Ontario Public Library
Guidelines Monitoring
and Accreditation Council

| **Le Conseil de l'agrément et du**
contrôle des lignes directrices pour
les bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario

Ontario Public Library Guidelines
Additional Resources
2023 Edition

Aids to Measurement

Library planners often ask for comparative information between libraries. The materials in this appendix have been gathered from the Ministry's Annual Survey of Public Libraries and from the standards and recommendations document of the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO). In addition, in the areas of lighting and load bearing, we have referenced library sources and the Ontario building code. Information has been collected in these seven areas:

- Area 1 – Staffing
- Area 2 – Collection Size (in Volumes)
- Area 3 – Collection Use (Circulation and Turnover rate)
- Area 4 – Space (including user seating)
- Area 5 –Hours Open to the Public
- Area 6 - Load bearing of floors
- Area 7 – Interior lighting

The additional resources provided here are from other information sources, and are neither recommended nor endorsed by the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council.

Explanatory Note #1: Information on catchment area

In 2017, ARUPLO released the 3rd edition of the *Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems* (posted at http://aruplo.weebly.com/uploads/2/8/3/7/2837807/guidelines_3rd_edition.pdf).

In Areas 1, 2, 4 and 5, we used information supplied by ARUPLO for their members. These ARUPLO guidelines offer another option for libraries to consider.
We did want to highlight their definition of catchment area.

> **"Catchment Area / Population Served** – The catchment area is the area from which users are drawn to a particular library service point. Catchment areas and the population contained therein can be determined by branch library surveys, census data, information from county or municipal offices, Canada Post postal code areas, and the information collected by school boards. Determining catchment area / population served by individual branches can be problematic given available data and factors such as municipal boundaries. As a result, this is not the only consideration as to whether a branch is considered small, medium, large or urban. For instance, a branch may serve an immediate population of less than 10,000 people, thereby putting it in the medium category, but be considered a large branch by the system because it serves a strategic role such as having a larger collection, providing enhanced reference services, hosting system-wide functions such as inter-library loan or providing space for enhanced programming opportunities.
>
> - Small branches - Generally serve catchment areas of up to 5,000 population as determined by each system.
> - Medium branches - Generally serve catchment areas of 5,000-10,000 population as determined by system.
> - Large branches - Generally serve catchment areas of 10,000-35,000 population as determined by system.
> - Urban branches - Generally serve catchment area of 35,000 or more population as determined by system."

Explanatory Note #2 - Information about tables created from the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*

For comparative information, we used data from the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries* program. Current and historical statistical reports of information from the Annual Survey are available through the Ministry's website at http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/statistics.shtml. This data is from the 2019 Annual Survey.

Population Category - The figures have been arranged in seven columns, each one representing a 'Population Category' as presented in the Ministry's statistical pages. Each category represents a population range (less than 2,500, 2,500 to 5,000, 5,000 to 15,000, 15,000 to 30,000, 30,000 to 50,000, 50,000 to 100,000 and over 100,000). For those measures which describe 'per capita' service levels, the population categories are based on **resident,** as given in the Annual Survey itself. Libraries showing no local operating support and/or no staffing expenditure were excluded in determining the percentiles. When searching for comparative data, find the population category which covers your service population.

Levels – For each 'Population Category', the results are divided into four 'levels' representing the quartiles of data. Each level represents the responses on the Annual Survey arranged by quartile. Basically, for each population category, all the responses to a question are "lined" up in order, lowest number to highest number and then divided into four equal groups representing 25% of the answers in that population category. You want your library to fall into the 75-100 category.

As an example, here is 'Annual Circulation Per Capita' for the Population Category of 5000 to 15000:

Quartile	Population category 5,000 to 15,000	Notes
0-25	2.6	For this row, the average number of items circulated per person (per capita) of the lowest 25% of the responses within this population category in the year is 2.69 circulations in the service population.
25-50	4.7	
50-75	6.7	
75-100	10.2	For this row, the average number of items circulated per person (per capita) of the highest 25% of the responses in this population category in the year is 10.2 circulations in the service population.
Overall	6.1	The average number of circulations per capita for ENTIRE population category – that is, for each person in a library within this population category, there were 6.1 circulations (each person took out 6.1 items)

To use these 'aids to measurement' library staff should run the same data from the 2019 Annual Survey of Public Libraries – noting the annual circulation and the resident population.

