NHLA Paralibrarian Certification Guidelines
Updated: August 31, 2018

Introduction

In fall 2013, the READS section of the NH Library Association presented a program describing the Massachusetts Paralibrarian Certification system. A small group of interested library staff met in January and April 2014. It was determined that the effort would be best served by forming a new section of the NH Library Association. The Executive Board approved the trial section in June 2014, and the Paralibrarian section became official in November 2014. With their gracious permission, our program was modeled after the Massachusetts Paralibrarian Certification program, which was in turn modeled after the State of New York Program.

Purpose

The Paralibrarian Certification is a voluntary program designed to recognize the involvement and contributions of paralibrarians in New Hampshire. Paralibrarians (non-MLS staff) support the missions of school, public, academic, and special libraries throughout the state by providing important services, being involved in professional development activities, and demonstrating commitment to their work. The certification is not a substitute for a Master of Library Science degree or any other degree or certificate.

Overview

This program is designed to identify the achievements of participants by assigning point values to various activities. Applicants register for one of four increasingly challenging achievement levels. Each level is reached by accumulating a minimum number of points from within six *Categories of Library Service* (Public Services, Reference and Information Services, Technical Services, Technology, Administration/Management, and General) based on three *Sources of Expertise* in these broad categories (Experience, Education, and Professional Activities). The points needed for certification levels two through four must be earned within the three years immediately preceding the application.

Members of the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board are available to answer questions about the certification program. See www.nhlibrarians.org/paralibrarian for contact information.

Application and Fees

Each participant must submit a complete application with the full non-refundable registration fee, made payable to NHLA-Paralibrarians.

> NHLA member $20
> Non-member $50

Applicants are encouraged to apply for a Level 1 followed by a Level 2. Applicants wishing to combine Levels 3 and 4 are encouraged to organize each level separately but may submit the levels simultaneously if they wish.

It is strongly preferred that the completed forms, fee, and all supporting materials are sent together in the same packet.

All claims for points must be documented and verified by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board. The application must include three copies (double-sided and black & white is okay). Please also send a digital copy which will be uploaded to the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board digital archives. The three copies will not be returned to applicant as they will be the working copies of the Review Board.

<u>For continuing applicants to apply for the next level:</u>

If the application for the next level is:
- Within the three years following the most recent level achieved, the application fee will be waived.
- Outside of the three years following the most recent level achieved, a new application fee must be paid.

Documentation must include a copy of the previously earned Paralibrarian certificate or award letter, a copy of the corresponding Point Summary for each level achieved, and new documentation for all additional points.

Certification Levels

Each level requires an increased breadth of knowledge, demonstrated by earning points from the six *Categories of Library Service*. Level I requires points from at least three Categories; Level II requires points from at least four categories; Levels III and IV require points from at least five categories. Choosing to specialize in an area does not exempt the participant from showing the required breadth of knowledge. In addition, the total points required for a level must be earned from more than one *Source of Expertise* with the exception of workshops and conferences, which are not capped.

Once a Paralibrarian certification level has been earned, that level is considered "locked" for the purpose of any future applications; therefore a Paralibrarian certification level 1 applicant who wishes to apply for Paralibrarian certification level 2 needs to submit documentation for the 150 point difference between the two levels and the previous Point Summary and the Paralibrarian Certificate for the previous level(s).

Certification Review Board

The *Certification Review Board* consists of three to four voting members of the NHLA Paralibrarian section, one of whom is a section officer. The President of the Paralibrarian Section, in consultation with the other officers, appoints the review board members. The Paralibrarian Certification Review Board meets quarterly to review submissions. See the NHLA website for a schedule and submission deadlines. Members of the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board are available to answer questions about the program. See www.nhlibrarians.org/Paralibrarian for contact information.

Application Review Process

1. Applicant submits application packet to the Chairperson of the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board. Applicant notifies Review Board Chair to expect packet via email. Applicant may submit the digital version at this time.

2. Chair notifies Applicant of receipt of application and expected review date.

3. Following the Review Board's review of the application, the applicant is contacted with status or questions from the Review Board. If there are questions, once the applicant has submitted a follow up, the Board will reconvene.

4. Upon approval from the Review Board, the application is presented to the full Paralibrarian Board for approval.

5. Approved applicants will be issued a Paralibrarian Certification certificate signed by the President of the New Hampshire Library Association and issued an award letter from the Review Board Chair recognizing the level achieved.

6. Applications not approved at the Level requested: Candidate may appeal the decision to the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board in writing within 10 business days of the decision. All decisions of the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board are final. All candidates are encouraged to re-apply.

