

LAW OF GEORGIA
ON LIBRARIANSHIP

Chapter I - General Provisions

Article 1 - Scope of the Law

1. This Law regulates the main issues of the organisation of librarianship and the library relationships of natural and legal persons in accordance with the provisions of international law and its principles.
2. A library is a cultural, educational, scientific and informational institution, whose significant social function is to fully and efficiently use its stocks and other library resources and to meet the needs of natural and legal persons.

Article 2 - Main objectives of library services

The main objectives of library services are to:

- a) promptly and fully provide necessary information and library documents (printed, handwritten and other materials containing information) to readers, and to create a favourable environment for the creative development of a person;
- b) collect and preserve library documents from respective areas and provide such documents to the population of any country of the world by issuing them locally, as well as sending copies through an inter-library loan or international book-exchange;
- c) provide library services to children and teenagers through school or independent children's libraries and by establishing special children's sections and stocks in public libraries. The activities of school libraries shall be considered to be part of the teaching and educational processes;
- d) provide special library services to elderly and disabled people;
- e) provide library services to convicted persons in penitentiary institutions.

Law of Georgia No 2723 of 9 March 2010 - LHG I, No 12, 24.3.2010, Art. 59

Law of Georgia No 3558 of 1 May 2015 – website, 18.5.2015

Article 3 - Main principles in the operation of libraries

The main principles of the operation of libraries are:

- a) political and religious neutrality;
- b) the equality of the rights of readers;
- c) availability of and unrestricted access to information;
- d) promptness.

Article 4 - Role of the State in the provision of library services

1. The State shall be the guarantor of the observance of the main principles in the operation of libraries and the protection of rights provided for by this Law. The State shall not interfere in the professional activities of libraries, except in cases provided for by the legislation of Georgia.
2. The State shall develop and establish programmes for the development of libraries, manage the library system of Georgia, protect citizens' rights in the field of library services and implement measures to develop librarianship.
3. The State shall ensure:
 - a) the protection and inviolability of the material and technical bases of libraries;
 - b) the provision of library services to all citizens in its territory;
 - c) all required conditions for the exercise by citizens of their constitutional rights to receive library documents and information;
 - d) the provision of financial support for the development of librarianship by way of implementing a relevant tax and loan policy;
 - e) the establishment of standards and norms for state libraries;



- f) state statistical recording in the library sector;
- g) the preservation, enrichment, registration and special protection of the cultural valuables of libraries;
- h) the receipt of free mandatory copies allocated for libraries according to the established list;
- i) the provision to the library network of all unpublished normative acts of state authorities and any other agencies, except for documents subject to restriction;
- j) support for the financial encouragement of non-state libraries which provide free services to the population;
- k) the implementation of a state policy in the field of training and re-training of library personnel, their employment, remuneration, social guarantees and benefits;
- l) the establishment, funding and management of personnel training institutions;
- m) support for academic and methodological activities in the fields of library science, bibliography, bibliology and information;
- n) the informational improvement of libraries;

Article 5 - Right to use a state library

The use of state libraries shall be available and unrestricted for everybody. The exception shall be the libraries of institutions whose activities are related to the protection of state secrets. The right to use such libraries may be extended, restricted or abolished in accordance with the procedures established by law.

Article 6 - Legal grounds for library activities

The legal grounds for library activities are the Constitution of Georgia, this Law, the legislation of Georgia, and international agreements and acts.

Chapter II - Rights and Obligations of Libraries and Readers

Article 7 - Rights of readers

A reader shall have the right to:

- a) receive library documents preserved in the library according to the rules for using libraries;
- b) receive full information about issues of interest to him/her;
- c) use library search means;
- d) receive, in the case of the unavailability of an original, required documents or their copies from other libraries through inter-library loans;
- e) request to make copies of required documents based on the tariff established in the library;
- f) publish or otherwise make known to the public a library document in agreement with the library, unless this contravenes state secrets and/or copyright legislation;
- g) participate in the activities of public associations of librarians and library readers or the discussion of urgent issues for a library.

Article 8 - Responsibility of readers

1. A reader shall familiarise himself/herself with and observe the rules for using libraries.
2. A reader who violates the rules for using libraries shall redress the damage according to the norms established by the rules for using libraries. A reader shall have other responsibilities as well in cases provided for by current legislation.

Article 9 - Rights of libraries

A library shall have the right to:

- a) dispose of its funds on the basis of the legislation of Georgia and the regulations of the library;



b) submit to the governing bodies of local self-government or agencies a substantiated programme for the improvement of the material and technical base of the library;

c) participate in the determination of state publication and information policy;

d) take relevant measures in relation to persons who violate the rules for using libraries or cause material damage to libraries;

e) cooperate with libraries in foreign countries and become a member of international professional associations;

f) carry out other activities provided for by law.

