

## February 2015 – Trustee Tip of the Month

### Trustees' Questions About Employee Certification Answered

Kentucky libraries are always changing to meet the demands of technology, information literacy and patrons. Library employees who are well-trained and comfortable with the dynamic nature of librarianship are important to the success of our libraries -- and to our communities' present and future. For that reason, the Kentucky State Board for the Certification of Librarians exists to ensure that Kentucky libraries are staffed by qualified, skilled librarians.

#### Who Needs to Be Certified?

All full-time employees (and some part-time employees) who provide library information services to the public must be certified under the terms of **KRS 171.260**. This includes part-time and full-time Library Directors, Assistant Librarians or Assistant Directors, Branch Heads, Department Heads, and Bookmobile (Outreach Services) Librarians. Failure by a library to employ certified librarians in applicable positions can result in fines levied by the Certification Board.

#### What Types of Certificates Are Awarded By the Certification Board?

The Certification Board awards professional, paraprofessional and library experience certificates that recognize different levels of library experience and professional library education. Library directors' certification requirements, for instance, are dependent upon the population of your library's service area. **Certification must be renewed every five years.**

#### How Do Library Employees Obtain Certification?

New library employees and librarians transitioning to positions that require a higher level of certification must meet the experience and educational requirements for certification and, if applicable, the requirements for certification at a prescribed level as required by local library policy. Employees who do not meet these requirements can apply for a temporary certificate; during the five years in which the temporary certificate is valid, the employee must fulfill the educational requirements for the certificate for which he or she has applied. Obtaining initial certification may require taking up to **twelve hours of bachelor's level college courses, or completing a master's degree in library science.**

#### How Do Library Employees Maintain Certification?

The purpose of librarian certification is to maintain a high level of service through continuing education. Employees can earn the continuing education hours necessary for certification renewal by attending or presenting job-related classes, seminars, workshop or conferences like the annual KPLA and KLA conferences, holding an office at a professional library association, participating in continuing education offerings sponsored by KDLA, and/or writing for professional publications. Many continuing education offerings that will satisfy the requirements for obtaining CE hours are offered online and free of charge through KDLA's website.

If you'd like to learn more about certification, the Certification Board, or certification for trustees, visit the KDLA website: <http://kdl.ky.gov/LIBRARIANS/Pages/default.aspx>.