

**Institute of Museum and Library Services**

**University of Washington Information School**

**The Impact of Free Access to Computers and the Internet in Public Libraries**

**Interview Guide for Peer Agency Staff**

Hello! My name is [name]. I'm working with a research project being conducted by the University of Washington's Information School and sponsored by the US government's Institute for Museum and Library Services. We're interested in finding out how your agency has been affected by the presence of free access to computers and the Internet at your public library—including its computers, website, electronic databases, Internet connections and related services—and its use by your staff. Your responses will help us evaluate and improve library computer services in libraries all over the country. Information about you is confidential except as provided by law. The interview should last about 30 minutes. You can learn more about this project at <http://www.depts.washington.edu/imlspac>.

Staff Alias:

Agency Code:

Date:

Time:

Day:

Place of Interview:

Length of Interview:

Interviewer Name:

Notes:

Questions:

1. What services does your agency offer? How long has your agency been here? How many staff do you have? What is your role? About how many people do you serve annually?
2. Does your agency provide any form of free access to computers, including connectivity and training?
3. Who, if anyone, in your service area provides free access to computers and the Internet, aside from the library?
4. How did you learn about the library's free access to computers and the Internet—its connectivity, websites and training?
5. How is your agency affected by the library's free computers and Internet services? (have reduced load, save money, refer clients, etc.—want explicit examples of who, what, when, how, why)
6. When would someone on your staff make use of the library's free computer and Internet access?
7. In what situations has the library's computers and Internet access been helpful to your staff in the past? (e.g. kinds of work, time of year)
8. How do your clients make use of the library's free computers?

9. What are your expectations of the library's free computer and Internet access?
10. How does your organization track or record free computer and Internet access need/demand? How about resolution/fulfilled need? Do you have any statistics or data?
11. How has the library helped your agency reach more people in need of your services? Please explain, share an example.
12. How has the library helped your agency in reducing the number of requests from people who need other types of assistance than you provide? Please explain or share an example.
13. How has the library helped increase your agency's awareness of other service providers in your region?
14. How else has your agency been affected by the library's free computer and Internet access?
15. How do you think that your agency may change in the future because of the library's free access to computers and the Internet?
16. Do you have any other comments about the ways your staff uses the library's free computer and Internet services in doing their work?
17. If free computer and Internet access were not available at your library, how would it affect your agency?
18. To your knowledge, how have individuals, families and the community at-large benefitted as a result of the library providing free access to computers and the Internet? (specifically need examples pointing to "community")
19. What could the library do to most effectively communicate the value of its free computer and Internet services to policy and decision makers?

Demographics:

Years in Profession:

Years at this agency:

Gender: