



December 2019

Dear State Data Coordinator:

I am writing to request your participation in the Public Libraries Survey (PLS) for **fiscal year (FY) 2019**, conducted by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with data collection support from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) as our data collection agent. The FY 2019 data collection will open on January 8, 2020.

Your participation in this annual census of approximately 9,300 public libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas is both important and voluntary. Your response to this survey will contribute to a national file of public library data that will be available to the library research community, state and federal policy makers, and other interested users.

States have been placed into one of three reporting groups (see table below) based on their fiscal cycles or extraordinary reporting hardship, in order to stagger data submissions and thus enable timelier processing and release of the data file and survey report.

| Reporting group and fiscal cycle | States and U.S. territories | Survey due date |
|---|--|-----------------|
| Group #1 (July–June) | AK, AZ, CA, CT, DE, GA, HI, IA, KY, MA, MD, MO, MT, NC, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, TN, VA, WV, WY | April 17, 2020 |
| Group #2 (October–September, January–December) | AL, AR, CO, DC, FL, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, ME, MI, MN, MS, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SD, UT, VT, WA, WI, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands | July 24, 2020 |
| Group #3* (January–December) | TX | August 14, 2020 |

*Extraordinary reporting hardship

The FY 2019 PLS has a firm due date of April 17, 2020 for Group 1 states, July 24, 2020 for Group 2 states, and August 14, 2020 for the Group 3 state. No state data submission will be accepted after the due date specified for the state. If you cannot submit data for all of your public libraries by the due date, please submit the data you do have available instead of not submitting data at all.

Please report for ALL libraries that qualify under the FSCS Public Library Definition to avoid under-coverage, including those with data nonresponse.

The email to which this letter is attached also contains the following materials to aid in the completion of the survey:

1. Attachment to FY 2019 Advance Notification.

- a. Data Submission Requirements.** This document provides a high-level overview of the data submission process.

- b. Important Points in Reporting Your Data.** This document discusses valid data values, reviewing historical (year-to-year) changes in data, and other important information. Please review it before completing the survey.
 - c. Francis Keppel Award Criteria.** This document lists the criteria for this award. States that accumulate at least 16 out of the 20 maximum points will receive the award.
- 2. FY 2019 PLS Web Portal User's Guide.** This manual contains important information for using the web-based survey application including an overview of its key components, detailed instructions on processing your data, data element definitions, and other useful information. The User's Guide is also available on the PLS Web Portal on the Home Page under Helpful Documents and under the Help menu.

AIR and IMLS work cooperatively with you to review your data and resolve any problems throughout the data processing lifecycle. After your data are locked, AIR will review your submission and contact you if any problems require your action. SDCs and State Librarians will be informed and consulted on data edits and given up to three weeks to provide corrections. Questionable data may be deleted and imputed before being publicly released. Once any outstanding questions have been answered your State Librarian will be asked to review and certify the data (this sequence was revised for FY 2018).

IMLS will release the FY 2019 data files and report on their website (www.imls.gov). Visualizations, tools, historical reports, and prior year data files are also released on this website.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no person should be asked to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. For this information collection, the OMB control number is 3137-0074, which expires 12/31/2023. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 84.9 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection of information, please send them to Marisa Pelczar at mpelczar@imls.gov.

If you have any questions regarding this data collection, please contact the PLS Help Desk at PLS@air.org or 1-866-744-5746, option 1, between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm Eastern time. We look forward to receiving your FY 2019 data submission. I thank you for your cooperation in this important effort.

Sincerely,



Kathryn K. Matthew
Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services