



Annual Member Library Certification

Frequently Asked Questions

January 2015

What is certification?

Certification is an annual process and a requirement for RAILS membership. All RAILS academic, public, school, and special member libraries must certify that they are meeting RAILS membership requirements by completing an online certification form on the Illinois State Library's certification web portal. The certification period is between January 2 and March 31, 2015.

What are the RAILS membership requirements?

All RAILS members must meet certain requirements to retain their system membership, including requirements outlined in the Administrative Code Rules, Illinois Library System Act (23 IL ADC 3030). There are two categories of membership, full and developmental. Requirements for both categories are available in the Members section of the RAILS website or at www.railslibraries.info/memreq. Certification is a membership requirement for both full and developmental members.

What happens if my library doesn't certify?

Libraries that fail to certify each year will be recommended for suspension from system membership and will lose all system services (such as delivery, training and consulting services, access to the RAILS Community forums, etc.). In addition, libraries that do not certify will not be able to apply for any Illinois State Library grants, including public and school per capita and construction grants. Each April, the RAILS Board will recommend suspension of all RAILS libraries that have not certified by March 31 of that year. The recommendation will be sent to the Illinois State Library (ISL) for approval. ISL will then send a letter to those libraries notifying them of their suspension from system membership.

Do all library buildings need to complete the certification form?

Certification is done on the main library agency level. For example, school district offices need to certify, but individual schools do not. The main public library agency needs to certify, but individual public library branch locations do not. If you are not certain whether your library needs to certify, check the Control/Branch number field in the L2 (www.librarylearning.info) record for your library. The last two digits of this number represent your library's branch number. Main administrative branches are identified as **00** for academic, private school, public, and special libraries. Public school library administrative branches are identified as **99**. Any library that has 00 or 99 as a branch number must certify.

Why should I certify?

By certifying, you guarantee that all staff at your library will continue to have full access to all RAILS programs and services, as well as grants and programs from the Illinois State Library. RAILS services for full members include delivery, continuing education, consulting, grant projects (such as the *eRead Illinois* grant project), and a variety of communication services that allow you to connect with colleagues throughout the RAILS area, such as the RAILS Community online forums, and Fast Facts, a web-based survey creation tool. For more information about the wide variety of programs or services that are available to you as a library system member, visit the RAILS website at www.railslibraries.info.

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Is there anything I can do right now to prepare for certification?

The current certification period is from January 2, 2015 - March 31, 2015. There are several things you can do to prepare in advance that will help you complete the process more quickly:

- Update your library's contact and staff information in L2, the RAILS membership directory, located at www.librarylearning.info. This will enable RAILS to communicate important information about the system and the certification process to you. For assistance in creating an L2 account or updating your L2 information, visit www.railslibraries.info/L2help.
- Make note of your five-digit control number and two-digit branch number. You will need this information to log into the Illinois State Library's certification web portal (see link below). Locate the record for your library in L2 and find the Control/Branch Number field near the bottom of the page. The first five digits are your library's control number. The last two digits are your library's branch number.
- Locate your library's DUNS number, a unique nine digit identification number that is assigned free of charge for all businesses required to register with the U.S. Federal government for contracts or grants. The business office at your organization should be able to provide you with your DUNS number. You will be asked to enter your DUNS number on the certification form.
- Locate your agency's FEIN number, a unique nine-digit code used to identify a business entity. The business office at your library/organization should be able to provide you with your FEIN number as well. You will be asked to enter your FEIN number on the certification form.

How long does the process take?

Once you have all your information and sign into the Illinois State Library's certification web portal, you should be able to certify your library in 10 to 20 minutes.

Where can I find out more information about certification?

More information on certification is available on the Illinois State Library's certification web portal, located at: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/libraries/librarycertification.html.

During the certification period, RAILS will include articles about the process in our weekly E-News. The Illinois State Library's weekly E-News will also include regular articles about the certification process during this period. To subscribe to both of these e-newsletters, visit www.railslibraries.info/news.

If you have any questions about the certification process,
please contact the RAILS certification team at
certification@railslibraries.info or 630.734.5160.

Reaching Across Illinois Library System
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