



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**Whatcom County Library System**  
**July 15, 2025**

Via Teams and Administrative Services  
5205 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226

**WCLS Vision:** *An engaged community where curiosity is cultivated, literacy flourishes and democratic ideals thrive.*

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1. 9:00 a.m.      **Call to Order.** Quorum determined. Land Acknowledgement.  
*We are on the ancestral homeland of the Nooksack, Lummi and other Coast Salish peoples. They have been its stewards since time immemorial, respecting the land, river and ocean with the understanding that everything is connected, related and alive. We acknowledge the elders and their collective and individual plights and achievements. We consider the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together today. And we pursue ongoing action, to build lasting relationships and grow together so that all may prosper.*
2. 9:05 a.m.      **Open Public Comment Opportunity**  
*This period is set aside for persons wishing to address the Board. Each person may have up to three minutes for this purpose. Written comments may be submitted to [Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org](mailto:Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org) prior to the meeting.*
3. 9:10 a.m.      **Service Anniversary Recognition – Amy Jones**
4. 9:15 a.m.      **Consent Agenda**
  - a. Meeting Minutes
  - b. Expenditures
5. 9:20 a.m.      **Financial Report and Resolutions**
  - a. Finance Committee Report
  - b. Resolution 07/15/24-12 authorizing an interfund transfer
  - c. Incident Report Mid-Year Summary
6. 9:30 a.m.      **Policy Update**
  - a. Personnel Records Policy 12.03
  - b. Sick Leave Policy 12.22
  - c. Family & Medical Leave Policy 12.23
  - d. Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24
7. 10:00 a.m.      **Birch Bay Easement Update**
8. 10:15 a.m.      **Levy Lid Lift Update**
9. 10:20 a.m.      **BREAK**
10. 10:30 a.m.      **Staff Reports**
11. 10:40 a.m.      **Performance Measures and Committee Reports**
12. 11:00 a.m.      **Announcements and Adjourn**
  - a. Election Day August 5

*Board of Trustees Meetings are open to the public in accordance with RCW 42.30. The Board is currently holding meetings with options for in-person or remote participation. Persons wishing to be provided with an internet link or telephone number to access the meeting are asked to please email [Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org](mailto:Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org) before 4:00 p.m. Monday, July 14, 2025. Written comments may be submitted to [Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org](mailto:Rheannan.Pfnister@wcls.org) prior to the meeting.*



## Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	7/15/2025
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Consent Agenda – Board Meeting Minutes, Monthly Expenditures
Prepared By:	Jackie Saul
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Recommendation or Request:** Approval of consent agenda items

**Suggested Motion for Consideration:** Move approval of consent agenda items as presented

**Summary:**

Meeting Minutes:

- June 17, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Expenditures:

General Fund:

- May 16-31, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1043194573-1043194579 and voucher nos. 562829-562980 totaling \$246,057.78 and June 1-15, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1043371857-1043371860 and voucher nos. 562985-563140 totaling \$241,906.82.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$104,534.23; \$51,007.38 of this is for employee funded contributions to medical, dental and vision insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).
- Claim 2025-22G: warrant nos. 1258106-1258116 totaling \$11,785.06
- Claim 2025-23G: warrant nos. 1258564-1258587 totaling \$145,149.51
- Claim 2025-24G: warrant nos. 1258630-1258651 totaling \$25,338.30
- Claim 2025-25G: warrant nos. 1259075-1259099 totaling \$56,736.06

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2025-11C: warrant no. 1258588 totaling \$3,279.84

**Alternatives:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** Expenditures for approval paid from available 2025 budgeted funds.

**Comments:** The Finance Committee has reviewed the General and Capital Fund claims listed above. They reviewed that there were no General Journal entries in June.

## Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

June 17, 2025

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### Location

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This meeting was held in a hybrid manner, with remote attendance via Microsoft Teams and in-person attendance at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226.

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### In Attendance

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**Trustees: Trustees:** Rodney Lofdahl, Chair; Matthew Santos, Vice Chair; Danielle Gaughen, Secretary; John Miller and Jes Stugelmayer. Absent: None.

**Staff:** Christine Perkins, Executive Director; Michael Cox, Deputy Director; Jackie Saul, Director of Finance and Administration; Mary Vermillion, Community Relations Manager; Lisa Gresham, Collection Services Manager; Ryan Cullup, Facilities Services Manager; Beth Andrews, Human Resources Manager; Dianne Marrs-Smith, Birch Bay and Lynden Library Manager and Friends of the Birch Bay Library (FOBBL) President; Jessica Burson, Foundation Development Director; Maggie Mae Nase, Learning Coordinator; Rheannan Pfnister, Records Management Specialist & Executive Assistant; Sarah Lavender, Youth Services Librarian; Mariya Farmagey, North Fork Branch Manager.

**Guests:** Mark Farmagey.

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### Call to Order

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Rod determined quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., followed by a reading of the WCLS Land Acknowledgement by Michael.

***Rod motioned to move the service anniversary recognition on the agenda to 10 am. Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.***

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### Open Public Comment

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No public comment.

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### Consent Agenda

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The Consent Agenda included minutes of the May 20, 2025, Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as well as the following:

#### Expenditures:

##### General Fund:

- April 16-30, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1042809642-1042809645 and voucher nos. 562517-562667 totaling \$241,102.34 and May 1-15, 2025 payroll: check nos. 1042993462- 1042993468 and voucher nos. 562672-562824 totaling \$245,169.70.
- ACH transactions for employee benefits, telecommunication services and monthly sales/use tax filings totaling \$107,632.93; \$54,555.31 of this is for employee funded contributions to dental and vision

insurance premiums, Health Savings Accounts, PERS and deferred compensation plans (made via payroll deduction).

- Claim 2025-18G: warrant nos. 1256483-1256504 totaling \$22,431.44
- Claim 2025-19G: warrant nos. 1256744-1256765 totaling \$121,327.31
- Claim 2025-20G: warrant nos. 1257090-1257106 totaling \$12,597.22
- Claim 2025-21G: warrant nos. 1257657-1257678 totaling \$67,088.95

Capital Fund:

- Claim 2025-08C: warrant no. 1256766 totaling \$449.04
- Claim 2025-09C: warrant no. 1257107 totaling \$375.00
- Claim 2025-10C: warrant no. 1257679 totaling \$78.13

Authorization to Void a Warrant

- Resolution 06/17/25-10 voiding warrant no. 1256361

***John moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded. Unanimous board approval.***

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Financial Report and Resolutions: Finance Committee Report

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Jackie reviewed her report, including the May Notes and Highlights section. WCLS has received 54.5% of property taxes for the year. The next tax payments are not expected until October. WCLS will likely need to access the cash flow reserves again in August or September.

Rod inquired about PERS rates going down. Jackie clarified the reasoning behind it and that rates may return to higher levels in 2029.

The presented budget amendment makes no change to the ending fund balance. This amendment shifts funds between accounts for various projects and adds grant revenue from the Whatcom County Library Foundation for the Library Game.

Rod asked if there was any insight as to why the recent IT audit was less expensive than the previous one. Jackie speculated that it could be that WCLS used a different firm than the previous audit. Christine noted that the prior audit had a larger scope, including drafting policies and procedures.

***John moved to approve Resolution 06/17/25-11 amending the 2025 General Fund Budget. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

Jackie briefly reviewed the 2024 Annual Report she submitted to the State Auditor including the notes. The Trustees had no questions or comments.

Jackie presented a Cooperative Purchasing Agreement and explained “piggybacking” as it relates to procurement for the Birch Bay Library Express project. The WCLS Purchasing and Contracting policy requires the Board approve such agreements.

***Rod moved to approve Cooperative Purchasing Agreement with Omnia Partners. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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Trustee Education – Summer Reading

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Youth Services Librarian Sarah Lavender joined the Board of Trustees meeting to speak about the current Summer Reading season that began on June 1. She reviewed the Summer Reading goals for 2025. Each Trustee received a summer reading card from Sarah. She explained how to complete the cards and encouraged trustees to stop by their local branch and learn more and report their progress.

People’s Bank and the Whatcom County Library Foundation are sponsoring this year’s program. Thanks to these sponsors, WCLS will be hosting kick-off parties at each branch to celebrate the start of Summer Reading. For

those collecting cards for the Library Game, there will be a Library Game card to collect during the kick-off parties. There will also be a Celebration Day at the branches to close Summer Reading in August.

People's Bank will also be promoting Summer Reading in their bank lobbies. As part of their sponsorship, People's Bank is doing a home buying seminar for patrons at the Everson Library.

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## Policy Updates

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**Public Records Policy 21.01** –WCLS regularly reviews policies and updates them to follow best practices. This update focuses on clarifying the fees associated with public records requests and the payment methods WCLS is able to accept. There are a few other minor updates to wording regarding exemptions.

Rod asked about the acceptable payment methods stated. Christine and Jackie clarified that WCLS will accept personal checks and money orders by mail and personal checks, money orders and cash in-person at Administrative Services. Currently, WCLS does not have the ability to accept credit card payments for fees unassociated with a patron's library account.

The updated policy reinforces WCLS's practice to follow the State statute about fee collection regarding public records requests moving forward.

***John moved to approve the updated Public Records Policy 21.01, as presented. Seconded. Passed unanimously.***

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## Levy Lid Lift Update

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Christine and Michael are continuing their informational presentations for community groups around Whatcom County. Weekly posts are being shared with staff that help keep them up to date. Later this summer, WCLS will be mailing an informational card to households with information about the levy.

John was contacted by the League of Women Voters regarding the August ballot measure. They are interested in sharing informational materials related to the levy lid lift.

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## Break

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Rod adjourned for a break from 9:54 – 10:03 a.m.

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## Service Anniversary Recognition

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Although Mariya Farmagey has been the North Fork Branch Manager for the last one and half years, she is not new to WCLS or the North Fork Library. Mariya has deep institutional knowledge and started at the Maple Falls Library before the North Fork Library existed. She has also worked as a real estate agent in the area. She co-leads trilingual storytime and highlights many resources for the local community. She's thoughtful, shares her voice when it matters most and makes everyone who visits the library feel welcome. She connects with all, but especially with Ukrainian and Russian patrons. She helped bring the Freedge at the North Fork Library to fruition and is working towards getting a dedicated meeting space for the branch. Mariya thanked WCLS for allowing her to pursue some of her passion projects for the community.

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## Staff Reports: Executive Director

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In addition to her written report, Christine shared that WCLS learned on Friday morning that a group booked the meeting room at the Ferndale Library for that afternoon to make signs for a protest and planned to use the library parking lot to gather prior to the protest. The group was respectful while in the library and even cleaned and vacuumed after they finished making their signs. This was not a library sponsored event. Christine reminded the Board that all community members are able to book and use the meeting spaces at WCLS branches as long as policies are followed.

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### Staff Reports: Deputy Director

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In addition to his written report, Michael shared that after the Whatcom Grooves concert at Glenhaven in July, there will be another band sponsored by the Glenhaven Lakes Club, who will be selling alcohol. Since this event will not be taking place on library property, the Board does not need to approve alcohol use during the event.

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### Staff Reports: Youth Services Manager

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Thom was not present for the Board meeting. Christine presented his written report.

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### Staff Reports: Community Relations Manager

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Mary discussed her written report. She noted that Rod has a fan base after his podcast episode last month. She encouraged all to listen to the episode he is featured in.

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### Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Performance Measures

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In addition to his written report, Michael shared that the circulation increase in May at Northwest Indian College is not a fluke. A patron with an educator card has been checking out items at this partner location.

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### Performance Measures & Committee Reports: IT Services Committee

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The IT Services Committee reported there is a committee meeting on Monday, June 23 at 11:00 a.m.

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### Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Personnel Committee

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Rod inquired about the negotiation dates for this October. Beth will contact the bargaining teams to schedule union negotiations.

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### Performance Measures & Committee Reports: Whatcom County Library Foundation

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Jessica reported that the Foundation is on budget for the year. Work on Branch Out in September has begun. Trustees should receive a Branch Out save the date soon. She received helpful feedback from the Branch Out survey sent to staff and Board members in May.

Jessica is currently putting together a donor recognition system with the goal to decrease the transactional feeling for donors and increase personal interactions between WCLF and donors. After going through PayPal payments from Library Giving Day in April, Jessica found that many of these payments were from first time donors and had encouraging comments about WCLS. Jessica read a few comments for the Board.

Jessica will present a proposal to change over to a new donor database at the June WCLF Board meeting. This switch will allow Jessica to devote more time to pursuing those personal interactions with donors and assist with her role's efficiency. Costs are annually the same with a small increase this year because of startup costs. The hope is for the Foundation to be fully integrated into the new database by Branch Out in September.

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### Announcements and Adjourn

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No further announcements.

