

The Act of 20 December 1985 No. 108 on Public Libraries

Chapter I. The objectives and activities of public libraries.

Section 1. *Objectives*

Public libraries shall be responsible for promoting knowledge, education and other cultural activities by providing access to information and by making available books and other suitable material, free of charge, to everyone residing in Norway.

Each library shall in its services to children and adults stress the importance of providing high-quality, comprehensive and up-to-date material.

Library activities shall be directed towards the public and the services shall be publicized.

Public libraries are a part of a national library system.

Section 2. *The scope of the Act.*

This Act applies to the activities of public libraries, including the local public libraries for which the municipality¹ is responsible (Chapter II), the county libraries for which the county is responsible¹ (Chapter III) and central library and advisory services for which the central government is responsible (Chapter IV).

The activities of public libraries also include services for patients in hospitals and health institutions, and others who have particular difficulty in using a public library.

1 Cf. section 4 and the Act of 25 September 1992 No. 107

Section 3. *Lending cooperation, bibliographical control, etc.*

Libraries shall follow standardized rules for lending cooperation and bibliographic control, and for the compilation of statistics and annual reports. The Ministry¹ may issue further regulations².

1 The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

2 Cf. the Act of 10 February 1967, section 2 and Chapter VII.

Chapter II. Municipal public libraries.

Section 4. *General provisions.*

To fulfil the objectives specified in Chapter I, all municipalities¹ shall have a public library.

A public library may be operated by a municipality¹ alone, or wholly or partly in cooperation with another municipality, a county¹ or a central government institution. The Ministry² may grant exemptions from the first paragraph for experimental activities.

The municipality shall lay down regulations for public libraries based on recommended guidelines issued by the Ministry² for the operation of libraries.

1 Cf. the Act of 25 September 1992 No. 107.

2 The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

Section 5. *Staff.*

Each municipality¹ shall have a professionally qualified head librarian.

The Ministry² may grant exemptions from the provision in this section and shall issue further regulations concerning qualification requirements and transitional arrangements.

1 Cf. the Act of 25 September 1992 No. 107.

2 The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

Section 6. *Cooperation with schools.*

There shall be organised cooperation between public libraries and school libraries in the municipality¹.

The Ministry² shall issue recommended guidelines for such cooperation.

1 Cf. the Act of 17 July 1998 No. 61, section 9-2, second paragraph.

2 The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

Section 7. (Repealed by the Act of 11 June 1993 No. 85.)

CHAPTER III. County libraries

Section 8. *General provisions.*

To fulfil the objectives at county level which are specified in Chapter I, all counties¹ shall have a county library headed by a professionally qualified head librarian. For experimental activities, the Ministry² may grant exemptions from the requirement that all counties shall have a county library.

The county shall lay down regulations for the county library based on recommended guidelines issued by the Ministry² for the operation of libraries.

1 Cf. the Act of 25 September 1992 No. 107.

2 The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

Section 9. *Interlibrary lending.*

The county library shall attend to interlibrary lending within the county, organize lending cooperation between libraries, and assume responsibility for its part of the joint plan for the acquisition and storage of books, periodicals, etc.

The county library may operate direct lending services from book vans/book boats, either alone or in cooperation with other county and/or public libraries.

The county may enter into agreements on joint library operations with one or more municipalities.

Section 10. *Advisory services, etc.*

The county library shall advise local authorities, provide professional librarian advice and assistance, and arrange meetings and courses on library matters.

There shall be organised cooperation between the county library and the school leadership in the county. Cooperation between the county library and the county school authorities shall be ensured through agreements placing the library's professional expertise at the disposal of the school authorities.

Section 11. *Special duties.*

In addition to the duties that follow from section 3, the county¹ shall give opinions as regards the distribution of central government funds and assist central government authorities with research and planning.

¹ Cf. the Act of 25 September 1992 No. 107.

Section 12. (Repealed by the Act of 11 June 1993 No. 85.)

CHAPTER IV. Central government duties.

Section 13. *The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority (ABM-Utvikling)*

The duties of the central government pursuant to this Act shall be carried out by the Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority (ABM-Utvikling) on behalf of the Ministry.

Section 14. *Special central government grants.*

Special central government grants may be given for specific library purposes which do not naturally fall within the sphere of responsibility of individual municipalities, or which are of special significance for the maintenance of a national library system. The Ministry¹ shall issue further provisions.

¹ The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs

Section 15. (Repealed by the Act of 27 May 1987 No. 23.)

Chapter V. Commencement of the Act. Amendments to other statutes.

Section 16.

This Act shall come into force from the date decided by the King.¹ From the same date the following Acts shall be amended as follows: —

¹ From 1 January 1986 pursuant to the Royal Decree of 20 December 1985 No. 2236.