

How to maintain certification?

You should always consult with your staff development coordinator or the point person for staff development if you are not sure if an event you want to attend is CEU-worthy. Your staff development coordinators are:

- Allegany County: TBD
- Garrett County: Julie Iden
- Washington County: Kathleen O'Connell
- Western MD Regional: Shannon Kraushaar

Shannon Kraushaar is also available to answer your questions regardless of which county you're in, but copies of your CEU forms should always be sent to your specific staff development coordinator and your supervisor.

Examples of Ways to Earn Contact Hours:

- Attending a seminar or workshop that is related to your job responsibilities.
 - The statewide training calendar is located here:
<https://marylandlibraries.libcal.com/calendar/librarystaff?cid=19080&t=g&d=0000-00-00&cal=19080&inc=0>
- Online courses, such as webinars or trainings. There are a variety of resources for such trainings, such as:
 - Niche Academy Courses – Niche Academy for MD libraries can be accessed here: <https://my.nicheacademy.com/marylandstate-staff>
 - Percipio Courses – You can create a free account at <https://marylandlibraries.percipio.com/>
 - WebJunction Webinars – live and recorded training opportunities can be found here: <https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction.html>
- Completing a college course that is related to your job responsibilities
- Completing a learning portfolio -
https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=54641487

References:

Librarians and Library Directors:

https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=68620255

Library Associates: https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=68683176