

Public and Association Libraries: A Comparison

Characteristics	Association Library	Municipal Public Library	School District Public Library	Special District Public Library
How Established	By vote of association members or as trustees operating under a will or deed of trust.	By vote of county, city, town, or village board; or by petition and referendum.	By vote of school district voters.	By special act of State legislature followed by a vote of special district voters.
Charter	Regents incorporate by charter.	Regents incorporate by charter.	Regents incorporate by charter.	Regents incorporate by charter.
Registration	Education Department registers. Must meet minimum standards in order to receive public funds.	Education Department registers. Must meet minimum standards in order to receive public funds.	Education Department registers. Must meet minimum standards in order to receive public funds.	Education Department registers. Must meet minimum standards in order to receive public funds.
Funding	May receive appropriation from units of government. Library should sign contract with appropriating unit. May also use tax levy approved by vote of municipal voters* or school district voters.**	County, city, town, or village is responsible for assuring adequate funding. May also use tax levy approved by vote of municipal voters* or school district voters.**	Tax levy approved by school district voters.	Tax levy approved by special district voters.
Bonding Authority	Not permitted. Requires a special act of legislation through Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY).	Municipal government may issue bonds.	School district may bond on behalf of the library, if school district or library owns the library building.	Bonding authority determined by enabling legislation.
Board of Trustees	Number: 5-25. Elected by association members as per library bylaws and charter. Term of office: set by charter. Responsible to association membership and to Regents. Residential requirements may be established in bylaws.	Number: 5-15. Appointed by municipal governing board; term of office: three or five years if established after 1921. Responsible to municipal government, public, and Regents. Must be residents of municipality.	Number: 5-15. Elected by school district voters. Term of office: three or five years (if established after 1921). Responsible to school district voters and Regents. Must be residents of school district.	Number: determined by enabling legislation. Elected by residents of special district. Term of office: as defined by enabling legislation. Responsible to special district voters and Regents. Residency requirements determined by enabling legislation.
Retirement Benefits	May purchase retirement benefits from private vendor.	State Retirement System benefits through municipality.	State Retirement System benefits through school district or independently.	State Retirement System benefits if library district opts to participate.
Civil Service	Employees not covered by Civil Service.	Employees subject to Civil Service Law.	Employees subject to Civil Service Law.	Employees subject to Civil Service Law.

Notes:

* Municipal Vote (Chapter 414)

**School District Ballot (Education Law 259)