Rod adjourned the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

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## Next Meeting

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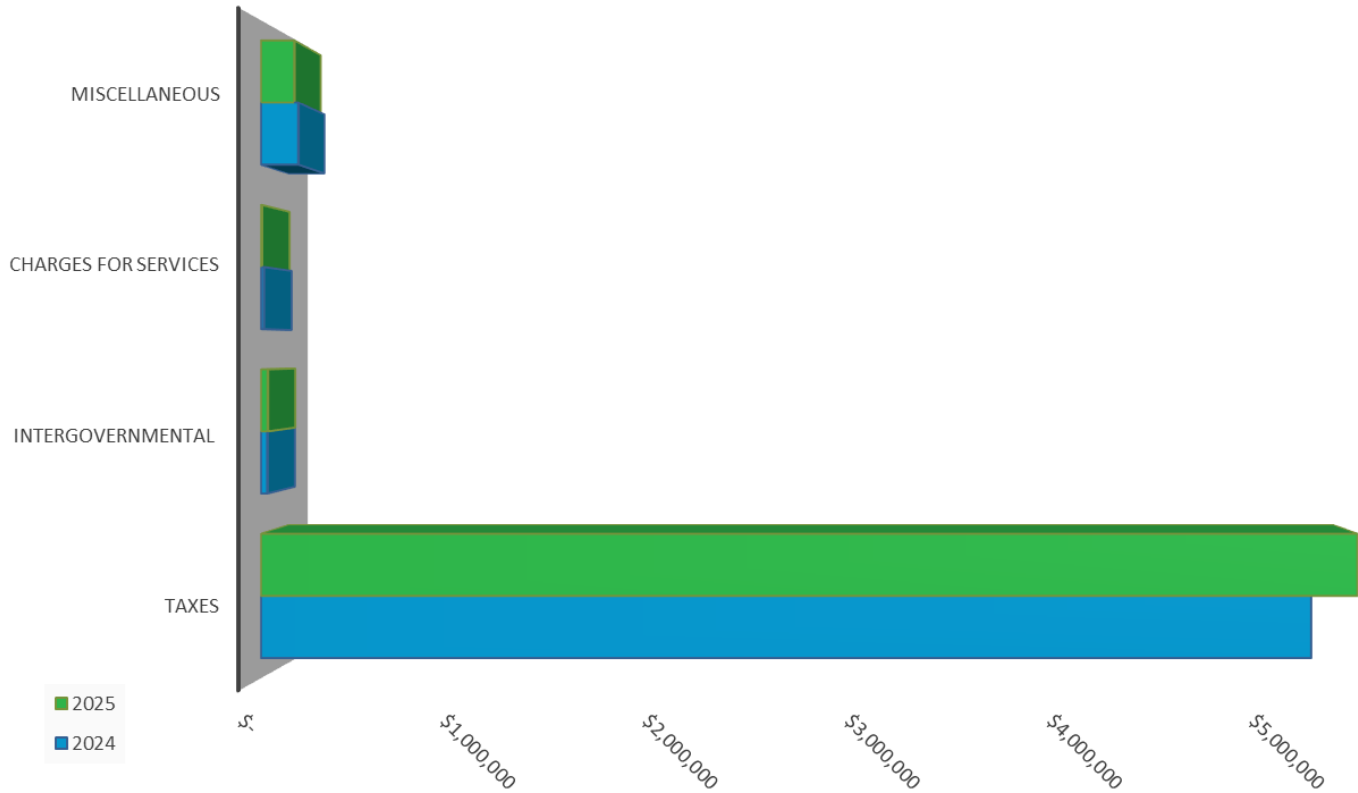
The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on July 15, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. online via Microsoft Teams and at Administrative Services, 5205 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226.

<hr/> Danielle Gaughen, Board Secretary	<hr/> 07/15/2025 Date	<hr/> Rheannan Pfnister, Exec. Assistant
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**2025 Budget Revenues - Year-To-Date  
June 2025 (50% of FY)**

Acct No	Description	Budgeted Revenues	Actual Revenues YTD	% of Actual Revenues YTD	% of Budgeted Revenues Received YTD	Budget Variance
310	<b>TAXES</b>					
311.10	General Property Taxes	\$ 10,153,717	\$ 5,624,666	96.39%	55.40%	\$ (4,529,051)
	<b>TOTAL TAXES</b>	<b>10,153,717</b>	<b>5,624,666</b>	<b>96.39%</b>	<b>55.40%</b>	<b>(4,529,051)</b>
330	<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE</b>					
333.4530	Fed Indirect Grant - IMLS	2,000	400	0.01%	20.00%	(1,600)
337.1000	Local Grants, Entitlements & Other	45,000	22,362	0.38%	49.69%	(22,638)
337.2000	Leasehold Excise Tax	30,000	12,068	0.21%	40.23%	(17,932)
	<b>TOTAL INTERGOV. REVENUE</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>34,831</b>	<b>0.60%</b>	<b>45.23%</b>	<b>(42,169)</b>
340	<b>CHARGES FOR GOODS &amp; SERVICES</b>					
347.2001	Printing & Duplication Services	6,000	3,425	0.06%	57.08%	(2,575)
347.2002	Library Use Fees	12,400	737	0.01%	5.94%	(11,663)
	<b>TOTAL CHARGES FOR SERVICES</b>	<b>18,400</b>	<b>4,162</b>	<b>0.07%</b>	<b>22.62%</b>	<b>(14,238)</b>
360	<b>MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES</b>					
361.1100	Investment Interest	352,000	130,249	2.23%	37.00%	(221,751)
362.1000	Rents & Leases	3,000	1,520	0.03%	50.67%	(1,480)
367.1000	Contributions & Donations	44,000	25,708	0.44%	58.43%	(18,292)
369.1000	Sale of Surplus	100	70	0.00%	70.00%	(30)
369.8100	Cashier's Overages or Shortages	-	20.32	0.00%	0.00%	20
369.9101	Other Misc. Revenue	22,000	8,987	0.15%	40.85%	(13,013)
369.9102	Reimburse Lost/Damaged Books	11,000	4,909	0.08%	44.62%	(6,091)
369.9105	E-Rate Reimbursement	15,000	-	0.00%	0.00%	(15,000)
	<b>TOTAL MISC. REVENUES</b>	<b>447,100</b>	<b>171,463</b>	<b>2.94%</b>	<b>38.35%</b>	<b>(275,637)</b>
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>10,696,217</b>	<b>5,835,121</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>54.55%</b>	<b>(4,861,096)</b>
390	<b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES</b>					
395.1000	Proceeds from Sale of Capital Assets	-	-	0.00%	0.00%	-
	<b>TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 10,696,217</b>	<b>\$ 5,835,121</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>54.55%</b>	<b>\$ (4,861,096)</b>

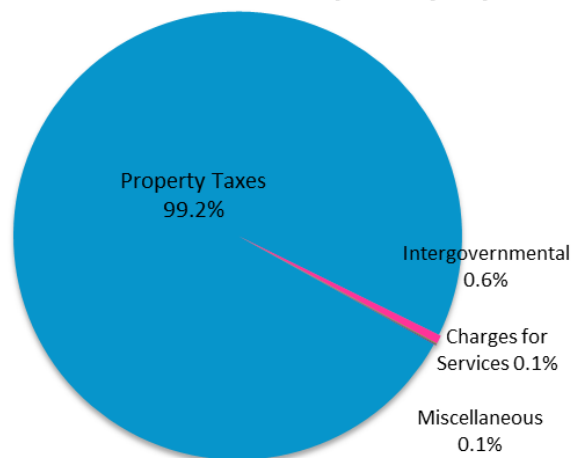
## General Fund Operating Revenue to Date-Compared to Prior Year



### Actual General Fund Revenue Year to Date Comparison

		2024	2025	% Change
Taxes	\$	5,386,467	\$ 5,624,666	4.42%
Intergovernmental		32,585	34,831	6.89%
Charges for Services		14,810	4,162	-71.90%
Miscellaneous		191,790	171,463	-10.60%
Total Operating Revenue		5,625,653	5,835,121	3.72%
Other Financing Sources		-	-	0.00%
Total Revenue	\$	5,625,653	\$ 5,835,121	3.72%

