



# Maryland's Library Associate Training Institute

## **LATI Handbook 2026-2027**

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### PART II – CORE CURRICULUM

Please see the Professional Development & Continuing Education page on the Maryland State Library Agency site at <http://tinyurl.com/2eqlw2p>

or

<https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/staffdevelopment/home>

### PART III - SYLLABUS

Please see the Professional Development & Continuing Education page on the Maryland State Library Agency site at <http://tinyurl.com/2eqlw2p>

or

<https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/staffdevelopment/home>

Note: The syllabus is updated for every winter, spring, and fall cohort. Please check with the LATI Coordinator for the most current version.

## **PART I - PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The LATI Handbook was created by the LATI Oversight Committee (LOC). The first edition was dated Fall 2010. This handbook describes the LATI program and provides clarity and organization.

#### **The current (2025-2027) committee members are:**

Laura Allen, LATI Virtual Assistant

Paul Chasen, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland State Library Resource Center (SLRC)

Karen Earp, Wicomico Public Libraries

Vivian Fisher, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland State Library Resource Center (SLRC)

Katie George, Howard County Library System

Jennifer Keysor, Washington County Free Library

Cheryl Nardiello, Wicomico Public Libraries

Sheila McDuff, Frederick County Public Libraries, Chair

Ryan O'Grady, LATI Coordinator

Tamar Sarnoff, Ph. D., Maryland State Library

Sara Stephenson, St. Mary's County Library

Jaleen Walker, Prince George's County Memorial Library System

The LATI program has always been valuable to library staff, library systems, and library customers. The LOC works to improve the existing program and document the new program in the LATI Handbook.

Document Updates – This document is posted on the Certification & LATI page on the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) website and linked from other sites, including the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA) and the State Library Resource Center (SLRC). The Maryland Libraries Training Platform also links to this handbook. An email will be sent by the LATI Oversight Committee (LOC) Chair to the statewide staff development group whenever the document is updated, letting them know that the newest version is on the MSLA site. The LOC will review the document annually. Other updates may take place as needed, when, for example, COMAR changes.

For Education and Continuing Education Requirements for individuals who have completed the LATI program, see the “Public Library Associate Education and Training” section of the Maryland State Library Support page on the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA) web site: <https://www.maplaonline.org/>

## **PROGRAM RATIONALE**

Job responsibilities and training for library associates in Maryland are dictated by Maryland law. Read COMAR 14.38.01.02 <https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/14.38.01.02.aspx> [Link verified on 11/6/2025]. According to the law, library associates are required to complete 90 hours of approved in-service training within the first two years of their appointment to a library associate position. They are also required to do so to participate in the Maryland State Retirement System (see COMAR 22.04.03.06).

Although each library system may conduct its own in-service training, there has been a history of cooperative training for library associates in Maryland since the 1960s. In 1980, The Division of Library Development and Services began to offer an approved, statewide program to ensure consistent, quality customer service for all twenty-four public and three regional library systems. In 1996, the Library Associate Training Institute was launched, offering a blended approach of online training and face-to-face meetings. In 2017, DLDS became the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) and continues to offer LATI.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **Vision:**

- ❖ Maryland Library Customers receive exceptional service

### **Mission:**

- ❖ LATI provides tools, techniques, information, ideas, and practice opportunities for LAs to enhance, develop, and demonstrate their professional competencies.

### **Goals:**

Library users in Maryland will benefit from library associates who:

1. Contribute to consistent, high quality customer service experiences across the state
2. Are knowledgeable about print, online, and statewide library resources, and use successful reference behaviors
3. Are prepared to deliver multiple types of library service, including reader's advisory and programming
4. Understand the principles and the value of public libraries and the library profession
5. Have increased confidence and competence in working with library users
6. Have a network of support to assist them in serving the public
7. Understand the principles and value of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

**Competencies:**

The LOC studied the Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) competencies sponsored by American Library Association (ALA) (<http://www.ala.org/>) to determine which applied to the Maryland LATI program. The LOC has added other competencies to reflect the priorities of the Maryland LATI curriculum. The competencies are listed in the Core Curriculum.

**General Description:**

This is a 90-hour competency-based program that uses blended learning delivery, providing the LA with the pre-requisite skills to meet the requirements of the law. LAs participate in face-to-face, live online learning sessions, independent work, and coaching sessions with the LA's supervisor.

