

Article 14.

Libraries.

§ 153A-261. Declaration of State policy.

The General Assembly recognizes that the availability of adequate, modern library services and facilities is in the general interest of the people of North Carolina and a proper concern of the State and of local governments. Therefore it is the policy of the State of North Carolina to promote the establishment and development of public library services throughout the State. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-262. Library materials defined.

For purposes of this Article, the phrase "library materials" includes, without limitation, books, plates, pictures, engravings, maps, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, manuscripts, films, transparencies, microforms, recordings, or other specimens, works of literature, or objects of art, historical significance, or curiosity. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-263. Public library systems authorized.

A county or city may:

- (1) Establish, operate, and support public library systems;
- (2) Set apart lands and buildings for a public library system;
- (3) Acquire real property for a public library system by gift, grant, purchase, lease, exercise of the power of eminent domain, or any other lawful method. If a library board of trustees is appointed, a county or city shall, before acquiring real property by purchase, lease, or exercise of the power of eminent domain, seek the recommendations of the board of trustees regarding the proposed acquisition;
- (4) Provide, acquire, construct, equip, operate, and maintain buildings and other structures for a public library system;
- (5) Acquire library materials by purchase, exchange, devise, gift, or any other lawful method;
- (6) Appropriate funds to carry out the provisions of this Article;
- (7) Accept any gift, grant, lease, loan, exchange, or devise of real or personal property for a public library system. Devises, grants, and gifts may be accepted and held subject to any term or condition that may be imposed by the grantor or trustor, except that no county or city may accept or administer any term or condition that requires it to discriminate among its citizens on the basis of race, sex, or religion. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 2011-284, s. 107.)

§ 153A-264. Free library services.

If a county or city, pursuant to this Article, operates or makes contributions to the support of a library, any resident of the county or city, as the case may be, is entitled to the free use of the library. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-265. Library board of trustees.

The governing body of a county or city may appoint a library board of trustees. The governing body shall determine the number of members of the board of trustees (which may not be more than 12), the length of their terms, the manner of filling vacancies, and the amount, if any, of their compensation and allowances. The governing body may remove a trustee at any time for incapacity, unfitness, misconduct, or neglect of duty. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 1; 1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-266. Powers and duties of trustees.

If a board of trustees is appointed, it shall elect a chairman and may elect other officers. The governing body may delegate to the board of trustees any of the following powers:

- (1) To formulate and adopt programs, policies, and regulations for the government of the library;
- (2) To make recommendations to the governing body concerning the construction and improvement of buildings and other structures for the library system;
- (3) To supervise and care for the facilities of the library system;
- (4) To appoint a chief librarian or director of library services and, with his advice, to appoint other employees of the library system. If some other body or official is to appoint the chief librarian or director of library services, to advise that body or official concerning that appointment;
- (5) To establish, a schedule of fines and charges for late return of, failure to return, damage to, and loss of library materials, and to take other measures to protect and regulate the use of such materials;
- (6) To participate in preparing the annual budget of the library system;
- (7) To extend the privileges and use of the library system to nonresidents of the county or city establishing or supporting the system, on any terms or conditions the board may prescribe.
- (8) To otherwise advise the board of commissioners on library matters.

The board of trustees shall make an annual report on the operations of the library to the governing body of the county or city and shall make an annual report to the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources as required by G.S. 125-5. If no board of trustees is established, the governing body shall make the annual report to the Department. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1969, c. 488; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 476, s. 84; c. 822, s. 1; 2015-241, s. 14.30(s).)

§ 153A-267. Qualifications of chief librarian; library employees.

(a) To be eligible for appointment and service as chief administrative officer of a library system (whether designated chief librarian, director of library services, or some other title), a person must have a professional librarian certificate issued by the Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources, pursuant to G.S. 125-9, under regulations for certification of public librarian as established by the North Carolina Public Librarian Certification Commission pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 143B-67.

(b) The employees of a county or city library system are, for all purposes, employees of the county or city, as the case may be. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1969, c. 488; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 476, s. 53; c. 822, s. 1; 1975, c. 516; 2015-241, s. 14.30(t).)

§ 153A-268. Financing library systems.

A county or city may appropriate for library purposes any funds not otherwise limited as to use by law. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-269. Title to library property.

The title to all property acquired by a county or city for library purposes shall be in the name of the county or city. If property is given, granted, devised, or otherwise conveyed to the board of trustees of a county or city library system, it shall be deemed to have been conveyed to the county or city and shall be held in the name of the county or city. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 2011-284, s. 108.)

§ 153A-270. Joint libraries; contracts for library services.

Two or more counties or cities or counties and cities may establish a joint library system or contract for library services, according to the procedures and provisions of Chapter 160A, Article 20, Part 1. (1953, c. 721; 1963, c. 945; 1971, c. 698, s. 3; 1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-271. Library systems operated under local acts brought under this Article.

If a county or city operates a library system pursuant to a local act, the governing body of the county or city may by ordinance provide that the library system is to be operated pursuant to this Article. (1973, c. 822, s. 1.)

§ 153A-272. Designation of library employees to register voters.

The governing body of each public library with four or more employees shall designate at least one employee of the library to be appointed by the county board of elections to register voters pursuant to G.S. 163-80(a)(6). With the approval of the board of elections, additional employees may also be designated for this purpose by the governing body. (1983, c. 588, s. 1.)

§ 153A-273. Reserved for future codification purposes.