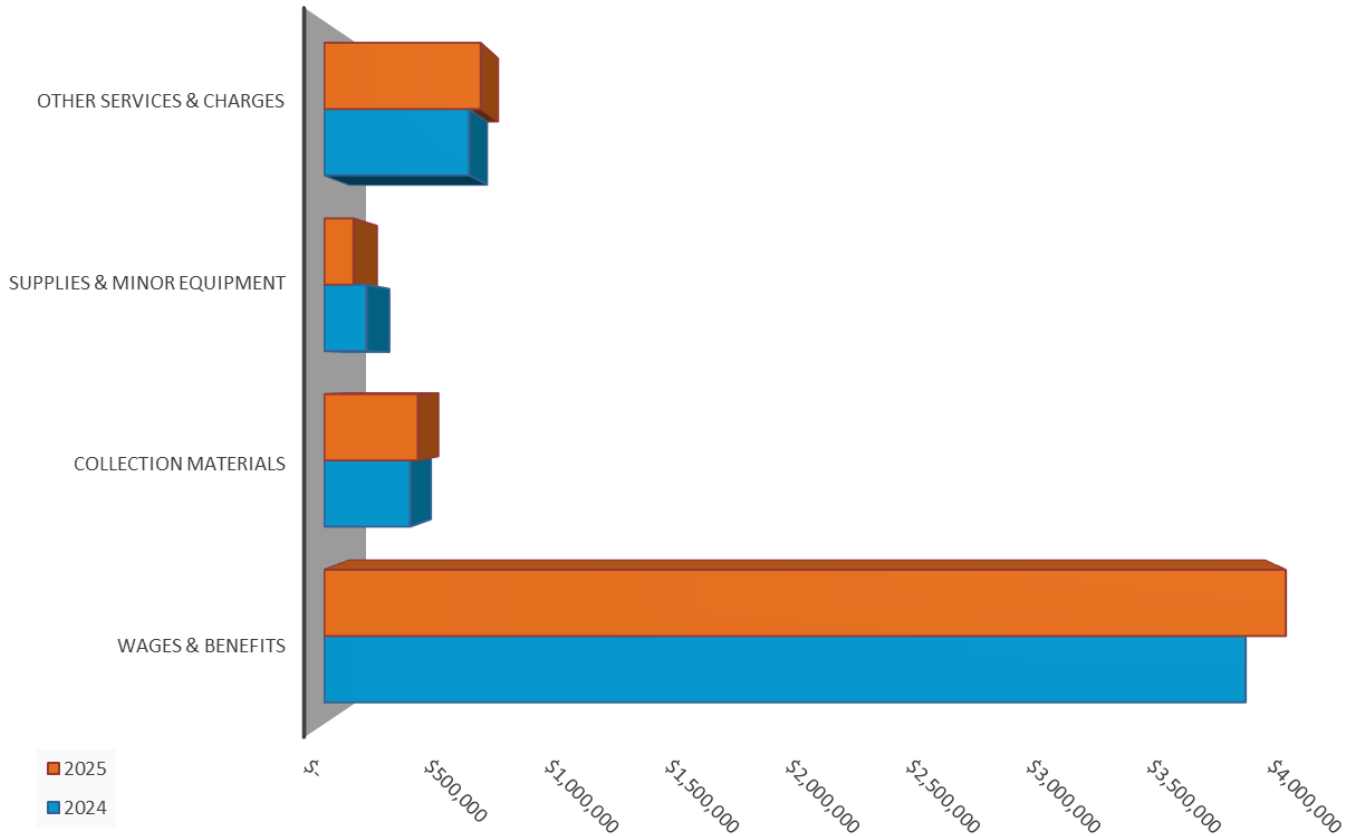
### YTD Revenue by category



**2025 Budget Expenditures - Year-To-Date  
June 2025 (50% of FY)**

Acct No	Description	Budgeted Expenditures	Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Actual Expenditures YTD	% of Budgeted Expenditures Spent YTD	Budget Variance
572	<b>SALARIES, WAGES, &amp; BENEFITS</b>					
572.1000	Salaries and Wages	\$ 6,289,075	3,066,810	57.43%	48.76%	\$ (3,222,265)
572.2000	Benefits	2,210,792	1,070,657	20.05%	48.43%	(1,140,136)
	<b>TOTAL SALARIES, WAGES, &amp; BENEFITS</b>	<b>8,499,867</b>	<b>4,137,467</b>	<b>77.49%</b>	<b>48.68%</b>	<b>(4,362,401)</b>
572.30	<b>SUPPLIES &amp; MINOR EQUIPMENT</b>					
572.3031	Office & Operating Supplies	169,570	70,808	1.33%	41.76%	(98,762)
572.3032	Fuel	24,050	7,347	0.14%	30.55%	(16,703)
572.3034	Collection Materials	1,275,000	403,074	7.55%	31.61%	(871,926)
572.3035	Small Tools & Minor Equipment	204,650	47,800	0.90%	23.36%	(156,850)
	<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES &amp; MINOR EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>1,673,270</b>	<b>529,029</b>	<b>9.91%</b>	<b>31.62%</b>	<b>(1,144,241)</b>
572.40	<b>OTHER SERVICES &amp; CHARGES</b>					
572.4041	Professional Services	695,115	338,154	6.33%	48.65%	(356,961)
572.4042	Communication	140,788	79,104	1.48%	56.19%	(61,684)
572.4043	Travel	30,600	11,169	0.21%	36.50%	(19,431)
572.4044	Taxes & Operating Assessments	550	317	0.01%	57.61%	(233)
572.4045	Operating Rentals & Leases	22,423	10,654	0.20%	47.51%	(11,770)
572.4046	Insurance	99,537	76,120	1.43%	76.47%	(23,417)
572.4047	Utilities	166,424	88,489	1.66%	53.17%	(77,935)
572.4048	Repair & Maintenance	112,740	30,794	0.58%	27.31%	(81,946)
572.4049	Miscellaneous	110,920	38,370	0.72%	34.59%	(72,550)
	<b>TOTAL OTHER SERVICES &amp; CHARGES</b>	<b>1,379,097</b>	<b>673,171</b>	<b>12.61%</b>	<b>48.81%</b>	<b>(705,926)</b>
	<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>11,552,235</b>	<b>5,339,667</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>46.22%</b>	<b>(6,212,568)</b>
590	<b>OTHER FINANCING USES</b>					
597.1000	Transfers to Capital	78,164	-	0.00%	0.00%	-
	<b>TOTAL OTHER FINANCING USES</b>	<b>78,164</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 11,630,398</b>	<b>5,339,667</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>45.91%</b>	<b>\$ (6,290,732)</b>
	<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$ (934,181)</b>	<b>495,455</b>			<b>\$ 1,429,636</b>
	<b>FUND BALANCE SUMMARY</b>					
	Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 9,932,448	9,932,448			
	Net Income	(934,181)	495,455			1,429,636
	Ending Fund Balance	\$ 8,998,267	10,427,903			\$ 1,429,636

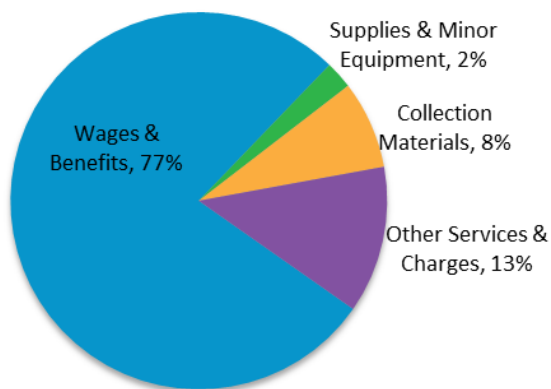
## General Fund Operating Expenditures to Date-Compared to Prior Year



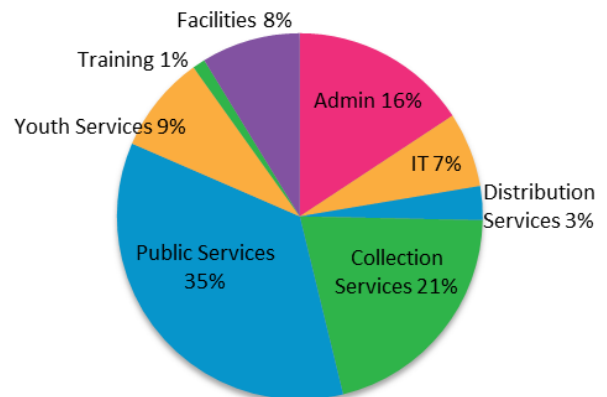
### Actual General Fund Expenditures Year to Date Comparison

	2024	2025	% Change
Wages & Benefits	\$ 3,964,556	\$ 4,137,467	4.36%
Collection Materials	369,785	403,074	9.00%
Supplies & Minor Equipment	181,899	125,955	-30.76%
Other Services & Charges	623,300	673,171	8.00%
Total Operating Expenditures	5,139,540	5,339,667	3.89%
Other Financing Uses	-	-	0.00%
Total Expenditures	\$ 5,139,540	\$ 5,339,667	3.89%
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 486,113</b>	<b>\$ 495,455</b>	<b>1.92%</b>

### YTD Expense by Category



### YTD Expense by Department



<b>Fund Balance Summary</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>	<b>2025 Budgeted</b>	<b>2025 Actual to Date</b>
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 10,612,545	9,932,448	\$ 9,932,448
Revenue	10,517,581	10,696,217	5,835,121
Expenditures	(10,967,678)	(11,630,398)	(5,339,667)
Transfer to (from) Reserves	(230,000)	-	-
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$ 9,932,448</b>	<b>\$ 8,998,267</b>	<b>\$ 10,427,903</b>

<b>Ending Fund Balance Designation Detail</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>	<b>2025 Budgeted</b>	<b>2025 Actual to Date</b>
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Cash Flow	\$ 3,639,587	\$ 3,767,044	\$ 3,767,044
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Emergency	926,588	951,274	951,274
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Capital Transfer	94,135	78,164	78,164
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Unemployment Comp Reserve	14,662	15,560	15,560
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Birch Bay Operating Fund	600,000	580,000	600,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Ownership & Library Svcs Fund	3,192,315	2,967,315	2,967,315
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Facility Maintenance Fund	650,000	550,000	550,000
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Operating Cost Stabilization Fund	250,000	-	-
Designated Ending Fund Balance - Collection Project Fund	172,000	-	-
Total Designated Ending Fund Balance	9,539,286	8,909,357	8,929,357
Beginning Fund Balance less designated funds	1,073,259	1,023,091	1,003,091
Transfer to (from) Reserves	(230,000)	-	-
Net Income	(450,097)	(934,181)	495,455
Ending Unassigned Funds with no designation	393,162	88,910	1,498,546
Ending Designated Funds	9,539,286	8,909,357	8,929,357
<b>Total Ending Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$ 9,932,448</b>	<b>\$ 8,998,267</b>	<b>\$ 10,427,903</b>

## June Summary

- As of the end of June, half-way through our fiscal year, we have received \$5,835,121, which is 55% of budgeted operating revenue.
- Operating expenditures are tracking close to budget at \$5,339,667 (46%), resulting in a year-to-date net income of \$495,455. This surplus, along with cash flow reserves, will provide cash flow until the next property tax revenue influx in October. We will likely not access cash flow reserves until August.
- The State Auditor's Office Financial Intelligence Tool (FIT) is an interactive online resource for reviewing financial data of local governments in Washington State. It's available for public officials and community members to learn more about the financial condition and fiscal health of governmental agencies. [The WCLS FIT report](#) was recently updated to include 2024 data. Of note:
  - WCLS ranks ninth across all library districts in the state for revenue, expenditures and taxes.
  - WCLS ranks "good" in all measures of fiscal health.



## Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	7/15/2025
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Resolution 07/15/25-12 Authorizing an Interfund Transfer
Prepared By:	Jackie Saul
Impact upon Budget?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Recommendation or Request:** Approval of Resolution 07/15/25-12 authorizing an interfund transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Fund as presented.

**Suggested Motion for Consideration:** Move approval of Resolution 07/15/25-12 authorizing an interfund transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Fund as presented.

**Summary:** The Board of Trustees budgeted for the transfer of \$78,164 from the General Fund to the Capital Fund during the 2025 fiscal year. Monies are currently available in the General Fund to complete this transfer.

**Alternatives:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** Transfers \$78,164 from the General Fund to the Capital Fund.

**Comments:** None



## RESOLUTION NO. 07/15/25-12

### A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE WHATCOM COUNTY RURAL LIBRARY DISTRICT AUTHORIZING AN INTERFUND TRANSFER

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**WHEREAS**, the Whatcom County Rural Library District in Resolution 12/29/80-21 established a Cumulative Reserve Fund for the purpose of acquisition, enlargement or improvement of the real or personal property of the Library District; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Cumulative Reserve Fund was renamed the Capital Fund in Resolution 09/23/08-12; and,

**WHEREAS**, \$78,164 has been budgeted to be transferred from the General Fund to the Capital Fund during the 2025 fiscal year;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that \$78,164 be transferred from the Whatcom County Rural Library District General fund into the Whatcom County Rural Library District Capital Fund.

Approved by the Whatcom County Rural Library District Board of Trustees this 15<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2025

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Rodney Lofdahl, Chair

This mid-year update on incident reports is provided in response to a request from the Board of Trustees at the January 2025 meeting.

- Thus far in 2025, there have been 33 incidents reports, which appears to be a downward trend. If we continue at this rate, total incident reports in 2025 will be 31% fewer than in 2024 and 6% fewer than in 2023.

2025 estimate: 66

2024: 96

2023: 70

- Most incidents occurred at Ferndale (eleven), Blaine (seven) and Lynden (five). All other locations had four or fewer incidents.
- Ferndale is experiencing a downward trend, as there were 58 incidents in 2024.
- Blaine is seeing an increase, having only five incidents reported in 2024. The incidents were primarily Harassment/Threat to a Patron or Suspicious Activity, and three involved the same individual who is currently suspended from library services.
- Most recurring incidents were Patron Accident/Injury/Illness (ten) and Harassment/Threat to a Patron (seven).
- Three suspensions and four trespasses have been issued, compared to eleven suspensions and five trespasses in 2024.

	AS	BL	DE	EV	FE	LY	SU	Total
<b>Staff Injury or Illness</b>	1	1				1		3
<b>Vehicle Accident</b>								0
<b>Damage/Theft of Patron Property</b>								0
<b>Damage/Theft of WCLS Property</b>	1				1			2
<b>Disruptive Behavior</b>								0
<b>Graffiti/Damage to Building not owned by WCLS</b>					3			3
<b>Harassment/Threat to Patron</b>		4		2	1			7
<b>Harassment/Threat to Staff</b>	1				1			2
<b>Minor Left After Closing</b>								0
<b>Patron Accident/Injury/Illness</b>			2	1	4	3		10
<b>Suspicious Activity/Object</b>		2		1			1	4
<b>Other*</b>					1	1		2
<b>Total</b>	3	7	2	4	11	5	1	33

*No incidents were reported at Birch Bay, Island, North Fork, Point Roberts or South Whatcom*

<b>*Other detail</b>	<b>FE</b>	<b>LY</b>
Tent set up in parking lot	1	
Suspected gas leak		1



## Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date:	7/15/2025
Committee or Department:	Administration Department
Subject:	Updates to Personnel Records Policy 12.03, Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23, and Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24
Prepared By:	Beth Andrews
Impact upon Budget?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Supporting Documents:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Recommendation or Request:** Approval of Personnel Records Policy 12.03, Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23, and Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24 as presented

**Suggested Motion for Consideration:** Move approval of Personnel Records Policy 12.03, Sick Leave Policy 12.22, Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23, and Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24 as presented.

**Summary:** Per recent Legislative updates, the following policies require updating to maintain compliance with State law:

Personnel Records Policy 12.03 – Updated to match the definition of what records are included in an employee’s personnel file, and who has access to them. We will be developing a procedure to outline the process for personnel records requests that aligns with the provisions of the House Bill that was passed.

Sick Leave Policy 12.22 – Expanded approved uses of sick leave to include the need to prepare for or attend judicial or administrative immigration proceedings involving the employee or the employee's family member.

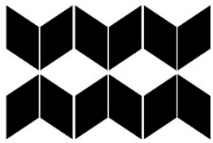
Family and Medical Leave Policy 12.23 – Update language to match the Legislative updates. Expanded minimum use from eight to four consecutive hours, expanded job and benefit protection to not extend beyond a period of unpaid FMLA leave where the employee was eligible for WApfml but did not use it.

Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24 – Expanded to include time missed from work in relation to addressing hate crimes for employees and family members, and expands definition of family member in this policy to align with other WCLS policies.

**Alternatives:** Policies would be out of legal compliance if not approved.

**Fiscal Impact:** none

**Comments:** none



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## PERSONNEL RECORDS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.03

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### SCOPE

This policy applies to all WCLS employees.