**PROGRAM DELIVERY**

The LATI program is offered in two sessions:

1. The Early Start Program: a 12-week, self-directed, online program based on Open LMS which should be completed within 120 days of hire. Feedback is provided by designees in each library system who are trained by the LATI coordinator.
2. Advanced LATI: a 9-week, blended learning course combining face-to-face sessions, virtual synchronous sessions, and online assignments and reflection. The virtual and online components are offered through Open LMS.

In-person sessions are scheduled in library meeting rooms across the state. A schedule of these class session dates is provided to staff development coordinators, supervisors, and LAs at least one month in advance of the program start date.

Weekly coaching sessions between the LA and their supervisor are highly recommended and scheduled locally.

**Early Start Program Completion:**

Library Associates must complete the 30-hour Early Start Program prior to attending Advanced LATI and within 120 days of enrolling in the class.

**Advanced LATI:**

The nine-session course is a combination of face-to-face and online virtual synchronous sessions (3 – 5.5 hours each) and pre-work and post-session assignments that comprise 60 hours. Together, Early Start and Advanced LATI comprise the 90 training hours required by COMAR.

**Technical Requirements:**

Library Associates will use equipment that meets equipment requirements for use on the Zoom platform to use in online synchronous sessions and video production. These requirements can be found here:

[https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/category?id=kb\\_category&kb\\_category=35f93ada8720391089a37408dabb3501](https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/category?id=kb_category&kb_category=35f93ada8720391089a37408dabb3501)

**PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

Please refer to the LATI page on MSLA at <http://tinyurl.com/2eqlw2p> for PART II: CORE CURRICULUM and PART III: SYLLABUS for the program structure. The syllabus is updated for every cohort. Email the LATI Coordinator at [laticoor@gmail.com](mailto:laticoor@gmail.com) for the most current version.

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

By Maryland law, library associates (LAs) are required to have a Bachelor's degree. However, the degree can be in any field of study, thus library associates tend to have varied backgrounds and experiences. Library associates may work in library branches or in other administrative departments such as technology, information services, materials selection, etc. Some work in both public service and in administrative departments. Since library associates are coming from systems throughout the state, their library systems are also diverse – urban, suburban, and rural. Most work full-time, but some work part-time.

According to the *Maryland Public Library Associate Education and Training Requirements Guide*, [https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=81039574](https://marylandlibraries.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=81039574) a Library Associate can meet the academic requirements for an LA position by completing three 3-credit courses of formal academic work in library science within the first two years of employment. Contact the Public Library and State Networking Branch of MSLA to determine your eligibility for exemption from LATI. Those who are exempt from LATI will receive documentation from MSLA that acknowledges they have met this requirement. Staff who already meet the academic requirements for an LA position, will not be accepted into a LATI cohort but may take the Early Start Program class.

**PREREQUISITES, ROLES, AND EXPECTATIONS*****Library Associates***

Although LATI is not a college course and letter grades are not assigned, LAs are accountable for understanding and demonstrating their knowledge of the curriculum and assignment objectives. The LATI program is required to meet the same hours of instructional and assignment rigor as a college level course. If the LA is having difficulty with an assignment or concept, the trainers are available to work with the LA so that they will be able to demonstrate proficiency in the subject area.

## Prerequisites of LAs:

1. Bachelor's degree in any field of study.
2. Technology skills including:
  - a. Computer basics, including how to use a personal computer or other smart device with microphone and video camera
  - b. Word processing
  - c. Ability to use a discussion board and chat
  - d. Ability to access and browse the Internet
  - e. Take the Open LMS introductory tutorial
3. Ability to travel to statewide meetings which may include overnight stays
4. Ability to work independently to complete assignments on time (consult the syllabus for time needed, which may vary each week)

## Roles and Expectations of LAs:

### Before You Begin

1. Meet with your supervisor prior to the first session to learn of your library system's expectations, verify support, and recognize what resources are available to maximize your LATI experience. Communicate any issues that arise to your supervisor, LATI Coordinator, and/or LATI Virtual Assistant as soon as possible. ***Ultimately, you are responsible for the success of your LATI experience.***
2. Review equipment needs with your supervisor.
3. Review scheduling needs with your supervisor. Schedule blocks of time of at least one hour to complete assignments. (Consult the syllabus for time needed, which will vary each week.)
4. Review the syllabus with your supervisor to come to agreement on how the work will be done. Assignments, due dates, and estimated completion times are provided on the syllabus.
5. Set-up your physical environment and work with your supervisor to identify a quiet, comfortable space prior to the first live online web session. Wear a headset with a microphone.
6. Schedule a weekly meeting with your supervisor to discuss what you learned and how you can put your learning into practice.