	Resident pop	Annual Circulation	Circulation per capita	Which quartile?
Library A	5159	24383	4.73	25-50
Library B	6466	51325	7.93	Halfway between 50-75 & 75-100
Library C	8706	25338	2.91	Just above 0-25

Looking at these results, it is Library C with a bit of work to do to increase circulation at the library, and Library B which can illustrate that it is a very busy spot with good usage by the citizens.

Area 1 - Staffing

Staffing in the library is covered in Section 16 of the OPLG Guidelines. There are many ways to look at staffing levels, with two different aids to measurement presented here.

Option A - Using *Guidelines for rural/urban public library systems*, 3rd edition, Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO), September 2017.

With increasing public expectations, technology-based services and operations, and the fundamental change in library services, all library employees require formal library education and training. The guidelines indicate both the minimum number of staff and their professional qualifications. These guidelines are based on the organizational, communication and operational challenges of staffing a multi-branch system and ensuring a professional team is in place to deliver and manage all functional requirements of a full library system. In addition to meeting public service needs, consideration must be given to staff safety concerns such as working alone.

Definitions:
- Professional librarians are defined as having a master's degree in library or information science from an accredited university.
- Library technicians are defined as having a diploma in library techniques from a community college.
- The EXCEL Certificate Program in Managing a small library is a distance education program for library workers without formal library training and is administered by the Ontario Library Service.
- FTE = Full-time equivalent. (35 hours per week)

Each library system has professional librarians that are used on a system-wide basis. The Library Administrator for each system is a professional librarian. One third of all system-wide staff are professional librarians; For every 10,000 people or part thereof, one of the full-time equivalent staff is a qualified librarian.

	Small	Medium	Large	Urban
Staff complement (FTE)	1-2.5	2.5-5	5-17.5	17.5+
Qualifications of Branch Supervisor	Library competency, e.g. post-secondary plus Excel or Library Tech.	Professional Librarian or Library competency, e.g. post-secondary plus Excel or Library Tech	Professional librarian	Professional librarian
Qualifications of other staff		Library competency, e.g. post-secondary plus Excel or Library Tech	2 additional professional librarians	2 additional professional librarians

Area 1: Staffing (continued)

Option B - Using Comparative figures based on Ontario Public Library statistics gathered by the Ministry.

Table 1: FTE Staff - *Average* of FTE (@35 hours/week) per 1,000 population – 2019 data
(collected in 2020)

Quartiles	less than 2,500	2,500 to 5,000	5,000 to 15,000	15,000 to 30,000	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 100,000	100,000 +	Grand total over all of the population categories
0-25	0.25	0.17	0.18	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.29	0.24
25-50	0.80	0.40	0.35	0.40	0.51	0.41	0.43	0.53
50-75	1.50	0.65	0.52	0.47	0.59	0.49	0.51	0.87
75-100	4.24	0.88	0.77	0.61	0.75	0.61	0.61	1.98
Number over the entire population category	1.71	0.52	0.46	0.44	0.54	0.44	0.46	0.90

Table 2: Staff Training Expenditure as a Percentage of Total Staff Expenditure - 2019 data

Quartiles	less than 2,500	2,500 to 5,000	5,000 to 15,000	15,000 to 30,000	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 100,000	100,000 +	Grand total over all of the population categories
0-25	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.2%
25-50	0.0%	0.5%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.5%
50-75	0.8%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.0%
75-100	11.8%	2.1%	2.2%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.2%	5.3%
Percent over the entire population category	3.2%	1.0%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	1.7%

Area 2 - Collection Size

Within the **Ontario Public Library Guidelines**, the size of the physical collection in a public library is referenced in Guideline 8.1.