Personnel records are maintained for all WCLS employees and are the property of WCLS. ~~The records include~~The following records will be retained as part of thean employee's personnel records if they exist:; all job application records, all performance evaluations, among other things, an employee's application, any examination materials, reports of the results of any employment reference checks, information on positions held and pay rates received, performance evaluations, letters of appreciation and commendation, letters of reprimand, all nonactive or closed disciplinary records, all leave and accommodation agreements, all payroll records, and all employment agreements. education/training information, and notes regarding any disciplinary actions or other counseling sessions. Any other records retained are not considered part of the employee's personnel records. WCLS will store and retain employee p~~Personnel and other records appropriately according to state and federal laws and rules. must be retained for at least six years following termination of employment.~~

An employee's personnel records are confidential, except as required by state or federal law, or in legal proceedings. Only the employee, the employee's immediate supervisor and Department Head, the Director of Finance and Administration, Human Resources, and the Executive Director may examine employee personnel records. Employees and former employees are entitled to review their own personnel ~~records~~file upon written request to the Executive Director, or Human Resources, or Records Management Specialist & Executive Assistant, within three years after their separation from WCLS, as outlined in Personnel Record Request Administrative Procedure 12.03.01. ~~Employees may request the removal of the information they deem irrelevant or erroneous. Final determination of the retention of such material shall be made by the Executive Director. The employee shall have the opportunity to submit a letter of rebuttal regarding any information contained in the file that is in dispute. Nothing in this policy precludes the maintenance of a "Confidential File" which contains items of a highly-sensitive nature or items that have been removed from an employee's personnel file. The disposal of personnel records is the responsibility of Human Resources.~~

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Verification of Employment/Reference Policy 12.04.](#)

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 40.14.070 Destruction, disposition, donation of local government records](#)—Preservation for historical interest—Local records committee, duties—Record retention schedules—Sealed records; WAC 434-635-050 (Record Retention); [RCW 49.12.240](#); [RCW 49.12.250](#); [HB-1308-S.SL](#); [RCW 42.56](#)

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## APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
April 1988	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
March 17, 1993	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
March 15, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
August 15, 2017	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke



## PERSONNEL RECORDS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.03

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### SCOPE

This policy applies to all WCLS employees.

Personnel records are maintained for all WCLS employees and are the property of WCLS. The following records will be retained as part of an employee's personnel records if they exist: all job application records, all performance evaluations, all nonactive or closed disciplinary records, all leave and accommodation agreements, all payroll records, and all employment agreements. Any other records retained are not considered part of the employee's personnel records. WCLS will store and retain employee personnel and other records appropriately according to state and federal laws and rules.

An employee's personnel records are confidential, except as required by state or federal law, or in legal proceedings. Only the employee, the employee's immediate supervisor and Department Head, the Director of Finance and Administration, Human Resources, and the Executive Director may examine employee personnel records. Employees and former employees are entitled to review their own personnel records upon written request to the Executive Director, Human Resources, or Records Management Specialist & Executive Assistant, within three years after their separation from WCLS, as outlined in Personnel Record Request Administrative Procedure 12.03.01.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Verification of Employment/Reference Policy 12.04.](#)

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 40.14.070 Destruction, disposition, donation of local government records](#)—Preservation for historical interest—Local records committee, duties—Record retention schedules—Sealed records; [RCW 42.56 Public Records Act](#); [RCW 49.12.240 Employee inspection of personnel file](#); [RCW 49.12.250 Employee inspection of personnel file – Erroneous or disputed information](#); [HB-1308-S.SL](#); [WAC 434-635-050 \(Record Retention\)](#).

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### APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
April 1988	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
March 17, 1993	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Approval Signature</b>
March 15, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
August 15, 2017	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
July 15, 2025	Revised to align with legislative updates.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



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## SICK LEAVE POLICY

**POLICY NUMBER: 12.22**

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### SCOPE

All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. The Whatcom County Library System follows Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law RCW 49.46.210.

### ACCRUAL RATE, CARRY OVER AND CAP

Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for bargaining unit employees are detailed in the current bargaining agreement. Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for exempt management employees are detailed in the Management Benefits and Leave Policy.

For all other employees, sick leave will accrue at a rate of one (1) hour of paid sick leave for every forty (40) hours worked. Sick leave begins to accrue at the start of employment, and is available upon accrual. Any unused paid sick leave will carry over to the following year with a cap of two hundred (200) hours.

### FAMILY MEMBER DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, the term "family member" includes the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and the employee's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and sibling (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian); and the child, parent, and sibling of the spouse or domestic partner of the employee, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual, as further outlined in RCW 49.46.210 (2). Use of sick leave for the care of persons other than those defined as a close relative may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Director and Human Resources Manager.

### ELIGIBLE REASONS FOR USE

Employees may use accrued paid sick leave to cover absences due to:

- Employee's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- Employee's care for a family member's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- When the employee's place of business has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason, or when an employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for such a health-related reason or after the declaration of an emergency by a local or state government or agency, or by the federal government.
  - When a closure is made under Emergency Closure Policy 12.35, the employee will be compensated using Emergency Closure Pay and eligible use of sick leave will not be necessary.
- Absences due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- The need to prepare for, or participate in, any judicial or administrative immigration proceeding involving the employee or employee's family.

#### **RATE OF PAY FOR SICK LEAVE**

Paid sick leave hours will be compensated at an employee's regular rate of pay. The minimum increment of paid sick leave use is fifteen (15) minutes. Paid sick leave hours will not count towards the calculation of overtime.

#### **ABSENCES EXCEEDING THREE DAYS**

When paid sick leave usage exceeds three consecutive scheduled work days, WCLS may ask the employee for verification from a health care provider that the absence is for an eligible reason. WCLS will NOT require an explanation about the nature of the condition. Verification must be provided within ten (10) calendar days of the first day an employee used paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member.

If an employee believes obtaining verification for use of paid sick leave would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, they should contact the Human Resources Manager orally or in writing. They must indicate that the absence is for an authorized purpose and explain why verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense. Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request, the Human Resources Manager will work with the employee to identify an alternative for the employee to meet the verification requirement in a way that does not result in an unreasonable burden or expense.

#### **REASONABLE NOTICE OF ABSENCE**

If an employee's absence is unforeseeable, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. When the need for leave arises before the start of their shift, the employee must notify their supervisor of their inability to work at least one (1) hour prior to the beginning of their shift. When possible, the notification should include the expected duration of the absence.

If an absence is foreseeable, the employee will provide notice at least ten (10) days, or as early as possible, before the first day paid sick leave is used.

#### **RETALIATION PROHIBITED**

WCLS will not discipline or retaliate against an employee for the lawful use of paid sick leave.

#### **SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

If an employee separates from employment, there will not be a financial or other reimbursement to the employee for accrued, unused paid sick leave at the time of separation.

#### **REINSTATEMENT OF HOURS UPON REHIRE**

If rehired within twelve months of the date of separation, the separated employee will have 100% of unused paid sick leave accruals reinstated. If rehired in the following year, WCLS will reinstate no more than 200 hours of a rehired employee's previously accrued unused sick leave.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14](#); [Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20](#); [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\) Policy 12.23](#); [Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24](#); [Emergency Closure Policy 12.35](#); [Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40](#).

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 49.46.210 Paid sick leave](#)—Authorized purposes—Limitations—“Family member” defined.

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**APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
December 19, 2017	Approved.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
March 19, 2024	Revised to clarify sick leave guidelines for all staff.	Jackie Saul & Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Matthew Santos
December 17, 2024	Revised to update “family member” definition.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rodney Lofdahl



## SICK LEAVE POLICY

**POLICY NUMBER: 12.22**

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### SCOPE

All employees of the Whatcom County Library System.

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. The Whatcom County Library System follows Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law RCW 49.46.210.

### ACCRUAL RATE, CARRY OVER AND CAP

Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for bargaining unit employees are detailed in the current bargaining agreement. Sick leave accrual rates, cap and carry over for exempt management employees are detailed in the Management Benefits and Leave Policy.

For all other employees, sick leave will accrue at a rate of one (1) hour of paid sick leave for every forty (40) hours worked. Sick leave begins to accrue at the start of employment, and is available upon accrual. Any unused paid sick leave will carry over to the following year with a cap of two hundred (200) hours.

### FAMILY MEMBER DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, the term "family member" includes the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and the employee's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and sibling (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian); and the child, parent, and sibling of the spouse or domestic partner of the employee, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual, as further outlined in RCW 49.46.210 (2). Use of sick leave for the care of persons other than those defined as a close relative may be considered at the discretion of the Executive Director and Human Resources Manager.

### ELIGIBLE REASONS FOR USE

Employees may use accrued paid sick leave to cover absences due to:

- Employee's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- Employee's care for a family member's illness (mental or physical), injury, or health condition, and for preventive care.
- When the employee's place of business has been closed by order of a public official for any health-related reason, or when an employee's child's school or place of care has been closed for such a health-related reason or after the declaration of an emergency by a local or state government or agency, or by the federal government.
  - When a closure is made under Emergency Closure Policy 12.35, the employee will be compensated using Emergency Closure Pay and eligible use of sick leave will not be necessary.
- Absences due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- The need to prepare for, or participate in, any judicial or administrative immigration proceeding involving the employee or employee's family.

#### **RATE OF PAY FOR SICK LEAVE**

Paid sick leave hours will be compensated at an employee's regular rate of pay. The minimum increment of paid sick leave use is fifteen (15) minutes. Paid sick leave hours will not count towards the calculation of overtime.

#### **ABSENCES EXCEEDING THREE DAYS**

When paid sick leave usage exceeds three consecutive scheduled work days, WCLS may ask the employee for verification from a health care provider that the absence is for an eligible reason. WCLS will NOT require an explanation about the nature of the condition. Verification must be provided within ten (10) calendar days of the first day an employee used paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member.

If an employee believes obtaining verification for use of paid sick leave would result in an unreasonable burden or expense, they should contact the Human Resources Manager orally or in writing. They must indicate that the absence is for an authorized purpose and explain why verification would result in an unreasonable burden or expense. Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request, the Human Resources Manager will work with the employee to identify an alternative for the employee to meet the verification requirement in a way that does not result in an unreasonable burden or expense.

#### **REASONABLE NOTICE OF ABSENCE**

If an employee's absence is unforeseeable, the employee must contact their supervisor as soon as possible. When the need for leave arises before the start of their shift, the employee must notify their supervisor of their inability to work at least one (1) hour prior to the beginning of their shift. When possible, the notification should include the expected duration of the absence.

If an absence is foreseeable, the employee will provide notice at least ten (10) days, or as early as possible, before the first day paid sick leave is used.

#### **RETALIATION PROHIBITED**

WCLS will not discipline or retaliate against an employee for the lawful use of paid sick leave.

#### **SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

If an employee separates from employment, there will not be a financial or other reimbursement to the employee for accrued, unused paid sick leave at the time of separation.

#### **REINSTATEMENT OF HOURS UPON REHIRE**

If rehired within twelve months of the date of separation, the separated employee will have 100% of unused paid sick leave accruals reinstated. If rehired in the following year, WCLS will reinstate no more than 200 hours of a rehired employee's previously accrued unused sick leave.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Attendance and Punctuality Policy 12.14](#); [Management Benefits and Leave Policy 12.20](#); [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\) Policy 12.23](#); [Domestic Violence Leave Policy 12.24](#); [Emergency Closure Policy 12.35](#); [Time and Attendance Records Policy 12.40](#).

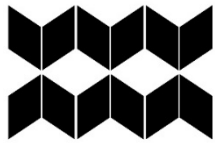
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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 49.46.210 Paid sick leave](#)—Authorized purposes—Limitations—“Family member” defined.

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#### APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
December 19, 2017	Approved.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
March 19, 2024	Revised to clarify sick leave guidelines for all staff.	Jackie Saul & Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Matthew Santos
December 17, 2024	Revised to update “family member” definition.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rodney Lofdahl
July 10, 2025	Revised with additional eligible reason for use of leave.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



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## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.23

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### SCOPE

All eligible employees of Whatcom County Library System.

#### A. Family and Medical Leave Policy Statement

Eligible employees experiencing a need for Family and Medical leave may qualify for leave according to the program and eligibility requirements outlined below.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** FMLA is an unpaid federal family and medical leave program. FMLA rules and forms are set by the federal government. FMLA is administered by the employer's Human Resources department. Eligible full-time employees may take up to 480 hours – the equivalent of 12 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job and benefit-protected leave during a 12-month period when the leave is necessary due a qualifying event (see below). Leave may be paid using paid time accruals, unpaid or combinations thereof, see Section E.

**Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml):** WApfml is a paid family and medical leave program that is administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD) for workers in Washington State. WApfml applications and determinations are between the employee and the ESD. Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks, or up to 18 weeks in some cases, in a claim year for eligible qualifying events. WApfml provides compensation of up to 90% of the employee's weekly pay. The ESD defines the weekly compensation limit annually.

FMLA and WApfml run concurrently when an employee is eligible and utilizing both programs.

#### FMLA Qualifying Events:

1. The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child. Leave to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.
2. To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) who has a serious health condition, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care (see 12.23.02 Family and Medical Leave Policy – Appendix A). Note that FMLA guidelines regarding immediate family members may differ from the Bargaining Agreement definition of a close relative.
3. A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care.
4. Qualifying exigency arising out of the active military duty (or notice of impending call or order to active duty) of an employee's spouse, parent, or child.
5. Care of a service member seriously injured while serving on active duty or a veteran injured any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment (see Section C).