### During the Program

1. Understand that you are a representative of your system at all times.
2. Respect the learning of other LAs.
3. Review the syllabus prior to each session. Most assignments must be completed prior to the class session. Physical and online classrooms are open 30-45 minutes prior to each session. Make sure to arrive or log in as early as possible, but at least 15-20 minutes before each in-person or live web session to settle in the room or to allow time for any online technical troubleshooting.

4. Come prepared to actively participate in the assignments, discussions, and activities of the training, whether online or face-to-face.
5. Attend all sessions in real time, on time, and notify your supervisor and LATI Coordinator ASAP if unable to attend.
6. Network with people from other libraries to share professional interests and build support for your library work.
7. Engage in the curriculum to receive prompt and useful feedback. Contact the LATI Coordinator if you have questions about your progress in the program or for feedback.
8. Stay motivated. Set small goals each week to help yourself complete assignments.

## **Supervisors**

### **Roles and Expectations of Supervisors:**

#### Before Your LA Begins

1. Recognize that your support is vital to your LA's success!
2. Plan opportunities for your LA to practice what is being learned.
3. Inform the LA that they represent your system while attending LATI and that LATI is an important professional experience. Explain any salary or job performance elements.
4. Attend the LATI supervisor orientation and participate in updates.
5. Familiarize yourself with Open LMS, the syllabus, and assignments to see what is expected of your LA and you.
6. Communicate to colleagues within your library system why your LA is participating in LATI. Define the goals, expectations, roles and support available for the LA within your library system. Celebrate your LA's accomplishments.
7. Provide the LA with a comfortable space and required equipment conducive to online learning.
8. Make sure that the LA is aware of the following:
  - a. Session dates, travel logistics, overnight lodging arrangements, meal reimbursements, etc.
  - b. Time available during scheduled work to complete assignments.
  - c. Whom to notify if there are problems completing assignments.
  - d. How to notify supervisor and LATI Coordinator if LA cannot attend a session.

#### During the Program

1. Actively engage the LA through ongoing communication. Ask questions, take responsibility, and listen. Provide ongoing reinforcement so the LA is using what they are learning.
2. Meet with the LA at least weekly to provide information and for discussions as noted in the assignments.
3. Be positive with your LA as you coach and mentor.
4. Know who to contact if issues arise and when to do it.
5. Monitor LA progress on assignments. You will be notified by email if/when your LA's assignments are overdue. Post the LA's LATI schedule on the regular schedule so that



co-workers understand when they are in training.

5. Schedule several blocks of time of at least one hour each for the LA to work on LATI assignments every week. (Consult the syllabus for time needed, which may vary each week and each cohort.)
6. Complete your feedback assignments on time in order to keep your LA on track.
7. Attend the LATI graduation, held on the date of the final session.

## **System Mentors**

### **Prerequisites of System Mentors**

1. Public library experience
2. Successful completion of an Info Session or System Mentor Training course

### **Roles and Expectations of System LATI Mentors**

1. Attend an Info Session or complete the System Mentor Training in Open LMS.
2. Ensure that all system LAs enrolled in Early Start have accounts in Open LMS and know how to use it.
3. Monitor deadlines for system group to ensure completion of assignments.
4. Facilitate scheduling internal interviews with Director/CEO, Materials Management Staff, and attendance at Board meeting.
5. Monitor discussion board posts for system group, encourage participation, and complete answers.
6. Provide feedback using an established rubric (or arranges feedback from others) for some assignments (e.g., Model reference behavior observations).
7. Check into Open LMS at least twice a week to monitor progress.

## **Trainers**

### **Prerequisites of Trainers:**

1. Public library experience.
2. MLS/MLIS, library associate, or subject specialist.
3. Training experience, including online as appropriate.

### **Roles and Expectations of Trainers:**

1. Accept responsibility for adhering to timelines.
2. Ensure measurable content based on LATI curriculum and future rubrics.
3. Define roles of team members.
4. Create training that engages participants by using a variety of learning styles and delivery modes. Debrief each session with LATI Coordinator to identify ways to strengthen or develop the training.
5. Communicate with LATI Coordinator and LATI Virtual Assistant in a timely manner.
6. Respond promptly to suggestions and questions from all LATI constituents and include LATI Coordinator in all discussions.
7. Immediately share with LATI Coordinator and as appropriate, the LATI

Virtual Assistant, any issue with a LA, class delivery, or anything else that negatively impacts the LATI experience.

