

# KDLA Welcomes You as a New Public Library Trustee!

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) is the state government agency whose mission is to support and promote access to library services and to ensure that documentation of government activities is created, preserved, and made available for public use. The most visible aspect of KDLA for public libraries is the Regional Consultant.

There are eight regions in KDLA's regional system. Each region is comprised of 15 counties and is served by KDLA Field Services Consultants and staff.

Your Regional Consultant is a librarian who will be *servicing your need to know* more about the details and varied requirements of your duties and will provide guidance and support as you navigate the complicated arena of contemporary libraries. All of the KDLA team is committed to helping your Board, Library Director, and staff in creating a library that plays a valuable and indispensable role in improving the quality of life in your community.

Your Regional Consultant and your library's Region are listed [here](#).

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## ***Ten things every new trustee needs to know:***

NOTE: The statute under which the library district was formed determines which section of the Kentucky Revised Statute applies to the operation of your library.

1. No authority rests in the individual trustee; only in the board taking action as a quorum.
2. Board meetings are open to the public and must be held in a public place. ([KRS 61.800-61.850](#))
3. The library board's minutes, budget, and annual report are subject to open records requests. ([KRS 61.870-61.884](#))
4. Be familiar with the library's long range or strategic plan, policies, and procedures.
5. Review the contents of the Board packet sent out in advance of the monthly Board Meeting and ask questions if you have them.
6. Be an advocate for the Library in your community and with local and state officials!
7. A trustee term is four years, unless fulfilling an unexpired term. ([KRS 173.340](#); [173.490](#); [173.730](#))
8. More than three absences from regular monthly board meetings during a term year results in an automatic resignation. ([KRS 173.340](#); [173.490](#); [173.730](#))
9. A quorum, or majority, of trustees need to be present to take an action (for most libraries this is 3 of the 5 trustees).
10. Boards must meet once each month at a regularly scheduled time. ([KRS 173.350](#); [173.500](#); [173.735](#))



### ***The successful library trustee will:***

- Learn about issues that impact libraries and library services;
- Make a serious commitment to and accept the significant legal responsibility of the Trustee's position;
- Attend all board meetings and arrive prepared to conduct business by studying the agenda and board packet prior to the monthly meeting;
- As a team member, contribute your ideas, questions, and concerns on all issues under discussion and allow everyone to freely contribute differing viewpoints;
- Know and follow pertinent laws – especially the Open Meetings laws;
- Work to obtain adequate funding and ensure effective use of library resources.

### ***Getting started:***

The Library Director can provide the following information to help familiarize you with your new position as a Library Board Trustee:

- A tour and brief history of the library and introduction to key staff and library programs
- General library information including hours of operation, library calendar and brochures, an overview of programs, services, and facilities
- The date and time of Board Meetings; length of your appointment; Board bylaws and policies; a list of the board members, including their position, term of office, and contact information
- A copy of the most recent Annual Report, audit, current budget, and strategic plan
- The last six months of board packets which include the minutes, financial statements, and other documents that were considered during the meetings
- A copy of Library personnel policies and operation policies.

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### ***Where to find additional information:***

**KDLA Web site:** <http://kdla.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

**KDLA Regional Map:** <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/plssd/Documents/RegionalMap.pdf>

**What to Expect from KDLA's Regional Consultants:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/Documents/KDLARegionalConsultants.pdf>

**KY Public Library Trustee Manual:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/Documents/trusteemanual.pdf>

**Trustee Oath of Office:** <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Documents/Oathofoffice.pdf>

**Directions for Going into Executive Session:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/Documents/ExecutiveSession.pdf>

***Your Duty under the Law (July 2013):*** Receipt of this document is required within 60 days of your appointment.

<http://ag.ky.gov/civil/civil-enviro/orom/Documents/YourDutyUndertheLaw.pdf>

***Where to find more additional information:***

***Managing Government Records (August 2012):*** Receipt of this document is required within 60 days of your appointment.

<http://ag.ky.gov/civil/civil-enviro/orom/Documents/ManagingGovernmentRecordsFinal.pdf>

***Proof of Receipt:*** This form is signed and retained on Library premises. A copy may also be provided to the County Judge/Executive.