#### WApfml Qualifying Events:

An eligible employee can take medical or family leave when a serious health condition prevents the employee from working, or to care for a family member (see Section C) with a serious health condition, or for bonding with a new baby or child in their family. Examples of qualifying events include major surgery, pregnancy and childbirth, receiving medical treatment for a chronic health condition, and receiving inpatient treatment for substance abuse or mental health. The amount of paid leave that can be taken is determined by the employee's medical provider up to the maximum allowed as outlined in Section D.

## **B. Eligibility**

FMLA eligibility: To be eligible for FMLA leave, the staff member must have worked for WCLS for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of FMLA leave.

WApfml eligibility: To be eligible for WApfml leave, the staff member must have worked for a Washington State employer for a minimum of 820 hours during the qualifying period (generally the last year) as determined by the Employment Security Department.

## **C. Caregiver or Family Leave**

FMLA Caregiver Leave: An eligible employee who is the spouse, parent, child or next of kin of a service member injured while serving on active duty, or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, and/or recuperating or in therapy for a serious injury or illness that occurred any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment while serving on active duty, may be eligible for up to 1040 hours – the equivalent of twenty-six 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job-protected caregiver leave during a 12 month period. The total amount of leave available under the FMLA available to family members of individuals in the Armed Forces cannot exceed the equivalent of 26 weeks in any 12-month period for any employee.

WApfml Family Leave: Employees may use family leave to care for: spouses and domestic partners, children (biological, adopted, foster or stepchild), parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents), siblings, grandchildren, grandparents (or spouse's grandparents), son-in-law and daughter-in-law, or someone who has an expectation to rely on the employee for care, whether they live together or not, as outlined by the ESD. Military family leave allows an employee to spend time with a family member who is about to be deployed overseas or is returning from overseas deployment.

## **D. Period of Leave**

FMLA: An eligible full-time employee may be entitled to a maximum of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave, including paid and unpaid leave, during a "rolling" 12 months period measured back 12 months from the first date the employee uses FMLA Leave. An eligible employee who works less than full time (but more than 1250 hours in the prior 12 months) is entitled to FMLA leave on a pro rata basis determined by the average number of hours worked by the employee per week during the prior 12 months. FMLA leave runs concurrently with Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave.

Intermittent Leave: Under qualifying conditions, FMLA leave may be taken intermittently in either blocks of time, or by reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule. Since a work week consists of the average number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work each week, a reduced or intermittent work schedule may result in an employee being on FMLA for more than 12 calendar weeks. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently if medically necessary because of a serious health condition of the staff member or family member as defined above. If FMLA leave is for birth or placement for adoption or foster care, use of intermittent leave requires specific approval of the Executive Director.

When intermittent leave is needed for planned medical treatment or care for a serious health condition of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule time off so as to avoid undue disruption to WCLS operations.

WApfml: Within a claim year, a qualifying employee may take:

- Up to 12 weeks of medical leave or family leave. Medical leave is for recovering from or getting treatment for a serious health condition. Family leave is for taking care of a qualifying family member who has a serious health condition, for bonding with a new child, or for certain military events.
- Up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee has more than one qualifying medical and family leave event in the same claim year.
- Up to 18 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee experiences a condition in pregnancy that results in incapacity, such as being put on bed rest or having a C-section or post-partum depression. A medical provider will need to certify that the employee's serious health condition is related to pregnancy using the appropriate certification form provided by the ESD.
- Intermittent Leave: Employees are not required to use leave all at once, but they must claim ~~eight~~four consecutive hours of leave each week or claim zero hours if taking intermittent leave. Parental leave applicants can take their leave anytime within the first year after birth or placement.

**E. Use of sick and vacation leave, personal days and unpaid leave while on Family and Medical leave**

Appropriate paid leave accruals may be taken as follows:

- An employee may elect to retain some or all of their paid sick leave accruals as allowed by the Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; and/or
- An employee may elect to retain some or all vacation or personal leave accruals when claiming WApfml.
- If only FMLA applies, an employee will need to use their paid leave accruals during their leave, however, they may retain up to 80 hours of their accrued vacation leave.
- Employees may use all of their accrued sick leave and/or vacation leave during medical leave but are not required to do so.
- Employees are permitted to use paid leave accruals to supplement WApfml up to 100% of lost wages but are not permitted to apply full shifts of WCLS paid leave accruals to shifts also claimed under WApfml to avoid double payment.
- If any FMLA leave remains after WApfml or paid leave accruals have been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid unless the employee requests and receives Shared Leave.
- If the employee applies for Shared Leave, all paid leave must first be exhausted as described in the Shared Leave policy.
- If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with FMLA and/or Unpaid Leave guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retro-actively.
- Employees may not receive double compensation for hours missed. Hours requested to be paid through WCLS accruals are not eligible to be claimed under WApfml. WCLS will be unable to retro-actively refund any ~~if an employee elects to use~~ paid leave accruals for time off that is later approved and claimed under WApfml. ~~the employee must notify HR and Payroll to refund the accruals that were applied. Employees may not receive double compensation for hours missed.~~

Vacation leave, sick leave and holiday pay for employees who work less than full time will be pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work. Employees who have worked for WCLS for less than six months may use their vacation for WApfml situations, even though they are not eligible for FMLA leave.

## F. Health Insurance and Other Benefits

### 1. Health Insurance During Family Medical Leave

WCLS will continue to pay premiums for health insurance, on the same basis as during regular employment, through the last day of the month in which the FMLA or WApfml leave ends, to not extend beyond a period of unpaid FMLA leave where the employee was eligible for WApfml but did not use it. Employees who pay part of the premium for their own coverage or for dependent coverage during regular employment must continue to make these payments during their approved family and medical leave. If the staff member terminates employment with WCLS during or after their family and medical leave, the continuation of health benefits is covered under the COBRA regulations.

### 2. Health Insurance and Other Benefits After Qualifying Medical Leave

Family and Medical leave ends when the employee returns to work or exhausts all FMLA or WApfml hours, to not extend beyond a period of unpaid FMLA leave where the employee was eligible for WApfml but did not use it. Additional time off under WCLS's general medical leave or leave without pay policies may be available, if needed and requested by the employee before the end of the family and medical leave period and approved by WCLS.

During unpaid leave time after FMLA and/or WApfml ends, the employee and dependents may receive health insurance benefits in accordance with the Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21. COBRA coverage may also be available. The terms of the policy in effect at the time will determine the coverage of the employee and any dependents.

A staff member who chooses to remove coverage for dependents at any time should be aware that renewal coverage for those dependents may not be available until the next open enrollment period. A staff member who does not return to work after qualifying medical leave will be required to reimburse WCLS for the insurance premiums paid by WCLS during their qualifying medical leave, unless failure to return is beyond the control of the staff member.

WCLS will pay benefits as if WApfml is approved starting from the application date, but if FMLA doesn't apply AND the WApfml request is denied, the employee may have to pay back benefits, including holidays, insurance, etc.

### 3. Leave Pay and Accrual

Staff members will not accrue sick leave, vacation leave or personal days during periods of unpaid leave. Leave is not accrued while a staff member is using shared leave, but holiday pay, pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work, will be paid when on an approved medical leave.

A staff member's performance and salary review date, or the date for their vacation benefit increase will not change during periods of qualifying family and medical leave.

## G. Return to Work

An employee returning from FMLA or WApfml leave Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law will be restored to the same position the employee would be working in if the

family or medical leave had not been taken. In most cases this will mean returning to work in the employee's former position, or an equivalent position. Restoration is not an option if the employee's former position no longer exists.

WCLS may require a statement from a certified medical provider that the employee is able to return to work. If required, this statement must be made on the "Certification of Physician or Practitioner" form. A copy is available from the Human Resources Department.

If an employee does not return to work after FMLA or WApfml leave, employment with WCLS may be terminated. In most circumstances, extended health insurance coverage is available to the employee on a self-pay basis under COBRA. More information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Sick Leave Policy 12.22](#); [Military Leave Policy 12.25](#).

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA); Family and Medical Leave Act; Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule; National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); Pregnancy Discrimination Act; Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA); Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; RCW Chapter 50A.04; RCW 49.46.210.

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Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett July 20, 2007.

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#### APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
May 21, 2002	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
September 18, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
April 15, 2008	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/Amory Peck
November 17, 2009	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Janneth Hunter
November 19, 2019	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
September 19, 2023	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rodney Lofdahl



## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.23

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### SCOPE

All eligible employees of Whatcom County Library System.

#### A. Family and Medical Leave Policy Statement

Eligible employees experiencing a need for Family and Medical leave may qualify for leave according to the program and eligibility requirements outlined below.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** FMLA is an unpaid federal family and medical leave program. FMLA rules and forms are set by the federal government. FMLA is administered by the employer's Human Resources department. Eligible full-time employees may take up to 480 hours – the equivalent of 12 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job and benefit-protected leave during a 12-month period when the leave is necessary due a qualifying event (see below). Leave may be paid using paid time accruals, unpaid or combinations thereof, see Section E.

**Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WApfml):** WApfml is a paid family and medical leave program that is administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD) for workers in Washington State. WApfml applications and determinations are between the employee and the ESD. Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks, or up to 18 weeks in some cases, in a claim year for eligible qualifying events. WApfml provides compensation of up to 90% of the employee's weekly pay. The ESD defines the weekly compensation limit annually.

FMLA and WApfml run concurrently when an employee is eligible and utilizing both programs.

#### FMLA Qualifying Events:

1. The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child. Leave to care for a child after birth or placement for adoption or foster care must be concluded within 12 months of the birth or placement.
2. To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) who has a serious health condition, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care (see 12.23.02 Family and Medical Leave Policy – Appendix A). Note that FMLA guidelines regarding immediate family members may differ from the Bargaining Agreement definition of a close relative.
3. A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job, including incapacity due to pregnancy and for prenatal medical care.
4. Qualifying exigency arising out of the active military duty (or notice of impending call or order to active duty) of an employee's spouse, parent, or child.
5. Care of a service member seriously injured while serving on active duty or a veteran injured any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment (see Section C).

#### WApfml Qualifying Events:

An eligible employee can take medical or family leave when a serious health condition prevents the employee from working, or to care for a family member (see Section C) with a serious health condition, or for bonding with a new baby or child in their family. Examples of qualifying events include major surgery, pregnancy and childbirth, receiving medical treatment for a chronic health condition, and receiving inpatient treatment for substance abuse or mental health. The amount of paid leave that can be taken is determined by the employee's medical provider up to the maximum allowed as outlined in Section D.

## **B. Eligibility**

FMLA eligibility: To be eligible for FMLA leave, the staff member must have worked for WCLS for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the start of FMLA leave.

WApfml eligibility: To be eligible for WApfml leave, the staff member must have worked for a Washington State employer for a minimum of 820 hours during the qualifying period (generally the last year) as determined by the Employment Security Department.

## **C. Caregiver or Family Leave**

FMLA Caregiver Leave: An eligible employee who is the spouse, parent, child or next of kin of a service member injured while serving on active duty, or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, and/or recuperating or in therapy for a serious injury or illness that occurred any time during the five years preceding the date of treatment while serving on active duty, may be eligible for up to 1040 hours – the equivalent of twenty-six 40-hour weeks (pro-rated for eligible part-time employees, see Section D) – of job-protected caregiver leave during a 12 month period. The total amount of leave available under the FMLA available to family members of individuals in the Armed Forces cannot exceed the equivalent of 26 weeks in any 12-month period for any employee.

WApfml Family Leave: Employees may use family leave to care for: spouses and domestic partners, children (biological, adopted, foster or stepchild), parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents), siblings, grandchildren, grandparents (or spouse's grandparents), son-in-law and daughter-in-law, or someone who has an expectation to rely on the employee for care, whether they live together or not, as outlined by the ESD. Military family leave allows an employee to spend time with a family member who is about to be deployed overseas or is returning from overseas deployment.

## **D. Period of Leave**

FMLA: An eligible full-time employee may be entitled to a maximum of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave, including paid and unpaid leave, during a "rolling" 12 months period measured back 12 months from the first date the employee uses FMLA Leave. An eligible employee who works less than full time (but more than 1250 hours in the prior 12 months) is entitled to FMLA leave on a pro rata basis determined by the average number of hours worked by the employee per week during the prior 12 months. FMLA leave runs concurrently with Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave.

Intermittent Leave: Under qualifying conditions, FMLA leave may be taken intermittently in either blocks of time, or by reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule. Since a work week consists of the average number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work each week, a reduced or intermittent work schedule may result in an employee being on FMLA for more than 12 calendar weeks. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently if medically necessary because of a serious health condition of the staff member or family member as defined above. If FMLA leave is for birth or placement for adoption or foster care, use of intermittent leave requires specific approval of the Executive Director.

When intermittent leave is needed for planned medical treatment or care for a serious health condition of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule time off so as to avoid undue disruption to WCLS operations.