Feedback
Successful candidates are invited to make suggestions to the Paralibrarian Certification Review Board about the Certification process.

Categories of Library Service

There are SIX categories of library service, as follows:
These lists are not all-inclusive but serve to demonstrate the types of knowledge considered appropriate for each type of library service.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Adult services
Children's services
Community Outreach
Customer service
Information literacy
Programs and activities
Readers' advisory
Young adult services

REFERENCE/INFORMATION SERVICES

Collection development
Community resources
Copyright law
Database use/access
Genealogy/special collections
Information access
Interlibrary loan
Local history
Medical/legal research assistance
Online learning resources

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Acquisitions/De-accessions
BISAC/Dewey
Digitization
MARC/RDA
Metadata/Linked data
Periodicals/serials
Preservation
Processing

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Accounting/budgeting
ADA compliance
Fundraising
Library marketing
Policy development
Public/Staff/Workplace safety
Staff supervision and training
Strategic/disaster planning
Volunteer supervision and training

TECHNOLOGY

Assistive/adaptive technology
Digital Media
Internet/computer security
Library automation
Maker spaces
Mobile computing
Networking
Office software
Social media
Technology troubleshooting
UX / User Experience
Web design

GENERAL

Association/committee membership
Other library topics not covered elsewhere
Professional reading *(i.e. library professional development books and library textbooks)*
Professional writing
Public speaking

Sources of Expertise

Work Experience (Form B - Work Experience)

Points for work experience are based on Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) as defined by your institution, 12 months per year, paid employment. Related library experience includes work in school media centers and public, academic, and special libraries. Points granted for experience are intended to reward the completion and mastery of regular work tasks, as defined by the role and situation in which the applicant served.

Claims for points must have verification for both number of hours worked per week and the length of time employed. Utilize Form B for each employer completed with the signature of the Director verifying employment. Points are granted for tenure only and not for job responsibilities.

This is the formula for work experience:

I worked (a) _____ hours per week. (b) _____ number of hours considered full time at my library.

       Year of employment ___ , ___ hours / week
       Year of employment ___ , ___ hours / week
       Year of employment ___ , ___ hours / week

So (a) divided by (b) = (c) _____ % of FTE
       FTE earns 60 points per year and (c) % of 60= (d) _____ .
       Therefore, I am requesting _____ points for experience.

Volunteer Experience (Form B - Volunteer Experience)

Points for volunteer experience in direct library services shall be awarded at half the rate for points earned as an employed applicant's experience. Volunteer work shall follow the same form as the Work Experience using the following ratio in place of the work experience ratio.

This is the formula for volunteer experience:

I volunteered (a) _____ hours per week. (b) _____ number of hours considered full time employment at my library.

       So (a) divided by (b) = (c) _____ % of FTE
       FTE earns 30 points per year and (c) % of 30= (d) _____ .
       Therefore, I am requesting _____ points for *volunteer* experience

Education (Form C)

   Points are awarded for completed degrees or certificates from an accredited college or university. These may include a non-MLS graduate degree, bachelor's degree, associate's degree or professional certificate. Verification options include a copy of a diploma, transcript, or certificate from the institution.

Professional *Development* Activities (Form D)

Included within this category is participation in workshops and programs, expertise gained from special projects and assignments, and other experiences that broaden the participant's skills and knowledge as outlined below. The applicant should provide a summary of the learning experience and clearly relate how this is applicable to the applicant's broadening of knowledge and how they intend to use that knowledge. Applicant is expected to briefly summarize the training topic and its value.

All points requested on each *Form D* must be assigned to the appropriate *Category of Library Service* and be accompanied by a certificate of attendance or the completion of a Verification of Attendance form which may be signed by the presenter or the applicant's Director.

College Course: Classes taken, either in person or online, in a non-matriculating capacity. Courses taken must be directly related to library training and are at the discretion of the Review Board. A copy of the course description or syllabus and final grade statement must be submitted. Undergraduate and graduate level courses qualify for different point values.

Conference: Applicant may request points for **each session** attended at a conference (this includes NHLA, READS, CHILIS, ITS, etc.) under the correct subject area.

Library e-course: Multi-week online classes in specific library-related areas. Examples: Classes offered by the American Library Association, InfoPeople, Techsoup, Webjunction, ABLE & SABLE courses (provided by Idaho Commission for Libraries). Additional resources can be found at http://nhlibrarians.org/paralibrarian/.

