



Fact Sheet:

Libraries in Washington State

There are almost 2,500 libraries in Washington State, operated by almost 700 different agencies and organizations. Each type of library—public, state academic, school, special and private—has a distinct mission, clientele, and funding method.

Public Libraries (62 libraries, 333 outlets)

- Municipal (City): part of city government, serving city residents; funded by city council appropriation.
- District (county, partial-county, island or regional): special purpose district, not part of county or city government serving affiliated residents; funded by dedicated property tax and contract fees.

State Academic Libraries (36 libraries; 75 outlets)

- Community and Technical Colleges: Support school curriculum and serve students and faculty (not required to serve general public); state funding through community college district.
- Four Year College & University: Support school curriculum and serve students and faculty (not required to serve general public); state funding through individual institution.

K-12 Public School Libraries (296 school districts; more than 1,800 libraries)

- Support school curricula and serve students and faculty; state and local funding through school district.

Publicly-Funded Special Libraries (75 libraries, 104 outlets)

- Support information needs of specialized federal, state and local agency information needs serving agency staff and clients; funded through parent agency; not required to serve general public (i.e. county law libraries, military installation libraries and the Washington State Library).

Private Libraries (151 libraries, 163 outlets)

- Mission and clientele similar to the same type of publicly-funded library; funding from private sources; not required to serve general public (i.e. private college and university libraries, special libraries).