WApfml: Within a claim year, a qualifying employee may take:

- Up to 12 weeks of medical leave or family leave. Medical leave is for recovering from or getting treatment for a serious health condition. Family leave is for taking care of a qualifying family member who has a serious health condition, for bonding with a new child, or for certain military events.
- Up to 16 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee has more than one qualifying medical and family leave event in the same claim year.
- Up to 18 weeks of combined medical and family leave if an employee experiences a condition in pregnancy that results in incapacity, such as being put on bed rest or having a C-section or post-partum depression. A medical provider will need to certify that the employee's serious health condition is related to pregnancy using the appropriate certification form provided by the ESD.
- Intermittent Leave: Employees are not required to use leave all at once, but they must claim four consecutive hours of leave each week or claim zero hours if taking intermittent leave. Parental leave applicants can take their leave anytime within the first year after birth or placement.

**E. Use of sick and vacation leave, personal days and unpaid leave while on Family and Medical leave**

Appropriate paid leave accruals may be taken as follows:

- An employee may elect to retain some or all of their paid sick leave accruals as allowed by the Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; and/or
- An employee may elect to retain some or all vacation or personal leave accruals when claiming WApfml.
- If only FMLA applies, an employee will need to use their paid leave accruals during their leave, however, they may retain up to 80 hours of their accrued vacation leave.
- Employees may use all of their accrued sick leave and/or vacation leave during medical leave but are not required to do so.
- Employees are permitted to use paid leave accruals to supplement WApfml up to 100% of lost wages but are not permitted to apply full shifts of WCLS paid leave accruals to shifts also claimed under WApfml to avoid double payment.
- If any FMLA leave remains after WApfml or paid leave accruals have been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid unless the employee requests and receives Shared Leave.
- If the employee applies for Shared Leave, all paid leave must first be exhausted as described in the Shared Leave policy.
- If WApfml is denied, the employee will be required to use accruals in accordance with FMLA and/or Unpaid Leave guidelines and appropriate accruals may be applied retro-actively.
- Employees may not receive double compensation for hours missed. Hours requested to be paid through WCLS accruals are not eligible to be claimed under WApfml. WCLS will be unable to retro-actively refund any paid leave accruals for time off that is later approved under WApfml.

Vacation leave, sick leave and holiday pay for employees who work less than full time will be pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work. Employees who have worked for WCLS for less than six months may use their vacation for WApfml situations, even though they are not eligible for FMLA leave.

## **F. Health Insurance and Other Benefits**

### **1. Health Insurance During Family Medical Leave**

WCLS will continue to pay premiums for health insurance, on the same basis as during regular employment, through the last day of the month in which the FMLA or WApfml leave ends, to not extend beyond a period of unpaid FMLA leave where the employee was eligible for WApfml but did not use it. Employees who pay part of the premium for their own coverage or for dependent coverage during regular employment must continue to make these payments during their approved family and medical leave. If the staff member terminates employment with WCLS during or after their family and medical leave, the continuation of health benefits is covered under the COBRA regulations.

### **2. Health Insurance and Other Benefits After Qualifying Medical Leave**

Family and Medical leave ends when the employee returns to work or exhausts all FMLA or WApfml hours, to not extend beyond a period of unpaid FMLA leave where the employee was eligible for WApfml but did not use it. Additional time off under WCLS's general medical leave or leave without pay policies may be available, if needed and requested by the employee before the end of the family and medical leave period and approved by WCLS.

During unpaid leave time after FMLA and/or WApfml ends, the employee and dependents may receive health insurance benefits in accordance with the Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21. COBRA coverage may also be available. The terms of the policy in effect at the time will determine the coverage of the employee and any dependents.

A staff member who chooses to remove coverage for dependents at any time should be aware that renewal coverage for those dependents may not be available until the next open enrollment period. A staff member who does not return to work after qualifying medical leave will be required to reimburse WCLS for the insurance premiums paid by WCLS during their qualifying medical leave, unless failure to return is beyond the control of the staff member.

WCLS will pay benefits as if WApfml is approved starting from the application date, but if FMLA doesn't apply AND the WApfml request is denied, the employee may have to pay back benefits, including holidays, insurance, etc.

### **3. Leave Pay and Accrual**

Staff members will not accrue sick leave, vacation leave or personal days during periods of unpaid leave. Leave is not accrued while a staff member is using shared leave, but holiday pay, pro-rated according to the hours the employee is budgeted to work, will be paid when on an approved medical leave.

A staff member's performance and salary review date, or the date for their vacation benefit increase will not change during periods of qualifying family and medical leave.

## **G. Return to Work**

An employee returning from FMLA or WApfml leave Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law will be restored to the same position the employee would be working in if the

family or medical leave had not been taken. In most cases this will mean returning to work in the employee's former position, or an equivalent position. Restoration is not an option if the employee's former position no longer exists.

WCLS may require a statement from a certified medical provider that the employee is able to return to work. If required, this statement must be made on the "Certification of Physician or Practitioner" form. A copy is available from the Human Resources Department.

If an employee does not return to work after FMLA or WApfml leave, employment with WCLS may be terminated. In most circumstances, extended health insurance coverage is available to the employee on a self-pay basis under COBRA. More information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#); [Sick Leave Policy 12.22](#); [Military Leave Policy 12.25](#).

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA); Family and Medical Leave Act; Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule; National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA); Pregnancy Discrimination Act; Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA); Washington State Paid Sick Leave Law; RCW Chapter 50A.04; RCW 49.46.210.

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Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett July 20, 2007.

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#### APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
May 21, 2002	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/
September 18, 2007	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
April 15, 2008	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/Amory Peck
November 17, 2009	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Janneth Hunter
November 19, 2019	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Marvin Waschke
September 19, 2023	Revised.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Rodney Lofdahl

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Approval Signature</b>
July 15, 2025	Revised to align with legislative updates.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.24

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all WCLS employees.

#### A. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY STATEMENT

Victims or family members of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, ~~or~~ stalking, or hate crime may take leave from work when leave is needed for legal, medical or safety reasons, as described in this policy. Leave must be reasonable under all the circumstances, and may be paid, unpaid, or a combination of both. See Section C.

Leave may be taken to:

1. Seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or the employee's family members, including, but not limited to, preparing for, or participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime;
2. Seek treatment by a health care provider for physical or mental injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime, or to attend to health care treatment for a victim who is a member of the employee's family;
3. Obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other social services program for relief from domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime;
4. Obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, mental health counseling related to an incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or hate crime in which the employee or the family member was a victim; or
5. ~~Take actions to increase the safety of~~ Participate in safety planning for the employee or the employee's family members, specifically including relocation (temporary or permanent) or other ~~and participation in safety planning. actions to increase the safety of the employee or their family members from future domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime.~~

"Family members" include ~~the employee's child, spouse, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person with whom the employee has a dating relationship.~~ the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and the employee's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and sibling (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian); and the child, parent, and sibling of the spouse or domestic partner of the employee, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual.

#### B. PERIOD OF LEAVE

When leave is necessary for the reasons and activities described above, employees may take leave, or work a reduced schedule that is reasonable under the circumstances. Because of the uniqueness of such situations, each request for leave will be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis.

**C. USE OF ACCRUED PAID LEAVE AND UNPAID LEAVE**

Employees may use accrued paid time off for Domestic Violence Leave, or may take unpaid leave.

**D. HEALTH INSURANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS**

**1. Health Insurance During Domestic Violence Leave**

WCLS will continue to pay premiums for health insurance coverage during a Domestic Violence Leave, on the same basis as during regular employment. Employees who pay part of the premium for their own coverage or for dependent coverage during regular employment must continue to make these payments during Domestic Violence Leave.

**2. Leave Pay and Accrual**

Staff members will not accrue sick leave, vacation leave and holiday pay during periods of **unpaid** leave. Seniority may be affected during periods of unpaid leave, including Domestic Violence Leave, because seniority is based upon the number of hours in paid status. A staff member's anniversary date or the date for their vacation benefit increase will not change during periods of Domestic Violence Leave.

**E. RETURN TO WORK**

An employee returning from Domestic Violence Leave will be restored to the same position the employee would be working in if Domestic Violence leave had not been taken. In most cases this will mean returning to work in the employee's former position, or an equivalent position. Restoration is not an option if the employee's former position no longer exists.

If an employee does not return to work after Domestic Violence Leave, employment with WCLS may be terminated. In most circumstances, extended health insurance coverage is available to the employee on a self-pay basis under COBRA. More information can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

**F. CONFIDENTIALITY**

WCLS will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of an employee who takes Domestic Violence Leave, and will not disclose information regarding the leave unless necessary for operational or safety reasons.

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#).

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 49.76 – Employment Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking](#).

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Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett May 2, 2008.

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**APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

Date	Action	Reviewer	Approved By	Approval Signature
May 20, 2008	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck

DRAFT



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 12.24

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### SCOPE

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Leave may be taken to:

1. Seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or the employee's family members, including, but not limited to, preparing for, or participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime;
2. Seek treatment by a health care provider for physical or mental injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime, or to attend to health care treatment for a victim who is a member of the employee's family;
3. Obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other social services program for relief from domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime;
4. Obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, mental health counseling related to an incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or hate crime in which the employee or the family member was a victim; or
5. Participate in safety planning for the employee or the employee's family members, specifically including relocation (temporary or permanent) or other actions to increase the safety of the employee or their family members from future domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or hate crime.

"Family members" include the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and the employee's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and sibling (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian); and the child, parent, and sibling of the spouse or domestic partner of the employee, and also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. "Family member" includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual.

#### B. PERIOD OF LEAVE

When leave is necessary for the reasons and activities described above, employees may take leave, or work a reduced schedule that is reasonable under the circumstances. Because of the uniqueness of such situations, each request for leave will be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis.

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##### **1. Health Insurance During Domestic Violence Leave**

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**RELATED POLICIES:** [Unpaid Personal Leave Policy 12.21](#).

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**STATUTORY REFERENCE:** [RCW 49.76 – Employment Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking](#).

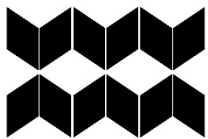
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Legal review by attorney Deborra Garrett May 2, 2008.

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#### **APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Approval Signature</b>
May 20, 2008	Adopted.	-	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	/s/ Amory Peck
July 15, 2025	Revised to align with legislative updates.	Beth Andrews	Whatcom County Library System Board of Trustees	



whatcom county  
library system

## Executive Director's Report

July 2025

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### COMMUNITY

Over 100 people attended the Whatcom Grooves concert at the North Fork Library on June 28, which was held on the lawn behind the building. Local favorite BandZandt (featuring a former WCLS staff member) played to an appreciative audience. There are five more upcoming Whatcom Grooves events scheduled this summer.

### ACCESS

At several presentations I've given around the county, people have spoken about their appreciation for access to computer printers at WCLS. Printers are essential for many personal, school and work-related projects and many households do not own them. WCLS saves the day when home printers aren't working, too.

### RESOURCES

A ruling by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on May 23, 2025 asserts that library collection decisions are "government speech" and are therefore not protected by the First Amendment. A UPI article about the ruling and an interpretation of the ruling follows this report. The Fifth Circuit has jurisdiction over libraries in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

### EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

A recent ruling by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (*Little v. Llano County*) concluded that the government can remove books from public libraries for ideological reasons. This is in contrast to last year's findings of the Eighth Circuit Court (*Iowa Safe Schools v. Reynolds*) which said that selection of books for public libraries does not constitute government speech. Articles about the decision follow this report.

### STEWARDSHIP

Congratulations to the Friends of North Fork Library who systematically worked through multiple grant applications to secure funding for the construction of a retractable meeting room wall to increase the functionality of the library space.

**Christine Perkins**, Executive Director



No right to information at public libraries, 5th Circuit rules

Published: May 24, 2025 at 8:53 PM

Mike Heuer

May 24 (UPI) -- A Texas public library did not violate patrons' right to free speech by removing books due to their content, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled on Friday.

The entire appellate court, in a 10-7 decision, overturned federal district court and appellate court rulings finding the Llano County (Texas) Library System erred in removing 17 books due to their content.

The courts initially ruled that library officials violated plaintiffs' right to receive information under the Constitution's Free Speech Clause by removing the books and ordered that they be returned to the library's shelves.

The plaintiffs are seven library patrons who in 2022 filed a lawsuit challenging the removal of 17 books due to their "content on race, gender and sexuality as well as some children's books that contained nudity," the [Austin American-Statesman](#) reported.

A federal district court and a three-judge appellate court panel each ruled against the library.

The Fifth Circuit appellate court's en banc panel on Friday reversed the prior court decisions and dismissed the free speech claims against the Lloyd County Library System for two reasons.

### **No right to receive information**

"Plaintiffs cannot invoke a right to receive information to challenge a library's removal of books," Judge Stuart Kyle Duncan wrote in the [majority decision](#).