Library Workshops and Programs: Instructional programs which bring library workers together for intensive training and for which academic credit is not offered (45 minutes or longer).

Webinars: Single session web conference learning on library specific topics. Examples include but are not limited to: webinars from the New Hampshire State Library for resource training, American Library Association, InfoPeople, Techsoup, Webjunction. Additional resources can be found at http://nhlibrarians.org/paralibrarian/.

Professional Activities (Form E)

Participation/Membership in a Library Organization: Credit may be claimed for holding an association office, for serving as an active committee member, or a committee chair at any time in the previous ten years.

Credit will also be granted for membership in a library association (*examples: NHLA, NELA, ALA, MLA, VLA).* Verification of membership or office held is required.

Membership in subsections of a library association are not considered for credit, unless applicant is an active committee member.

Presentations and Teaching: Credit is given for first-time presentations, exhibits, or teaching of library, media-related, or educational workshops. Credit may not be claimed for events which are part of the regular required duties.

For repeat presentations, subject matter presented requires proof of additional study, research, or preparation. Documentation should include materials used/presented and verification that the class or workshop was held.

Professional reading: 15 points maximum may be claimed for professional reading. Resources for professional reading include library textbooks and professional development books related to the library profession. Verification should include a written narrative summarizing what was learned from the reading and how it will be applied to the applicant's current position and/or career goals.

Programs and Services: This section is intended to provide applicants with a way to document, and receive credit toward certification, for library-related activities that fall outside the scope of the applicant's day-to-day work duties.

Applicant must include a detailed narrative of the learning experience and how it relates to library services outside current job responsibilities. Examples include: program planning, implementation and evaluation, training, or other experiences.

Verification may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: letter of commendation, letter of verification, samples of work produced, explanations of tasks performed, and newspaper or journal excerpts.

Publications: Points may be claimed for an article or review published in a recognized professional resource. Such resources include a library or media publication, as a contributing author on a recognized professional blog. Publications may be in either print or electronic format. Length and breadth of article determines point value. Points may only be claimed for the first publication of the article. Verification should include a copy of the published piece showing publication name and date.

Details of Certification Levels and Requirements

Paralibrarian Level 1
- 200 points minimum
- 100 points maximum from any one of the Sources of Expertise, with the exception of workshops and conferences which are unlimited. (Pages 5-7)
- Professional development activities in a minimum of **3 of the 6** Categories of Library Service (Page 4)
- All points earned within ten years preceding the application.

Paralibrarian Level 2
- *Completion of Paralibrarian Level 1 certification*
- 150 points minimum
- 75 points maximum from any one of the *Sources of Expertise*, with the exception of workshops and conferences which are unlimited. (Pages 5-7)
- Professional development activities in a minimum of **4** of the **6** *Categories of Library Service* (Page 4)
- All points earned within the three years preceding the application.

Paralibrarian Level 3
- *Completion of Paralibrarian Level 2 certification*
- 250 points minimum
- 125 points maximum from any one of the *Sources of Expertise*, with the exception of workshops and conferences which are unlimited. (Pages 5-7)
- Professional development activities in a minimum of **5** of the **6** *Categories of Library Service* (Page 4)
- All points earned within the three years preceding the application.

Paralibrarian Level 4
- *Completion of Paralibrarian Level 3 certification*
- 350 points minimum
- 175 points maximum from any one of the *Sources of Expertise*, with the exception of workshops and conferences which are unlimited. (Pages 5-7)
- Professional development activities in a minimum of **5** of the **6** Categories of Library Service (Page 4)
- All points earned within the three years preceding the application.

Levels 3 & 4 may be submitted together but should be organized as individual levels. .

Preparing your Paralibrarian application

When preparing your documentation:

Determine the *Source of Expertise*, whether from

     a. Experience (Form B)
     b. Education (Form C) – A separate form is required for each degree or certification. Include a copy of diploma, transcript or certification.
     c. Professional development activity (Form D or Form E)
          Form D:
               Hosting organization examples: NHLA, Paralibrarian, CHILIS, READS, NELA, NELA ITS, ALA, WebJunction…
          Description of program from the hosting organization.
          Summary of content learned and how you will apply the information you learned at your home library or how it relates to library service at large.

          Form E:
               Description of the Activity outlined on Page 7.
          Summary of the activity and how you will apply the information you learned at your home library or how it relates to library service at large.

