ADA. Americans with Disabilities Act; prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities.

ALA. American Library Association

Carceral Libraries. Commonly known as prison libraries, carceral libraries include any library within a holding, detention, jail, or prison facility.

Color Rendering Index (CRI). Measurement of how light affects how one sees color; measures the ability to reveal colors of objects compared to using natural light.

Custody Level. Dictates the degree of staff supervision for a person who is incarcerated and correlates to where in a facility a person is housed.

Digital Resources. Content made available in digital formats by the library.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Application used by educational institutions to determine eligibility for work-study programs, scholarships, grants, and other forms of aid. Normally required by state and other educational institutions each year one is enrolled to receive funding and financial aid.

General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Test of math, science, social studies, and language arts taken in lieu of completing high school. The test includes short-answer, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank questions and covers the aforementioned subjects at what is considered to be the standard high school level. Can be presented to educational institutions and possible employers instead of a high school diploma.

High School Equivalency Diploma (HSE). A high school–level qualification offered in some states instead of a GED.

IFLA. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Incarcerated Clerk. Library assistants who are incarcerated or detained residents at the facility and who provide clerical support for library staff such as performing circulation functions and customer service to library users.

Integrated Library System (ILS). Software used to track library activities such as checking materials in and out, user information, and information about materials held in the library.
**Interlibrary Loan** (ILL). Requesting materials from an outside library to be used at the requesting institution.

**Law Library.** A collection of legal materials and resources for those held in the facility to support their meaningful access to the courts.

**Library Technical Assistant (LTA).** Paraprofessional who provides support to librarians in day-to-day functions including acquisitions, organization of materials, and answering user questions.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** Agreement between facilities and outside organizations that outlines expectations during a set period of time. Should be signed by all parties and reviewed when new expectations are proposed or at the end of the agreement period.

**MLIS.** Master of Library and Information Science

**National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo).** During the month of November, the NaNoWriMo 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization encourages writers to make goals and track their progress in writing a novel or working on any piece of writing.

**Parole.** The conditional release of an incarcerated person before their sentence is completed.

**Professional Librarian.** A librarian who holds a master’s degree in library science (or equivalent) from an ALA-accredited institution.

**Recreational Library.** The ideal carceral library provides recreational reading, listening, and viewing from a broad selection of current books and other resources; allows for unrestricted information seeking in support of educational or vocational programs or individual interest; and offers a complete reference section.

**Reentry.** When someone is released from a carceral facility. They may still be under probation but need to navigate job seeking, housing, medical care, transportation, and a host of other services and areas of life.

**Restricted Access.** Pertaining to any library user who cannot visit the library because of their custody level or special population status.

**Special Population.** Pertaining to people who are housed outside the general population (e.g., administrative segregation, hospital unit, or crisis bed).

**User.** Anyone who utilizes library services, regardless of custody level or population type.

**Weeding.** Removal of outdated, irrelevant, or unnecessary books and materials.
APPENDIX B

Reflection Prompts

Each year you should read through these Standards and try to benchmark your facility’s library provision against each section and subsection. We know there are a lot of recommendations, and it may take time to incorporate all of the services, programs, materials, staffing, facilities, and other recommendations we put forward here. To help you focus on incremental improvements that are actionable, and to help you advocate for the library with your core users, administrators in the wider department of corrections environment including your chain of command, and the broader networks of stakeholders who make library services possible, here are some more specific prompts for each section. You can reuse these prompts each year or more frequently to benchmark your progress. Keep running notes or files so you can track changes over time. We hope these will help you assess your library’s current state in order to communicate what is going well and what needs improvement and/or additional support.

1. ACCESS

a. Are there any populations within your facility that do not have access to the library (e.g., those in the hospital, crisis bed, administrative segregation)?

b. If there is a population that cannot access the library, what steps can your library take to provide access? Who can you work with to reach those users?

c. Does your library currently provide a library orientation? If yes, when was the last time the orientation materials were updated? If not, what information do you think is important to share about your library access/services? How can you share that information with new arrivals? Staff? Officers?

d. What role do digital resources have in your carceral library? Are e-readers freely available through your carceral library? Can your library lower user costs for e-resource access?

e. How does your library provide accessibility services and assistive technologies as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

f. What barriers are keeping people from using your library more? Are they physical? Are they rules that no longer make sense? What one thing can you change to improve access to your library?

g. How is your library protecting users’ privacy?

h. How is your library supporting educational programs at the facility?
2. ADMINISTRATION
   a. Does the administration in your carceral facility play a significant and meaningful role in providing effective library service? How can the facility librarian affect that relationship positively? Who else has a stake in your library, and how do you build relationships with them?
   b. Is your facility following an effective planning and assessment procedure for your library? Does your facility conduct annual assessments and performance audits as scheduled?
   c. Library advisory committees, which include incarcerated library users, can positively impact the carceral library. Does your facility use this tool or is one a part of planning?