<http://ag.ky.gov/civil/civil-enviro/orom/Documents/proofofreceipt.pdf>

**Kentucky Public Library Standards:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/plssd/Pages/LibraryStandards.aspx>

**Sample Library Policies:** <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/librarypolicies/Pages/default.aspx>

***Auditor of Public Accounts Recommendations for Public and Nonprofit Boards – 3/4/2010:***

<http://auditor.ky.gov/cpatools/Documents/2010BoardRecommendationsLetter3-4-10.pdf>

**Kentucky Public Library Statistics:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/plssd/Pages/LibraryStatistics.aspx>

**National Public Library Statistics:** <http://connect.informata.com/>

NOTE: You must use Internet Explorer to access this site. Your director can provide the User Name and Password to access this data.

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***Stay Updated – E-resources:***

***Trustee Tip of the Month:*** Distributed by your Regional Librarian, the *Tip* will provide helpful information on topics that are important in fulfilling your duties as a Trustee. Previous *Tips* are also available online at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/TrusteeTips.aspx>

**Trustee List:** An e-mail discussion list to ask other Trustees questions and to provide and receive notices on important information. To join the list, send an e-mail with the subject “Kentucky Library Trustees” to [Nicole.Frilling@kentonlibrary.org](mailto:Nicole.Frilling@kentonlibrary.org). In the body of the message, list your name and the name of your library. You will receive instructions for posting to this moderated discussion list.

**KPLA Listserv<sup>®</sup>:** an e-mail list for anyone interested in public libraries. To subscribe to the KPLA Listserv<sup>®</sup>, send an e-mail message to [LISTSERV@LSV.UKY.EDU](mailto:LISTSERV@LSV.UKY.EDU) with the following message: *sub KPLA-LIST Your Name* (example: *sub KPLA-LIST Mary Smith*).

***Kentucky Public Library News Digest:*** The *Digest* is a compilation of links to articles and editorials relating to public libraries in Kentucky and nationwide. It is available online at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/plssd/Pages/KentuckyPublicLibraryNewsDigest.aspx>. If you would like to receive the *Digest* via e-mail, please send your request to [nikole.wolfe@ky.gov](mailto:nikole.wolfe@ky.gov).

***Public Library News & Notes: KDLA E-newsletter:*** *PLN&N* is sent via e-mail to anyone who wishes to receive it. To subscribe, give your e-mail address to your Regional Librarian or send an e-mail message to the editor, [Paige.Sexton@ky.gov](mailto:Paige.Sexton@ky.gov).

## Organizations of interest:

**Kentucky Library Association (KLA):** <http://www.klaonline.org/index.cfm>

Provides leadership and initiatives for continuing improvement of all types of libraries. Holds a Fall Conference with a focus on general library issues.

**Kentucky Public Library Association (KPLA):** <http://kpla.org/>

Holds a Spring Conference with a focus on public library issues. Provides leadership and initiatives for KY's public libraries.

**Kentucky Library Trustee Round Table (KLTRT):** <http://www.kylibasn.org/rtt676.cfm>

Meets at the Fall and Spring Conferences to discuss Trustee education & initiatives.

**American Library Association (ALA):** <http://www.ala.org/>

The oldest and largest library association in the world, providing leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library services to ensure access to information for all.

**United for Libraries: Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations:**

<http://www.ala.org/united/>

United for Libraries provides help to Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations to work together at the local, state, and national levels to effectively promote and advocate for libraries.

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## National Documents of Interest:

**American Library Association Library Bill of Rights:**

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/intfreedom/librarybill/lbor.pdf>

**ALA Issues and Advocacy Resources:** Additional information and resources are available on topics and issues of interest at: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/>

**United for Libraries: ALTAFF Trustee Ethics Sample Policy:**

<http://www.ala.org/united/sites/ala.org.united/files/content/trustees/orgtools/Ethics%20Statement.pdf>

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## Job Description for Public Library Boards Members:

*“Government is a trust, And the officers of government are trustees; and both the trust and trustees are created for the benefit of the people.”*

Henry Clay – Kentucky Speech (1829)

**Public library boards have five primary roles:**

1. **Hire and evaluate the library director.** One of the most important decisions that a board will make is in hiring a qualified and effective director. This selection will have a major impact on the future success of the library.