2. Refer to the *Conversion Guidelines for Points* to determine point value

     a. Experience (Form B): see above
     b. Education (Form C): see above
     c. Professional development activity (Form D)
          i. Assign points to one of the *Categories of Library Service*
          ii. Include a brief narrative describing content and value
          iii. Attach a certificate of attendance or Attendance Verification form
     d. Presentation of publication (Form E)
          i. Assign points to one of the *Categories of Library Service*
          ii. Include a detailed narrative of your presentation, or a copy of your publication, or a detailed narrative of your professional reading,

3. If an activity/training does not clearly fit into one of the listed Professional Activities|

     a. Complete a Competency Statement (Form E)
          i. Assign points to one of the *Categories of Library Service*
          ii. Include a detailed narrative of the event/training/experience and how it relates to your current job or career goals
          iii. Include a signature of verification

4. The application must include three copies and one digital copy. These will not be returned to you as they are working copies for the Review Board.

Conversion Guidelines for Points

Source of Expertise	Unit of Measure	Points
Library experience (FTE) *Form B*	12 months	60
Education *Form C*	Non-MLS graduate degree	60
	Bachelor's degree	50
	Associate's degree	25
	Library Media Certification	10
Professional Activities *Form D*		
Library related workshop/program	per hour	4
Library related undergraduate college course	per credit/CEU	5
Library related graduate college course	per credit or SEU	6
Library webinar	per hour	4
Self-paced library related online courses or other non-credit library e- course (ex. ALA, Webjunction, ABLE/SABLE, Lynda.com)	per hour	2
Conference sessions	per session	3
Competency Statement *Form E*		
Library organization:		
Officer/Director/President of association	1 year	16
Committee chair	1 year	16
Committee member	1 year	8
Member of a library association	1 year	4
Presentation and teaching	Based on written narrative and documentation provided.	5-20
Publications	Based on written narrative and documentation provided.	5-20
Professional reading	Based on written narrative and documentation provided.	15
Other learning experiences	Based on written narrative and documentation provided.	5-20

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Forms Appendix: Table of Contents

Review Board Calendar and Submission deadlines:
Visit www.nhlibrarians.org

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form A – Registration/Application
Please print legibly in ink or type. Fill out completely.

Name

Title/position

Library Institution

Address (Library or Home)

City   State   Zip

Email

Phone

Type of Library   Academic   Public   School   Special

I am applying for
 PARA Level I   PARA Level II   PARA Level III   PARA Level IV

___I am a member of NH Library Association. I have enclosed my $20.00 registration fee.
___ I am not a member of NH Library Association. I have enclosed my $50.00 registration fee.
___ I am applying for Certification for the next level within the three year window
               (last level _____dated _____) therefore the fee is waived.

Date submitted: _____

Make check payable to NHLA-Paralibrarians and mail packet and check to

New Hampshire Library Association
Paralibrarian Section
c/o Heather Rainier
hrainier@hooksettlibrary.org
31 Mount Saint Mary's Way Hooksett NH 03106
Van stop: Hooksett/Hooksett Public Library

Send Heather an email to let her know to expect your packet.

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form B – Work Experience

Name:

If multiple employers, complete an individual Form B for each.

The following formula is offered to help you determine your points (if part time) based on FTE (full time equivalency).

I worked (a)_____ hours per week. (b)_____number of hours considered full time at my library.

Year of employment ____ , _____ hours / week
Year of employment _____, ____ hours / week
Year of employment _____, _____hours / week

So (a)_____ divided by (b)_____ = (c)_____ % of FTE
FTE earns 60 points per year and (c)____ % of 60= (d)_____   .
Therefore, I am requesting (d)____points for experience

Library: _____

Director signature: _____ Date: _____

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form B – Volunteer Experience

Name:

If volunteering at multiple libraries, complete an individual Form B for each.

Points for volunteer experience in direct library services shall be awarded at half the rate for points earned as an employed applicant's experience. Volunteer work shall follow the same form as the Work Experience using the following ratio in place of the work experience ratio.

This is the formula for volunteer experience:
I volunteered (a)___ hours per week. (b)_____ number of hours considered full time employment at the library volunteered at.

        So (a)___ divided by (b)____ = (c) ____ % of FTE

        FTE earns 30 points per year and (c)____ % of 30= (d)_____
        .
        Therefore, I am requesting (d) _____points for volunteer experience

Library: _____

Director/Volunteer Coordinator signature: _____

Date: _____

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form C – Education

A separate form is required for each degree or certification with accompanying verification.