3. STAFFING
   a. Do librarians at your institution have a relationship with the facility’s administration? If not, how can you begin to establish one? What concerns do you think are most important to discuss with them? What should they absolutely know about library staffing?
   b. According to these Standards, is your library fully staffed? If not, which positions are missing, and how can the facility work to recruit qualified staff?
   c. What types of professional development opportunities would you be most interested in attending? How can you demonstrate the value that your participation will bring to the facility/administration?
   d. How do you ensure that library staff (you) are knowledgeable about the needs and service requirements of library users?
   e. Does your library currently use incarcerated Clerks? Why or why not? What onboarding and ongoing training and professional development are available to incarcerated Clerks? What tasks might incarcerated Clerks be trained to do in your library?
   f. Are staff compensated at a level commensurate with that of staff performing similar duties outside the library? If not, how do you have this discussion with administration?

4. BUDGET
   a. Is the library budget a separate line item? If not, where is the library budget housed, and how can you begin to advocate for a separate budget? If so, who determines the budget and how?
   b. How can the library demonstrate responsible use of funds? How can the library demonstrate a need for more funding?
   c. Does your library receive funding specifically for programming? If so, does the annual report demonstrate efficacy? If not, how do you start reporting to demonstrate efficacy?
5. FACILITIES

a. What subsection of the Facilities Standards does your library currently do well and why? How do or can you communicate this success up your chain of command?

b. What aspects of your facility/facilities are out of date when compared against the Standards? Are there small things you can address yourself (e.g., creating more space between desks to have ADA-compliant turning areas)? How do you keep track of, and communicate with your chain of command about, all the improvements that you are able to make without additional resources?

c. What needs does your community have, meaning all the users and the staff in the library, that might need further funding to achieve (e.g., new shelving and bookends, or updated electrical outlet supplies, or lighting)? How would you communicate a need for additional support to your supervisor or other stakeholders, in order to improve the facilities in your library? Can you point to other areas of the Standards, such as Programs and Services or Library Materials, to indicate how such changes will improve your ability to meet various parts of the Standards?

d. What features and modifications have been made in your library to increase safety? How could you further improve safety in the library?

e. Does your library have adequate signage and wayfinding? How can you improve the signage and increase the ease of navigation?

f. How do you resolve issues with climate control or the library environment? Could the process be improved?

6. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

a. What kinds of reentry information/materials does your library currently provide? What kinds of requests have you gotten from patrons for reentry information, and how did you go about fulfilling those requests? Do you have a dedicated space in the library for reentry information? If yes, how can you improve or expand that section? If not, how can you establish a space for reentry information, and what do you think should be included in that section? Would it be helpful to see what other institutions provide?

b. In what ways does your library currently help patrons develop work skills? How can you expand work skills training and information? How might partnering with an outside organization be helpful? Do you currently have a relationship with an organization that can help provide services or materials?

c. Does your library offer programs that foster open discussion, encourage self-reflection, and facilitate learning about different perspectives and cultures? Are your programs inclusive and inviting to all library users regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, dis/ability, and first language? How can you include more people in the services you already offer?
d. Does your library offer programs that are fun and recreational and that encourage a sense of wonder, curiosity, and creativity?

e. How can users contribute to the kinds of programs, celebrations, and cultural events that take place in the library? If users currently don’t contribute, how can you solicit input in the future?

f. Does your library have a resident advisory board? If so, who is able to serve on it? Are there clear written guidelines for the board’s operation? How do you create a safe space for honest discussion?

g. What new digital tools, resources, or digital literacy training can you offer this year, either through core library staff or external partners?

7. LIBRARY MATERIALS

a. Are materials available in a variety of formats including large print, hardcover, paperback, e-book, audiobook, video, music, newspapers, magazines, and emerging formats to meet the educational and recreational needs of your population? Does your entire population have access to all formats regardless of custody level? If not, is there a reasonable security concern to justify limiting access by format, and if so, are you offering the material in an alternative format? Are all materials freely available for all users to access without requesting access from a clerk or staff member? If not, why not?

b. Does your library prioritize buying materials that are inclusive and diverse to include different genders, races, ethnicities, religions, abilities, and sexual orientations? Does the diversity in your collection reflect your population so users see themselves and the broader world on the shelves?

c. Does your library use interlibrary loan and other resource-sharing consortia, such as the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC), which supports the sharing of resources for print-disabled users under the Marrakesh Treaty, to allow access to a wider range of materials and topics for your users?

d. Do you have a collection management policy that includes collection and weeding guidelines, a process for challenges (censorship) to materials, and a plan for consistent collection diversity audits? Do you have a list of censored materials readily and freely available to your library users?

e. Because digital literacy skills are constantly evolving, how are you helping users grow their digital literacy to keep pace with the outside world?
8. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

a. In what ways can users of the library offer feedback to library staff? Are the methods inclusive of people with a range of dis/abilities, spoken and written literacy, and primary languages?