8. If the LA is having difficulty with an assignment or concept, the trainers are available to work with the LA so that they will be able to demonstrate proficiency in the subject area.

### ***Staff Development Coordinators***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Read the LATI Handbook. Ensure your supervisors have read it and discuss both program and system expectations of supervisors and LAs.
2. Attend LATI Supervisor orientation if appropriate.
3. Ensure that LAs have met their prerequisites
4. Communicate changes to the LATI program to your library system.
5. Communicate why LA is attending LATI.
6. Understand the program and communicate the goals and policies to staff members (as needed).
7. Ensure LATI supervisors are registered for their orientation.
8. Monitor LA progress on assignments in cooperation with Supervisor. LATI Coordinator will contact you if help is needed.
9. Register LA in Early Start Program as soon as possible (when LA is hired).
10. Notify the LATI Virtual assistant if any LAs enrolled in LATI leave the system.
11. Suggest possible Trainers and System Mentors.

### ***Maryland State Library Agency Liaison***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Act as Liaison to the Maryland State Library Agency.
2. Make recommendations to the State Librarian and keep them informed.
3. Responsible for managing budget.

### ***Chair of the LATI Oversight Committee (LOC)***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Create agendas for LOC meetings.
2. Report to MAPLA.
3. Facilitate LOC meetings.
4. Work with MSLA Liaison and LATI Coordinator to ensure successful implementation of program.
5. Administer the LATI grant.

## **LATI Oversight Committee (LOC)**

### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Assist the LATI Coordinator as needed in finding Trainers, content experts, and System Mentors.
2. Participate in ongoing review of curriculum and handbook.
3. Attend LOC meetings.
4. Be a resource to LATI program.
5. Provide input for annual program evaluation, including attendance at some LATI sessions.
6. Assess and develop evaluation process of LATI program.
7. Communicate results of evaluation to all stakeholders.
8. Ensure that the LOC is represented at the opening session (Orientation), and attend the LATI graduation, held on the date of the final session.
9. Be appointed by the Maryland State Librarian.
10. Ensure that the LOC is a representative group that includes:
  - MAPLA members, at least one staff development coordinator, and a branch manager
  - Members from all three regions and central Maryland
  - Members from both large and small libraries

## **LATI Coordinator**

### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Implement LATI Curriculum.
2. Develop Schedule and Syllabus.
3. Coordinate logistical elements such as enrollment, instructors, locations, and supervisor orientation.
4. Facilitate face-to-face and online LATI sessions.
5. Ensure feedback is provided to students and supervisors.
6. Develop online training activities in Open LMS.
7. Create Open LMS training for System Mentors and other trainers.
8. Report to MSLA Liaison.
9. Act as liaison between the LOC and LAs.
10. Collaborate with LATI Virtual Assistant.
11. Serve as primary contact for the program.
12. Ensure learning objectives are in place and up to date.
13. Coach trainers for development.
14. Maintain awareness of trends and technologies in the training landscape and recommend changes in content and delivery to LOC.

15. Report to the Staff Development Coordinators and participate in their regular meetings.
16. Serve as member of LOC.
17. Prepare grant applications and reports in cooperation with the LOC Chair and MSLA Liaison.
18. Maintain an awareness of related library training and certification programs and report to the LOC.

### ***LATI Virtual Learning Assistant***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Manage Open LMS classes and help create learning activities.
2. Develop LA rosters and manage registration in Open LMS.
3. Serve as technical assistant for all online elements of the program.
4. Communicate with LAs, Supervisors, Trainers, System Mentors, and LOC.
5. Other duties as negotiated.

### ***SLRC Liaison***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Coordinate development of training modules, working in partnership with the LATI Coordinator.
2. Supervise SLRC trainers or assign responsibility.
3. Serve as member of LOC.
4. Act as SLRC Liaison with MSLA and LOC.
5. Ensure that [www.slrc.info](http://www.slrc.info) is updated for LATI program.
6. Facilitate SLRC Conference participation for LATI cohort.

### ***MAPLA (Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators)***

#### **Roles and Expectations:**

1. Provide input and support to LOC.
2. Encourage library supervisors and LAs to maximize LATI experience.
3. Attend LATI final class session and graduation. This is especially important when LAs from the MAPLA member's library have participated in a cohort.
4. Provide resources for LAs and supervisors to ensure successful program completion.