Option A - Using *Guidelines for rural/urban public library systems*, 3rd edition, Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO), September 2017.

"The following guidelines were adopted for collections; an appropriate collection is a variety of materials responsive to specific community needs. These guidelines have been developed at a time when the publishing industry for physical/print publications is in considerable flux and transition. Within this context there is a recognition that:
a) Collection materials include a variety of physical, print and digital formats, and system-wide electronic resources.
b) Physical or print publications will continue to be an important component for ARUPLO communities.
c) Resources are shared among branches.
d) Collections are responsive to each community's needs."

The guidelines refer to the number of physical items of any format located at each branch.

	Small	Medium	Large	Urban
Number of items in physical collection	6,000-12,000	12,000-24,000	24,000-50,000	50,000 +

Option B - Using Comparative figures based on Ontario Public Library statistics gathered by the Ministry.

Table 3: Total volumes held per capita – All materials except periodicals – 2019 data (collected in 2020)

Quartile	less than 2,500	2,500 to 5,000	5,000 to 15,000	15,000 to 30,000	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 100,000	100,000 +	Grand total over all population categories
0-25	2.8	3.2	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.1	2.2
25-50	7.7	4.7	3.2	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.4	4.4
50-75	12.2	6.1	3.8	2.4	2.6	2.0	1.7	6.4
75-100	23.8	9.4	5.1	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.3	11.5
Number over the entire population category	11.7	5.8	3.5	2.3	2.4	2.0	1.6	6.1

Area 3 - Collection Use (Circulation)

With the *Ontario Public Library Guidelines*, reference to having a lending collection which can be circulated for a period of time is found in Guideline 24.1

Comparative figures based on Ontario Public Library statistics gathered by the Ministry.

Table 4: Annual circulation per capita – 2019 data (collected in 2020)

Quartile	less than 2,500	2,500 to 5,000	5,000 to 15,000	15,000 to 30,000	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 100,000	100,000 +	Grand total over all population categories
0-25	0.7	2.3	2.6	4.8	4.6	4.5	5.6	2.7
25-50	3.4	4.1	4.7	6.4	6.5	5.8	7.8	4.8
50-75	6.5	5.5	6.7	7.9	8.2	6.7	9.6	7.0
75-100	14.4	10.6	10.2	11.3	11.6	9.5	12.7	12.1
Number over the entire population category	6.3	5.6	6.1	7.5	7.7	6.5	8.9	6.6

Table 5: Annual Turnover rate (Actual circulation divided by circulating volumes) – 2019 data

Quartile	less than 2,500	2,500 to 5,000	5,000 to 15,000	15,000 to 30,000	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 100,000	100,000 +	Grand total over all population categories
0-25	0.1	0.5	0.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	2.7	0.9
25-50	0.3	0.9	1.3	2.5	2.6	2.6	4.9	1.5
50-75	0.7	1.2	1.8	3.1	3.5	3.2	5.8	2.0
75-100	2.9	3.1	3.3	4.3	4.8	4.9	7.8	3.8
Rate over the entire population category	1.0	1.4	1.8	2.9	3.1	3.1	5.3	2.1

Area 4 - Space

Library facilities and space arrangements should be developed to meet library service strategies, projected populations, and community needs. In addition, consideration should be given to compliance issues related to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, building standards, fire codes, and other regulations. Branch size is also affected by components such as programs, special collections, and other add-on functions attributed to the branch by the library system. The issue of user seating is not a question on the Annual Survey of Public Libraries, so no comparative information is available in the *Ontario Public Library Statistics* files.   Planning documents are available to assist with ensuring public libraries meet their local needs including these three documents:

Dahlgren, Anders C. *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009. https://dpi.wi.gov/pld/boards-directors/space-needs

Library space planning guide, Connecticut State Library, 2011. http://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/construction/spaceplanning

Making the Case for Your Library Building Project. Southern Ontario Library Service, 2010. https://resources.learnhq.ca/library-space-and-facilities

The *Guidelines for rural/urban public library systems*, 3rd edition, states that the following should provide a general guideline for the **range of size** for each library type.