b. What is a specific piece of feedback you received from one or more users that you plan to implement or have already implemented this year? How did you decide to implement this change? What resources were/are needed to accomplish it? On what time line will you implement the change?

c. If you are not already collecting the metrics outlined in Subsection 8.4, identify a new metric you will gather this year and how you will measure it. How does this fit with your existing metrics? How does it help you convey the story of the library and its users to stakeholders including users, administration, chain of command, friends and family beyond the facility, and the external supporting organizations such as Friends groups and public libraries?

d. Look at your metrics over a period of three or more years. What area of library provision is most in need of improvement, and what resources do you need to achieve this? Draft a paragraph or more describing the need using your data and requesting additional support. This could include additional funds, greater support for collaboration with external groups and stakeholders, professional development opportunities for yourself and the incarcerated library workers, and more.
Resources for Carceral Librarians and Clerks

NETWORKING/CONNECTING

Library Services to the Justice Involved (LSJI), ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services (ODLOS). www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/services-incarcerated.

“Library Services for the Justice Involved (LSJI) is an interest group for library professionals, students, correctional staff, volunteers, or anyone who serves the underserved in correctional settings (prison, jail, detention centers, state mental health institutes, juvenile facilities) or justice-involved individuals (those in halfway houses, community corrections, sober living, transitional housing, on parole, or the formerly incarcerated).”

Prison-l (prison-l@cvl-lists.org), ALA ODLOS.

“A resource for those who provide library services to the justice-involved, from youth to adults, currently or formerly incarcerated or detained. This listserv is intended to help library professionals, students, correctional staff, volunteers, or anyone who serves the underserved in correctional settings (prison, jail, detention centers, state mental health institute, juvenile facilities) or justice-involved individuals (those in halfway houses, community corrections, sober living, transitional housing, on parole, or the formerly incarcerated).” To subscribe, visit https://cvl-lists.org/mailman3/postorius/lists/prison-l@cvl-lists.org/.

LIBRARY PARTNERS AND PROVIDERS / LOCATING SERVICES


“Expanding Information Access for Incarcerated People is an initiative based in San Francisco Public Library’s (SFPL) Jail and Reentry Services program, in coordination with the American Library Association (ALA). This project exists to locate library services to incarcerated people and to support the development of new services. It is made possible by a generous grant from the Mellon Foundation.”
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING


“This virtual training series includes examples of library services for incarcerated people and people who are previously incarcerated. It also provides background information on why library services to people in jails, juvenile detention centers, and prisons are part of the core services libraries provide. All trainings are asynchronous and free to access.

This series is developed by the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) Jail and Reentry Services and funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. We are partnering with the American Library Association (ALA) to host videos on their Learning Management System (LMS). Videos in this training series are also available on SFPL’s Jail and Reentry Services YouTube playlist (titles begin with ‘Training’ or search for #ExpandingInformationAccessforIncarceratedPeople). Participants can claim a certificate of completion from the course page after completing each training.”

RESEARCH RESOURCES


“This resource guide provides information on providing library services within correctional institutions, including ALA policies and standards, a select bibliography, directories of organizations that support library services and intellectual freedom for justice-involved individuals, along with resources for libraries to provide justice-involved individuals upon reentry into their communities.” Essential starting point for anyone researching prison libraries, curated by Kyairla Davis and Michelle Channing.

The PRISM Planning Project, Colorado Department of Education. www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/prism.

“The PRISM Planning Project developed a viable research design for a study of prison library impact. Because U.S. incarceration and recidivism rates are so high and since there is promising evidence that prison libraries may play a significant role in promoting pro-social behaviors that contribute to successful re-entry and reduced recidivism, it is time for a large-scale study to assess these potential contributions. Because Colorado champions resident rehabilitation over punishment, it is an excellent state to model a first-of-its-kind study that can be replicated in other states throughout the nation.”

Curated by members of the Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated or Detained during development of the Standards.

IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners (4th ed.), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), 2023. https://repository.ifla.org/bitstream/123456789/2538/1/ifla-guidelines-for-library-services-to-prisoners_4th_ed-en.pdf. “This fourth edition of the IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners provides a tool for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of library services to prisoners in all kinds of places of incarceration, including adult and juvenile prisons, detention centres, and jails. It serves as a model guide for the development of national guidelines for prison libraries and can be adapted to reflect local circumstances and needs.”

TRAUMA/SELF-CARE


“This book is written for anyone who is doing work with an intention to make the world more sustainable and hopeful—all in all, a better place—and who, through this work, is exposed to the hardship, pain, crisis, trauma, or suffering of other living beings or the planet itself. It is for those who notice that they are not the same people they once were, or are being told by their families, friends, colleagues, or pets that something is different about them.”


This resource provides recommendations on actions that can be taken to encourage a trauma-informed facility culture.


A 16-part series that “educates prison residents about their traumas, so they can find resilience, self-regulate to calm their nervous systems, reduce prison aggression and become productive members of society upon their return.”