"Supreme Court precedent sometimes protects one's right to receive someone else's speech," Duncan continued.

"Plaintiffs would transform that precedent into a brave new right to receive information from the government in the form of taxpayer-funded library books," he said. "The First Amendment acknowledges no such right."

Instead, a patron could order a book online, buy it from a bookstore or borrow it from a friend, Duncan wrote.

"All Llano County has done here is what libraries have been doing for two centuries: decide which books they want in their collection," he said.

Such decisions are very subjective, and it's impossible to find widespread agreement on a standard to determine which books should or should not be made available, the majority ruling says.

"May a library remove a book because it dislikes its ideas? Because it finds the book vulgar? Sexist? Inaccurate? Outdated? Poorly written?" Duncan wrote. "Heaven knows."

The plaintiffs "took the baffling view that libraries cannot even remove books that espouse racism," Duncan added.

### **Public library collections are 'government speech'**

The majority decision also ruled that the library's collection decisions are government speech and not subject to First Amendment-based free speech challenges.

Duncan said many precedents affirm that "curating and presenting a collection of third-party speech" is an "expressive activity."

Examples include editors choosing which stories to publish, television stations choosing which programs to air and museum officials deciding what to feature in exhibits.

"In the same way, a library expresses itself by deciding how to shape its collection," Duncan wrote.

He cited another court's ruling that said governments speak through public libraries by selecting which books to make available and which ones to exclude.

"From the moment they emerged in the 19th century, public libraries have shaped their collections to present what they held to be worthwhile literature," Duncan said.

"Libraries curate their collections for expressive purposes," he said. "Their collection decisions are, therefore, government speech."

He called arguments made in the case "over-cafeinated" and said plaintiffs warned of "book bans," "pyres of burned books," and "totalitarian regimes."

"Where they burn books, they will ultimately burn people," one brief filed by plaintiffs claimed, according to Duncan.

"Take a deep breath, everyone. No one is banning (or burning) books," he said.

### **Won't 'join the book burners'**

Judge Stephen Higginson was joined by six others in a lengthy dissenting opinion.

The Supreme Court in prior rulings affirmed the right to receive information and the right to be "free from officially prescribed orthodoxy," Higginson said.

"Public libraries have long kept the people well informed by giving them access to works expressing a broad range of information and ideas," Higginson wrote.

"But this case concerns the politically motivated removal of books from the Llano County Public Library system by government officials in order to deny public access to disfavored ideas," he said.

The majority "forsakes core First Amendment principles and controlling Supreme Court law," he wrote.

"Because I would not have our court 'join the book burners,'" Higginson said, "I dissent."

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On May 24, 2025, in a sharply divided 10–7 decision, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the government can restrict access to books in public libraries simply because it dislikes or disagrees with the content of those books.

The court ruled that the patrons of the Llano County Library have no First Amendment right to receive information in the form of public library books. In doing so, the court overturned long-standing precedent that prohibits viewpoint-based censorship in public libraries. Even more disturbingly, the ten-judge majority embraced the radical argument that public library collection decisions are a form of allowable *government speech* that is immune from constitutional scrutiny. EveryLibrary rejects this ruling and the dangerous, contradictory logic it relies upon.

As we have been saying [since oral arguments last fall](#), Llano's public library is not a mouthpiece of the government. Public libraries are civic institutions created to uphold the public's right to access information across a broad range of ideas. The assertion by the court that library collection decisions are expressive acts of the government, similar to the editorial decisions of a newspaper or the curatorial choices of a museum, distorts both constitutional precedent and the historic mission of public libraries in American civic life. By asserting that patrons can simply "buy the [missing] book elsewhere" or "borrow it from a friend," the Court conflates the marketplace with the common good. It reveals an indifference to the lived reality of millions of Americans for whom public libraries are their only or primary means of access to books.

### **A Constitutional Misstep**

[In this ruling](#), a majority of the Fifth Circuit has embraced a doctrine that not only permits but also constitutionalizes the removal of books from public libraries by government officials for ideological reasons. This is government censorship in its plainest form. The Attorneys General and other amici who advocated for a new expansive interpretation of the Government Speech Doctrine are working to extend government control over what ideas are allowed in public libraries and in schools.

Under this ruling, local and state governments are newly empowered to purge libraries of ideas they disfavor. This sets a precedent permitting political orthodoxy to dictate public access, which should alarm every American, regardless of political affiliation. If this decision stands, no book in a public library is safe, and no curricular decision in K-12 will be free from political litmus tests.

### **Contradictions with Executive Order 14149 and Prior Rulings**

This ruling stands in contrast to [Executive Order 14149](#), "*Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship*," signed by President Trump on January 20, 2025. That Executive Order is intended to protect the speech rights of Americans from government suppression, explicitly prohibiting federal officials from coercing or influencing content decisions in ways that violate the First Amendment. That E.O. was largely issued in response to a case, *Murthy v. Missouri* (formerly *Missouri v. Biden*), in which the same Fifth Circuit [decried government influence](#) over social media content moderation. In its September 2023 ruling, the court found that Biden White House and federal agency officials likely coerced or significantly encouraged private platforms to remove content, violating users' First

Amendment rights. But in *Little v. Llano County*, the Fifth Circuit majority took the exact opposite position. It concluded that when local government officials remove books from a public library, that act constitutes protected *government speech*.

The contradiction here is staggering. When the federal government pressures private platforms to remove misinformation, the Fifth Circuit cries foul. But when a local government directly and unilaterally strips public library shelves of books based on viewpoint and ideology, the court not only permits it but celebrates it as government expression. Suddenly, censorship isn't a violation of the First Amendment; it is the right of local officials.

This flip-flop is particularly ironic because the plaintiff in *Missouri v. Biden*, the Attorney General of Missouri, joined an amicus brief in favor of Llano County's actions. They argued that local governments should be allowed to impose their own ideological preferences on public library collections through the Government Speech Doctrine. Along with the Florida Attorney General and others, they argued against government speech when it comes from Washington, D.C., but in favor of it when it comes from Llano County, Texas.

### **Public Accommodations and the Right to Be Represented on the Shelf**

The First Amendment should not be deployed in ideological battles. It exists to protect *everyone's* right to read, speak, and think freely. The Fifth Circuit's decision in *Little v. Llano County* speaks narrowly to the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment. In a footnote, the court concedes that other constitutional protections may still apply, writing: "*We express no opinion on whether a public library's removal of books can be challenged under other parts of the Constitution.*" That quiet acknowledgment is critical.

While the plaintiffs in *Little* initially alleged a Fourteenth Amendment due process claim, the lower court chose not to rely on it when issuing a preliminary injunction, and therefore it was not addressed by the Fifth Circuit on appeal. But this omission should not be mistaken for a judgment. In fact, it raises an important question: Was the lower court correct to disregard the Fourteenth Amendment as a basis for protecting patrons from ideologically motivated censorship?

Public libraries are places of public accommodation funded by and for the public good. When those institutions remove books based on race, gender, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics or erase perspectives linked to those identities, it may not only violate the First Amendment but also implicate the Equal Protection Clause and Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Discriminatory exclusion need not take the form of a locked door; it can also take the form of a missing book. In this context, civil rights statutes provide an additional and underutilized path for justice.

Under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, places of public accommodation and the government itself are prohibited from denying access to services and benefits on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. If the selective removal of materials disproportionately impacts protected groups, these laws may provide enforceable protections that operate independently of the First Amendment.

That is why EveryLibrary supports the [Libraries for All Act](#), a statutory framework that codifies the principle that public libraries must have collection development policies that reflect and support the communities they serve, not merely the views of those in power. Just as no one should be turned away at the door of a public institution, no one should be erased from its shelves.

EveryLibrary's vision for a *Libraries for All Act*, which has passed in Delaware and Vermont, affirms that public libraries are not just venues for free speech, they are civil rights enactors. The Fifth Circuit's endorsement of the Government Speech Doctrine in this context creates a shield for viewpoint-based censorship masquerading as administrative decisions. But civil rights law shows us that intent matters, and impact matters. A pattern of removals targeting particular communities should be seen not as a neutral exercise of discretion, but as a discriminatory practice in violation of the principles of equal protection and inclusion.

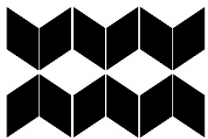
### **What Comes Next**

Public libraries are [10th Amendment institutions](#) that are enactors of constitutional provisions and state laws. In the wake of this ruling, we reaffirm the need for a state-by-state legislative frameworks, grounded in First Amendment principles and public accommodation law, that make it clear that libraries must serve all people, represent all communities, and reject censorship that targets identity, belief, or viewpoint. Free speech and civil rights are not separable in libraries.

The Fifth Circuit's ruling conflicts with prior Supreme Court decisions and has created a clear circuit split with the [Eighth Circuit \(in Reynolds\)](#). If allowed to stand, this decision invites political partisans across the country to impose their ideology through the selective curation and removal of public information, unchecked by the Constitution. We call on legal advocates, librarians, publishers, educators, and the public to demand better.

Libraries cannot be allowed to become instruments of government propaganda. They are one of the last remaining institutions where Americans can freely encounter ideas without economic or ideological gatekeeping. That role must be protected, not politicized. EveryLibrary will stand with librarians, readers, and constitutional advocates to challenge this ruling and its implications at every level.

[STATEMENT: Rejecting Government Speech Doctrine in Public Libraries in Little v. Llano County - EveryLibrary](#)



whatcom county  
**library system**

## Deputy Director Report

July 2025

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### COMMUNITY – Deming Library Spotlight

The Deming Library is one of two WCLS libraries owned and maintained by a local Friends of the Library group, and much of the construction work was done by community volunteers. To this day, community members take the lead on maintaining library grounds. The Friends of the Deming Library (FODL) also regularly hosts monthly art exhibitions in the meeting room, a practice that has continued for more than a decade. Recently, solar panels were installed on the library resulting from a successful grant written and managed by FODL. Another grant project they are proud of resulted in the funding to host native artist Matika Wilbur's Project 562 exhibition at multiple WCLS locations and the Northwest Indian College in 2019.

Unique to the Deming Library is the Library Learning Garden. The garden got started in 2014 in partnership with Local Food Works. Easy County is considered a food desert, and the Learning Garden was started as a demonstration of what can be done in a small space. It has continued to flourish in the library backyard and has become a destination for visitors who love to graze from the garden or play in the willow dome. Another point of interest in the back yard is the seismic monitoring device put in place by the U.S. Geological Survey as part of the U.S. Seismic Sensor Program.

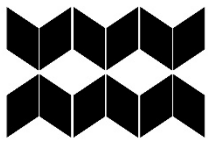
Staff have developed a number of digital collections housed within the Washington State Library's [Washington Rural Heritage - Mt. Baker Foothills Collection](#). A large-format scanner and other grant-funded digitization equipment is available for public use as part of the Digitize-It Kits available to patrons by reservation.

Some of the local partners past and current are: FODL, Common Threads, Twin Sisters Market, Nooksack Tribe, South Fork Valley Community Association, and WWU Community Education Fellows.

FODL has procured funding to commission a mural by celebrated Coast Salish artist, Jason LeClair. This mural will be welcomed during a ceremony being coordinated by Nooksack Cultural Liaison staff member, Marty Jimmy. All are welcome to attend on September 13, 2025.

**Michael Cox**

Deputy Director



whatcom county  
library system

## Youth Services Report

July 2025

### RESOURCES

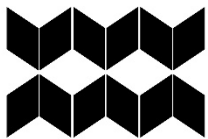
From June 23 to 28 WCLS hosted 14 Summer Reading Kickoff Parties at every WCLS location and Bookmobile stop. These parties made a celebration of summer reading registration, sharing information about and building enthusiasm around this summer's new program. Each party featured some craft or other engagement that tied into the activities on our 2025 summer reading card. At Deming, participants colored designs on taped-together popsicle sticks which became a puzzle when disassembled, which they could count as "Do a puzzle" in the Get Cracking category. At Lynden a craft station offered many opportunities to create, which participants could count as "Make something" in the Get Inspired category. And at Blaine people decorated small cut-out paper chevrons as their favorite book cover, which they could count as a book recommendation in any category. This year's financial sponsor, People's Bank, tabled at the Lynden and Ferndale kickoff parties, with age-appropriate financial literacy materials, coloring sheets and other interactive engagements, and hourly piggy bank raffles. Through their generosity, and the support of the Whatcom County Library Foundation, we were able to offer every Kickoff Party attendee 18 and under their choice of a free, brand-new "forever book" that they could keep. Across the week, 1,609 young people picked something from a particularly rich and varied selection of titles. We'll continue to distribute forever books through outreach efforts to county migrant camps and the Lummi Nation School in July. Here are a few photos from this summer's celebration:



Earlier in the month the Youth Services and Community Relations Departments came together to review all of the print and web-based materials we have created to support students and educators looking to understand and maximize the use of their ConnectED school-based library accounts. ConnectED has evolved in its eight years and we're updating our set of materials to support expanded holds pickup in schools, educator cards, and other improvements to the systems that keep the program functioning.