	Small	**Medium**	**Large**	**Urban**
Net library space (s.f.)	2,500-5,000	5,000-10,000	10,000-35,000	35,000 +

Space: User seating

The issue of user seating is not a question on the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, so no comparative information is available in the Ontario Public Library statistics files. The *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* includes the following guideline on user space (seating):

28.12 M	**User Space (Seating)** - The library provides seating for use of library services and materials by the public on library premises. (e.g. - leisure reading, computer use, as well as table space and/or carrels for study purposes and consultation of library materials).

The *Guidelines for rural/urban public library systems*, 3rd edition, contains this explanation and chart. That "user seating should be flexible and interchangeable to meet community needs. This includes seating for independent work as well as collaboration with other people, and computers provided by the library for use by the public."

	Small	**Medium**	**Large**	**Urban**
Number of seats, including computer seating	15-30	30-60	60-200	200 +

Area 5 - Hours Open to the Public

The *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* includes this specific mandatory guide on minimum hours of operation:

27.1 M	**Minimum Hours**– The main library service outlet is open to the public at least 20 hours per week. In the case of multi-branch library systems, any branch service outlets within the system are open a minimum of 12 hours per week.

The *Guidelines for rural/urban public library systems*, 3rd edition, contains this explanation and chart:

Public libraries operate in an increasingly 24/7 environment. The single greatest barrier to library use as reported in community needs assessments is time. The hours of operation for a system, including virtual hours, have to begin to approximate a 24/7 model to meet public expectations. Full 24/7 service can be accomplished through virtual library services, online resources, and wifi at library locations. Library hours of operation must be available in order for a library to provide an enhanced mandate of government services outlet, public access to the Internet, and community gathering place. Library hours should be allocated to meet community needs. Minimum hours of operation by library type are noted for a "bricks and mortar" library with staff are as follows.

	Small	**Medium**	**Large**	**Urban**
Hours of operation per week	20-24	25-45	45-65	65 +

Area 6 - Load bearing on floors

Information from the Building and Development Branch of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

The requirements for "loading" are the same in the National Building Code and the Ontario Building Code. The requirement for a stack area is 150 lbs/square foot and the requirement for a reading room is 60 lbs/square foot. No specific definitions were given for these types of rooms, but that where the Building Code did not define, you are to use the general meaning or understanding that one might find in a dictionary. In the case of the stack, it is a concentration of books/shelves in an area that the public is not generally allowed. The definition of reading room is desk and chairs only. Most libraries do not have book areas into which the public is not allowed, so the key part of the phrase is the "place for the books".

By comparison, the Building Code load-bearing requirements for a municipal office are 100 lbs on the lower level and 50 on the upper floors.

Area 7 - Interior Lighting

From: "Lighting for Libraries**."** 2001, Revised 2005, created by David Malman**,** *Architectural* Lighting *Design*. Sections of his text are reprinted in ***Interior Design for Libraries: Drawing on Function & Appeal,*** *b*y Carol R. Brown.

Beyond the factors of glare, orientation and glare, a commonly used measure of illumination is the foot-candle, and the Illuminating Engineering Society Handbook (IES) provides recommended lighting levels:

Area	Foot-candles
General reading areas (measured horizontally at desk-top)	30-40
Patron reading tables or carrels (same level as general reading but with task lighting added where appropriate)	30-40
Bookstacks (measured vertically on the stack face at a height of 30")	30
Staff service desks (measured at countertop, with careful coordination of computer-screen locations and orientations to avoid reflected glare)	50
Staff work areas (measured horizontally at desktop, but could be that desired lighting level in staff areas can be achieved through a combination of general and task lighting, with 50 at desk and tables and 30 elsewhere in work areas)	50
Small conference and group study rooms (measured horizontally at desktop)	30-40
Large meeting or community rooms (measured with all lights on, but separately controlled lighting for podium and lights should be dimmable to produce 2 foot-candles for note-taking during an audio-visual presentation)	40