Name:_____

Institution: _____

Date awarded: _____

Non-MLS graduate degree

Bachelor's degree

Associate's degree

Professional certification

Types of verification attached (Only one required) (copies only please)

Diploma

Transcript

Certificate

Total points requested

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form D – Professional Development
Please type this form or include an attached typed narrative.

Name: _____

Program title: _____

Hosting organization:_____

Date:_____   Type of Professional Activity:_____

Points requested:_____

Length of program (Sessions must be 45+ minutes):

_____

Category of Library Service:

Subcategory (if applicable):

Verification Attach Certificate of Attendance or Attendance Verification Form

Presenter name:_____

Library / Organization: _____

Description of program from hosting organization:

Summary of content learned: Consider how you will apply the information you learned at your home library or how it relates to library service at large.

Approved   Needs Clarification   Denied

Comments:

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form E – Presenting, Teaching, Writing, Other Learning Experiences
Please type this form or include an attached typed narrative.

A separate form is required for each request and documentation must be provided.

Name:_____

Event/Activity:_____

Date:_____

Points Requested:_____

Category of Library Service:

Subcategory (if applicable):

Include narrative, also include published article if applying for credit for a publication:

Approved   Needs Clarification   Denied

Para Review board member   Date

Comments:

Verification of Attendance

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification Form F

Name: Date:

Conference (if applicable)

Hosting Organization:

Workshop title:

Presenter name:

Library / Organization:

Signature of presenter:

Applicants: Complete form in entirety prior to requesting signature of presenter.

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification

Form G: Points Listing

Professional Activity – Workshops/Classes

Category of Library Service: Public Service (P); Reference/Information Service (R); Technical Service (T); Technology (TX); Administrative/Management (A); General (G)

Date	Category	Name of Workshop/Class	Points Req.	Approved
		Total Workshop/Class points		

Form G: Points Listing

Professional Activity – Webinars

Category of Library Service: Public Service (P); Reference/Information Service (R); Technical Service (T); Technology (TX); Administrative/Management (A); General (G)

Date	Category	Name of Webinar	Length of Webinar	Points Req.	Approved
		Total Webinar points			

Point Caps
Level I   100 Points
Level II   75 Points
Level III   125 Points
Level IV   175 Points

Form G: Points Listing

Professional Activity – Conference Sessions

Category of Library Service: Public Service (P); Reference/Information Service (R); Technical Service (T); Technology (TX); Administrative/Management (A); General (G)

Date	Category	Name of Conference Session	Length of Session	Points Req.	Approved
		Total Conference Session points		

Form G: Points Listing

Professional Activity – Library Organization Membership

Date	Category	Name of Library Organization Membership	Points Req.	Approved
		Total Library Organization Membership points		

Point Caps

Level I	100 Points
Level II	**75 Points**
Level III	**125 Points**
Level IV	**175 Points**

Form G: Points Listing

Professional Activity – Presentations /Teaching / Publications / Professional Reading / Other Learning

Category of Library Service: Public Service (P); Reference/Information Service (R); Technical Service (T); Technology (TX); Administrative/Management (A); General (G)

Date	Category	Name of Other Activity	Points Req.	Approved
		Total Other Activity points		

Point Caps
Level I   100 Points
Level II   75 Points
Level III   125 Points
Level IV   175 Points

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification
Form G: Points Summary Page

	Total Points Requested	Total Points Approved
Library Experience (Form B)		
Education (Form C)		
Workshops/Classes (Form D)		
Webinars (Form D)		
Conferences (Form D)		
Presentations/Teaching (Form E)		
Professional Reading (Form E)		
Library Organization Memberships (Form E)		
Other Activities (Form E)		
Total All Points		

Points needed:

Level I	**200 Points**
Level II	**150 Points**
Level III	**250 Points**
Level IV	**175 Points**

NHLA Paralibrarian Certification

Form H: Level Checklist

This form is to help organize your application and is not part of the application packet.

Please keep for your records.

	Completed
Form A Registration/Application	
Registration fee attached	
Form B Experience (one form for each place of employment)	
Form C Education (if applicable)	
Verification attached	
Form D Professional Activities (one form for each request)	
Selected *Category of Library Service* contains # of points requested	
Verification attached or signature included for each form	
Description from hosting organization included for each form	
Short narrative included for each form	
Form E Competency Statement	
Selected *Category of Library Service* contains # of points requested	
Verification attached or signature included for each form	
Typed narrative included for each form	
Paralibrarian Point Summary completely filled in	
Prior Paralibrarian notification/certification earned (if applicable)	
Prior Paralibrarian Point Summary (if applicable)	