



Create a Workforce-friendly Library

Connect people to community services

Many job seekers have needs beyond that of finding a job, such as applying for government services, adjusting to reduced income or facing foreclosure. The library is a point of connection to ensure that people get the services they need as seamlessly as possible.

- Create and sustain relationships with local social service agencies.
- Create an Interagency Handbook that lists each agency, contact person and description of the services they offer.
 - Complete a **Community Social Services Analysis Agency Profile** for one or more agencies you connect with.
- Keep a reference log to identify needs the library cannot fulfill and connect patrons with agencies that can.
 - Use the **Library Services Analysis** worksheet to identify your patrons' priority needs.
- Watch the **2-1-1 and Library Partnerships** webinar archive to learn about connecting patrons to the services provided through the 2-1-1 database.
- Find local contacts with the **Mental Health Services Locator**.
- Create a “Help for Hard Times” flyer with community information, such as help with bill paying, food pantry locations, emergency housing, etc.
- Create a social services bulletin board with brochures and flyers from local agencies.
- Have a binder of social services that allow patrons to discover other community services in a manner that respects their privacy.
- Provide a basic collection of print resources relating to social services.
 - Review the reference collections for **Health & Medical Information** and **Legal Information** from Somerville Public Library (MA).
 - Review the Kalamazoo (MI) Public Library Topic Guides, which have staff book picks, relevant databases and magazine/newspaper titles, and links to community and Internet resources for **Consumer Information**, **Health**, **Law** and **Tax Information**.
- Connect patrons with online resources relating to social services.
 - Click the *E-Government Videos* tab on Pasco County (FL) Library System's **E-Government Tools** site for very short videos (“chapters”) informing library staff about the e-government services available to patrons.
 - Review the Library of Congress' online directories on topics of **Health/Medical** and **Consumer Information**.

Be a welcoming family-friendly place

- Open early one or two days per week for job seekers only.
- Remove time limits for computer use for job seekers and new learners.
- Place job center computers near the reference desk so patrons can get help easily.
- Consider leaving Wi-Fi “on” 24/7 so that patrons can access it from the parking lot on weekends or after hours.
- Have a flexible phone policy for those in need.
- Offer free coffee during job center hours.
 - Can’t afford coffee? Ask a local bank or business to sponsor it!
- Offer free print copies for job seekers, or one free copy of a résumé on nice quality paper.
- Offer five free résumé faxes per week.
- Schedule job-seeker workshops to coincide with storytimes.
- Place a computer in the children’s area for parents to use for job seeking.
- Offer just-for-fun family programming on Friday or Saturday nights to help those struggling financially to spend time together as a family.

Keep staff prepared and informed

- Provide training on how to respond to the economically impacted in a positive and productive manner.
 - Review these [Standards of Library Customer Service](#) from the Davenport (IA) Public Library, which cover upholding confidentiality, creating a welcoming atmosphere, exhibiting respect and more.
- Provide “reference interview” training to learn how to elicit the patron’s actual need, which frequently is not the question they first ask.
 - Use role-playing and practice for learning how to interpret nonverbal cues from patrons.
- Library staff can help each other learn through mini-workshops, “lunch-and-learn” sessions or knowledge exchanges at staff meetings.
 - Offer mini-workshops for staff on social networking and new tech tools for job seekers.
 - At staff meetings, ask each person to share an experience he or she has had with an un(der)employed patron.
 - Brainstorm with staff to understand “a day in the life of a job seeker.”

URLs Reference List

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Community Social Services Analysis Agency Profile and Library Services Analysis worksheet:

www.webjunction.org/documents/wj/Community_and_Library_Services_Analysis_Tools.html

2-1-1 and Library Partnerships: www.webjunction.org/events/wj/2-1-1_and_Library_Partnerships.html

Mental Health Services Locator: <http://store.samhsa.gov/mhlocator>

Somerville (MA) Public Library

Health & Medical Information: www.somervillepubliclibrary.org/reference/health.html

Legal Information: www.somervillepubliclibrary.org/reference/legal.html

Kalamazoo (MI) Public Library Topic Guides

Consumer Information: www.kpl.gov/guides/consumer/

Health: www.kpl.gov/guides/health/

Law: www.kpl.gov/guides/law/

Tax Information: www.kpl.gov/guides/tax/

Pasco County (FL) Library System's E-Government Tools: <http://pascolibraries.org/egovtools.shtml>

Library of Congress

Health/Medical: www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/selected-internet/medical.html

Consumer Information: www.loc.gov/rr/business/beonline/subjects.php?SubjectID=5

Keep staff prepared

Davenport (IA) Public Library Standards of Library Customer Service:

www.davenportlibrary.com/Default.aspx?PageId=170&nt=122