**Thom Barthelmess**

Youth Services Manager



whatcom county  
library system

## Community Relations Report

July 2025

### COMMUNITY

An informational mailer regarding the library levy has been sent to all households in the county. Ballots are mailed July 16. We've also featured levy information in patron emails that include a link to [wcls.org/levy](https://wcls.org/levy). On July 3 — the date of the last email — the levy webpage had 188 views from 178 unique visitors. Prior to July 3, we were averaging about 25 visits per day during the past 28 days.



A blue banner with a colorful geometric logo on the left. The text reads: "LIBRARY LEVY PROPOSITION 2025-02 TO RESTORE LEVY RATE TO \$0.42/\$1,000". On the right, a white circle contains the text "VOTE AUG. 5, 2025". An orange arrow points from the proposition text towards the vote date.

### The library levy funds:

#### STAFFING AND LIBRARY HOURS



Patron service, access to 10 libraries, bookmobile, library express locations

#### PROGRAMS & EVENTS



School outreach, early literacy, teen engagement, adult enrichment, community meeting rooms

#### TECHNOLOGY



Computers, printers, WiFi, scanners, mobile WiFi hot spots, staff assistance

#### 680,000+ ITEMS TO BORROW



Print and digital resources, games, puzzles & more with minimal wait times



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#### LIBRARY LEVY PROPOSITION 2025-02

This levy is not a new tax. The library levy is the major source of revenue for Whatcom County Library System, a junior taxing district that serves communities outside the city limits of Bellingham and is not funded by Whatcom County government. On the Aug. 5 ballot, voters will decide on a one-time lift of the levy rate from \$0.26 to \$0.42. This is the first time in 16 years that WCLS has asked for a levy lid lift.

RETURN  
YOUR BALLOT  
BY AUG. 5

#### WHY NOW?

- Demand for library services continues to grow and operating costs are up.
- Due to long-term impact of Washington State's 1% levy cap and inflation, annual expenses now outpace revenue.

☒ **YES** Maintain open hours, staffing, services and minimal wait time for robust collection of materials

☐ **NO** Cut open hours and reduce staffing, services and investment in materials, adding wait time

#### WHAT WILL IT COST?

HOME VALUE	CURRENT YEARLY COST	NEW YEARLY COST
\$400,000	\$104	\$168 (\$14 per month)
\$600,000 *	\$156	\$252 (\$21 per month)
\$800,000	\$208	\$336 (\$28 per month)

\*The median cost of a home in Whatcom County

FIND MORE INFORMATION  
[wcls.org/levy](https://wcls.org/levy)



REGISTER TO VOTE  
[votewa.gov](https://votewa.gov)



#### Book Reviews

- *The Northern Light*, June 11, 2025, [Blaine book club review: "Stone Blind"](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, June 20, 2025, [Review: 'Supersonic' by Thomas Kohnstamm](#)
- *Bellingham Alive*, June/July 2025, [Women's Hotel and Orbital](#)

#### Media Coverage

- *Whatcom Talk*, June 2025, [Peoples Bank Hosts Home Buying Seminar at Everson Library](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 4, 2025, [Letters to the editor: June 4, 2025](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 4, 2025, [Whatcom News: June 4, 2025](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, June 10, 2025, [Week of June 11, 2025: Libraries, effective protest, Pride, treason and Ivory Tower terms](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 11, 2025, [LEGALS- June 11, 2025 | Legals](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 11, 2025, [Letters to the editor: June 11, 2025 | Community | lyndentribune.com](#)
- *The Northern Light*, June 11, 2025, [Birch Bay Kite Festival, Splash Days make seasonal return](#)
- *Cascadia Daily News*, June 12, 2025, [Weekly Watchdog: June 13-19, 2025](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 13, 2025, [Whatcom News for June 11, 2025](#)
- *My Bellingham NOW*, June 16, 2025, [Whatcom County Council to host Community Conversation events this summer](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 20, 2025, [Barn Buddies 4-H club talk ice cream, bird houses](#)
- *Lynden Tribune*, June 25, 2025, [Letters to the editor: June 25, 2025](#)
- *The Northern Light*, June 25, 2025, [Blaine's Old-Fashioned Fourth of July expected to bring thousands](#)
- *All Point Bulletin*, June 26, 2025, [The Commons is awaiting you](#)

## June clips from All Point Bulletin, Point Roberts

**Ready to Read?** Whatcom County Library System's summer reading program kicks off with reading parties June 23–28 at all library branches. [Party on!](#)

**Whatcom Grooves Summer Music:** Saturday, July 26, 2 to 3 p.m., back lawn of library. Cape Flattery band from Bellingham rocks us with music. Bring a chair or blanket. Sponsored by Whatcom Library Foundation & Friends of the Point Roberts Library. [fopr1@gmail.com](mailto:fopr1@gmail.com).

**Voter information night:** Thursday July 3, 7 p.m., community center. Items for the August 5 primary election: Whatcom County Library District, Proposition 2025-02; Point Roberts Public Hospital District: Commissioner Position 2 Candidates. General meeting will include selection of Point Roberts Registered Voters Association Board and selection of October date for meet the candidates.

**Treasure Hunt:** Saturday, July 5, 1 to 3 p.m., library. Grades K through 5. Info: [wcls.org](http://wcls.org).

**Summer Reading Celebration Party:** Saturday, August 23, all-day, library. Info: [wcls.org](http://wcls.org).

**Book Making:** Saturday, August 16, 1 to 3 p.m., library. Age: Teen. Info: [wcls.org](http://wcls.org).

**Summer Reading Kickoff:** Saturday, June 28, 10 to 5 p.m., library. Join us all week long as we celebrate our summer reading program. Collect your summer reading card, learn about summer programs. All youth under 18 will receive a free book to pick out and keep.

**Nature Journaling at the library:** Saturday, June 21, 1-2 p.m., Join nature journaling educator Rachael Robbins and learn how to keep an illustrated, observational journal. Based on the teaching of John Muir Laws, this introductory program will reveal how a nature journal can be "...a lens that focuses our attention and crystalizes our observations, thoughts, and experiences." Info: [wcls.org](http://wcls.org).

**Mary Vermillion**

Community Relations Manager

Collection Size	Physical	Electronic	Total
	296,764	395,929	692,693

Circulation	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
Physical Circulation					
Blaine	13,563	11,829	76,562	82,375	7.6%
Bookmobile & Outreach	4,405	4,743	26,551	27,507	3.6%
Deming	6,879	6,717	45,775	44,844	-2.0%
Everson	9,288	7,542	52,648	50,500	-4.1%
Ferndale	32,716	29,893	192,523	179,111	-7.0%
Island	1,674	1,532	9,811	10,217	4.1%
Lynden	36,822	34,966	216,399	210,338	-2.8%
North Fork	3,618	3,309	22,439	20,370	-9.2%
NWIC	8	42	48	188	291.7%
Point Roberts + PRX	2,462	2,278	12,820	12,831	0.1%
Sumas + SLX	2,582	2,430	13,890	14,811	6.6%
South Whatcom	7,625	7,663	44,406	46,778	5.3%
NDX	3,107	3,669	19,879	23,231	16.9%
Physical Circulation Total	124,749	116,613	733,751	723,101	-1.5%
Disc materials: DVDs, CDs	26,419	22,611	156,245	143,499	-8.2%
All other materials	97,450	92,532	571,392	565,556	-1.0%
Digital Circulation					
eBooks/eAudiobooks	35,542	35,873	216,308	223,035	3.1%
eMagazines	3,854	5,902	30,025	35,662	18.8%
eMusic	9,387	11,499	63,090	64,632	2.4%
Streaming Video	2,523	3,027	16,799	20,423	21.6%
Digital Circulation Total	51,306	56,301	326,222	343,752	5.4%
Grand Total	176,055	172,914	1,059,973	1,066,853	0.6%

Visitors (Door counts)	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
Blaine	6,898	6,482	40,692	41,054	0.9%
Deming	2,508	2,394	16,573	16,129	-2.7%
Everson	3,231	3,627	18,730	20,715	10.6%
Ferndale	11,088	12,773	75,692	74,870	-1.1%
Island	1,622	1,785	7,600	9,146	20.3%
Lynden	11,257	11,569	67,521	70,333	4.2%
NDX	285	349	1,927	1,878	-2.5%
North Fork	1,800	1,610	10,459	10,687	2.2%
Point Roberts + PRX	1,885	1,712	8,532	8,127	-4.7%
Sumas + SLX	1,353	1,476	7,022	8,096	15.3%
South Whatcom	3,310	3,426	17,285	18,209	5.3%
Total	45,237	47,203	272,033	279,244	2.7%

New Borrowers	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
	786	675	3,916	3,461	-11.6%

Interlibrary Loan	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
Borrowed from BPL	11,711	10,754	72,434	71,206	-1.7%
Lent to BPL	21,399	20,675	131,310	131,726	0.3%
Borrowed: other libraries	522	423	3,837	3,531	-8.0%
Lent: other libraries	499	616	3,553	3,634	2.3%

Electronic Resources	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
WCLS.org Sessions	37,380	36,820	230,379	232,150	0.8%
Bibliocommons Sessions	105,456	84,907	603,285	531,042	-12.0%
Internet Sessions	3,634	3,959	21,727	24,316	11.9%
Wifi Clients / Sessions	7,335	8,266	40,284	46,017	14.2%

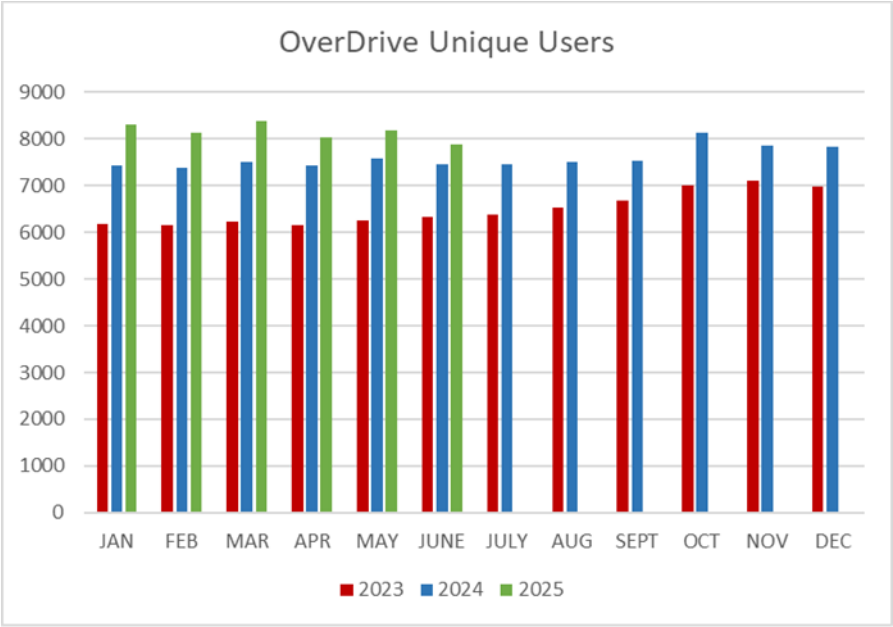
Activities	Jun 2024	Jun 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	YTD % chg
Programs					
Adults	68	119	419	646	54.2%
Teens	20	16	91	205	125.3%
Children	39	46	548	539	-1.6%
Total	127	181	1,058	1,390	31.4%
Attendance					
Adults	746	856	4,541	6,309	38.9%
Teens	1,524	784	5,150	6,913	34.2%
Children	6,495	6,637	18,705	18,327	-2.0%
Total	8,765	8,277	28,396	31,549	11.1%

Notes/Corrections:

Issue with Kanopy stat tracking by title, so we now track Plays. Previous Year streaming video stats in 2025 Board Report will be inconsistent with 2024 Board Report.

OVERDRIVE UNIQUE USERS

Unique eMaterials users are leveling out, hovering at about 8,000 unique users of the service each month. On average, about 5% of these unique users are new to the platform. Of the top 20 circulating eBook/eAudiobook titles for May/June, 14 are eAudiobooks and 6 are eBooks. *The New Yorker* was the top circulating eMagazine for this period with 974 checkouts, nearly twice as many as the second highest circulating magazine, *New Scientist* (499 checkouts). The list of highest circulating eMagazines includes a few titles that have not been on the list before, including *The Guardian Weekly* (#6) and *National Geographic* (#7).



DATABASE USAGE

With students out of school and no longer using database resources for homework support, we are experiencing our typical summer decline in overall database usage; as an example, Britannica usage dropped from 385 sessions in May to 17 sessions in June. Gale Resource and Culturegrams experience similarly significant declines in summer months. Mango Languages, Novelist, Newsbank and Valueline all had strong usage in June.