The Board, speaking as one voice, partners with the director by providing direction through the goals set in the library's strategic plan; by delegating all day-to-day management responsibility, including supervision of all other library staff, to the director; and by monitoring the director's effectiveness in providing library services to the community.

The board evaluates the director's effectiveness on a regular basis—usually annually. This is an opportunity to reflect on the previous year's progress and to plan for the upcoming year. Regular evaluation ensures that the director and board are in agreement on the progress made in providing the excellent library services that every community desires.

2. **Monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the library.** Boards are entrusted with the responsibility to make sure the library is operating as efficiently and effectively as the community thinks it should. A few of the major areas that the board monitors are the handling of the finances, the director's effectiveness, and the progress on the strategic plan.

Careful examination of the financial reports, vouchers, and the library's statistics are important tools for monitoring the wise use of resources. In addition, the Annual Report and the Library Standards can also be used in measuring the effectiveness of library services.

The board should also adopt a tool to monitor its own performance on an annual basis to provide confirmation of its accountability to the community.

3. **Plan for the future of the library.** The library board is ultimately responsible to see that the library provides the best possible service to its community. A strategic plan prepares for the library's future. It provides a tool for accountability to the community and makes the job of the board, director, and library staff easier by pulling together all the decisions about budgeting, personnel, capital improvements, library services in response to the community's needs.

The plan's specific goals and objectives describe how the library will focus its resources and which programs and services the library will provide, giving everyone a tool for measuring the library's successes.

4. **Set library policies.** The library board spends much of its time on developing policies that reflect the library's philosophy of service. Well-defined and well-written policies guide the trustees and staff in carrying out their duties.

Policies ensure conformity to federal, state, and local laws; and ensure high-quality service and fair treatment of all customers and staff. Once adopted by the board, library employees carry out the policies on a day-to-day basis.

Policies should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure proper oversight and responsiveness to a continually changing environment.

5. **Advocate for the library.** To be a library advocate is to work for the betterment of library services for the community. Advocacy includes working to obtain adequate funding for the library by telling the library's story to taxpayers, donors, and elected officials.

As a library advocate, you may pursue opportunities to speak with community groups where you can tell the library story. Some carefully chosen statistics and having some example stories of how people are using and benefiting from the library can make a persuasive impression when speaking to civic groups, legislators, or even your friends and neighbors.

Because board trustees are citizen volunteers with no direct financial stake in library funding issues, they are in a unique position to be effective in the governmental arena by keeping the library's financial needs in front of elected officials. Boards and trustees can do that by writing, calling, and visiting their elected officials frequently.

Expanded and adapted from: *The Library Trustee: A Practical Guidebook*, edited by Virginia G. Young, American Library Association, Chicago, 1995

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<i>Library Boards Govern ~ Library Directors Lead ~ KY Dept. for Libraries &amp; Archives Supports</i>		
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Board</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Daily Operations</b>	None	Responsible for the daily operation of the library.
<b>Library Personnel</b>	Hire, monitor, and annually evaluate library director.	Hire, monitor and evaluate library staff.
<b>Fiscal Operations</b>	Evaluate and approve a budget that supports library goals. Monitor income and expenditures.	Determine financial needs of library. Expend money according to approved budget.
<b>Policies</b>	Regularly review and adopt policies.	Recommend new and revised policies.
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Develop and adopt a Strategic Plan. Monitor annually for progress.	Coordinate planning activities and draft a Strategic Plan for Board approval.
<b>Advocacy</b>	Participate in organized events to promote support for library funding and issues. Regularly contact community leaders and officials to raise awareness of library impact and needs.	Advise Board of library advocacy initiatives and provide statistics and stories for Trustees to use. Participate in organized advocacy events.
<b>Continuing Education</b>	Attend forums or educational activities on library issues to become certified.	Advise Board of CE opportunities. Manage library staff certification activities.