## **POLICIES**

### **1. Accommodations Policy**

LATI is committed to providing a learning environment that is equitable and allows students to participate fully in activities and experiences. We all learn in different ways—you may prefer speaking and listening to writing and reading, for example. LATI strives to use Universal Design for Learning principles in the development of this course. All videos offer closed captioning and Open LMS provides options for speech to text and braille technology. Learning objects are provided in a variety of forms (video, print) and assignments may be completed using a variety of platforms (documents, discussion boards, videos, podcasts).

If you feel that you will have difficulty fully participating in aspects of this training, please contact the LATI Coordinator at [laticoor@gmail.com](mailto:laticoor@gmail.com) about your personal learning needs and how this course can accommodate them **at least 3 weeks prior to the assignment due date**. In addition, be sure to talk to your supervisor about the need for additional support.

### **2. Attendance Policy**

**Early Start Program:** Students are expected to complete the Early Start Program within 12 weeks; however, this period may be extended by request of the System Mentor. The Early Start Program must be completed at least 1 month prior to attendance in Advanced LATI. The Early Start Program accounts for 30 of the 90 hours required by law. If a Library Associate leaves employment prior to finishing Early Start and obtains another position in a Maryland public library, they will be required to repeat Early Start at their new system.

If a staff member is not a Library Associate when they take Early Start but subsequently becomes one (in the same library system) they do not have to retake Early Start if they completed it within 2 years. Specifics will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**Advanced LATI Attendance:** The 9-session program is a combination face-to-face and online virtual synchronous sessions (3 – 5.5 hours each) and pre-work and post-session assignments that account for 60 of the 90-hour requirement.

In order to meet the COMAR regulation for contact hours, each LA MUST attend each session as scheduled live and in real time, whether scheduled as an in-person class or virtual online.

Attendance at class sessions is required. Illness and personal emergencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is the responsibility of the LA to contact the LATI Coordinator if there is a conflict.

- The LA is required to make up any missed face-to-face sessions during the following cohort and will receive their graduation certificate at the completion of the follow-up work from that session.
- The LAs missing a virtual session must review the archived recording of the session and complete a make-up assignment that the LATI Coordinator provides.

If a Library Associate leaves employment prior to completing LATI and obtains another position in a Maryland public library within 2 years, credit will be given for the sessions taken. The LA would only be required to make up the sessions they missed to graduate.

If a Library Associate leaves employment after completing LATI, they do not need to repeat LATI. If a Library Associate leaves employment after completing LATI, but before completing the subsequent 90 hours of training, and are later re-hired, the 5-year clock for their hours restarts with their new re-hire date.

### **3. Communications Policy**

- Students should check Open LMS at least weekly AND the day prior to a face-to-face or online session for any updates or announcements.
- Students may message the LATI coordinator or virtual assistant through Open LMS
  - LATI coordinator's email is checked Mon-Thurs unless otherwise indicated.
  - Virtual Assistant's Open LMS messages are checked Mon-Fri.
- The LATI Coordinator will have office hours on Open LMS or Zoom as indicated on the Open LMS Course Site.
- System mentors should grade or post (or arrange for coverage) every week during the session.
- The LATI Coordinator will participate in discussion forums periodically and highlight interesting threads.
- The LATI Coordinator or Virtual Assistant may make system-wide announcements as needed.

### **4. Grading and Participation Policy**

Students are expected to:

1. Complete all lessons discussion forum posts and assignments by the deadlines.
2. Check the LMS at least twice a week to participate in discussion forums.
3. For each discussion forum, student should create one post and make a substantive response to one other student.

Assignments are not given a letter grade; however, they are checked for completion. The LAs receive feedback/comments/question from their System Mentors, Supervisors and other Feedback Providers and may be required to expand upon their work. Timely completion of assignments and participation in classroom discussion are expected from all LAs. Students may take quizzes as many times as needed to get the correct answer(s). Requirements are laid out in rubrics for each assignment or discussion forum. All work must be completed one week prior to graduation.

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

### **LATI Program Evaluation**

Prior to the end of each class, and as a prerequisite to graduation, participants must complete a survey through Open LMS. The surveys are anonymous. An additional survey will be conducted at the end of the following cohort. This survey measures the satisfaction of the participants and provides outcome information to be used in grant reporting. Information from these surveys is also used by the LATI Coordinator and LOC to improve the curriculum for subsequent sessions of the program.