Article 10 - Obligations of libraries

Libraries shall:

a) carry out their activities in accordance with current legislation;

b) comply with state standards;

c) systematically replenish their stocks with library documents corresponding to the type of the library and promptly reflect them in the library reference and search means;

d) exchange surplus library documents with other libraries;

e) provide high level services to readers on the basis of the study of their interests and the cooperation of library resources;

f) draw up and make known to readers the rules for using libraries;

g) perform coordinated work with regional libraries for the planned use of library resources and the increase in the level of the provision of services;

h) maintain library statistics in accordance with the procedures established in Georgia;

i) perform additional unbiased registration of library data to facilitate library and academic research;

j) introduce library technical methods and advanced technology;

k) take into account the recommendations of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia and relevant methodological centres.

Article 11 - Labour relations of the employees of libraries

1. The labour relations of the employees of libraries shall be regulated in accordance with the procedures established by labour legislation.

2. The employees of libraries shall be subject to periodic certification in accordance with the procedures established by the executive authorities.

Chapter III - Library System of Georgia

Article 12 - Library system of Georgia

1. The unified library system of Georgia includes the networks of state and non-state, local and departmental libraries. The system includes: National, scientific (universal and special), scientific and technical, scientific and educational, public, children's, school and specialised libraries.

2. The founder or owner may distinguish a main library out of the libraries included in the library system, which are united in one unified network.

3. The main library within the library system of Georgia is the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, and in Abkhazia and Ajara - the republican libraries.

Article 13 - State library network

The state library network shall be established according to territorial and departmental principles.

Article 14 - Guarantees of the rights of non-state libraries

1. The State guarantees the freedom of the activities of non-state libraries, notwithstanding their organisational and legal forms.

2. Non-state libraries shall be guided by the legislation effective in the state library system and may participate in the implementation of state



programmes at their discretion.

3. The principles of the joint activities of state and non-state libraries shall be defined by agreements concluded between them.

Article 15 - Bibliographic and informational library centre

1. City, district and village libraries represent information centres in their service territories, which collect documents on a selective basis and make them known to the public.

2. The functions of collecting, fully reflecting and making available to the public all normative and library documents issued in Georgia shall be assigned to the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, and state libraries and bibliography centres which have been granted respective status by the Ministry of Culture of Georgia. The State shall provide these centres with mandatory copies of library documents.

Article 16 - Libraries and the national information infrastructure

The library system of Georgia represents the main element of the national information infrastructure. It shall cooperate with archives and other bodies of scientific and technical information, which have banks of various levels of information data. The procedure for the relationship between them is defined by current legislation, state programmes, and agreements concluded between such institutions and organisations.

Chapter IV - National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

Article 17 - National Parliamentary Library of Georgia in the library system of Georgia

1. The National Library of Georgia, the main library in the library system of Georgia, is the Parliamentary Library of Georgia and the coordinator of librarianship in the country, and a methodological centre, which satisfies the universal information needs of society, organises library, bibliography and academic and information activities, and facilitates the development of national and world culture, and science and education.

2. The National Parliamentary Library of Georgia is a particularly valuable object of the cultural heritage of the country and is the property of the State only. The change of its form of ownership and type, or its liquidation, shall be impermissible. The integrity and the non-alienation of its stocks shall be guaranteed.

Article 18 - Regulation of the activities of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

The activities of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia shall be regulated by the Law of Georgia on the National Library.

Chapter V - Management of Librarianship

Article 19 - Coordination of librarianship

The Ministry of Culture of Georgia shall coordinate librarianship together with the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia. The functions of the Ministry of Culture of Georgia are to:

- a) implement a unified state library policy;
- b) determine the standards of funding the state library network and the share allocated from the State Budget for the functioning of the respective network;
- c) coordinate the work of local self-government bodies on issues related to librarianship;
- d) ensure the performance of international library agreements and conventions;
- e) determine the policy of training and retraining of library personnel;
- f) supervise financial and technical support for state libraries;
- g) monitor the observation of state standards in the library sector;
- h) collect in a centralised manner and analyse library statistical data.

Article 20 - Management of librarianship in Abkhazia and Ajara



Librarianship in Abkhazia and Ajara shall be managed in accordance with this Law and their legislation.

Article 21 - Role of local self-government bodies in the management of library activities

1. Library activities shall be managed locally by local self-government bodies, which shall act in coordination with the Ministry of Culture of Georgia.
2. Local self-government bodies shall ensure the organisation of the library network according to social and economic conditions, the level of population, and the distribution and information needs of the population in the respective area.

Article 22 - Appointment of the heads of libraries

1. The heads of city and district main libraries shall be appointed (and may be dismissed) by local self-government bodies in agreement with the Ministry of Culture of Georgia. The heads of local libraries shall be appointed (and may be dismissed) by the director (chief) of the main library of the district in agreement with the local self-government bodies.
2. The heads of departmental and non-state libraries shall be appointed by their founders.

Article 23 - Public participation in the management of libraries

The citizens shall have the right to participate in the management of libraries by way of involvement in public and professional associations of librarians and readers in accordance with the legislation of Georgia.

Chapter VI - Funding of Libraries

Article 24 - Financial resources of state libraries and their use

1. The source of funding of state libraries shall be allocations from the Budget, state and local subsidies, funds contributed by the founders of the library, charitable contributions, and other income permitted by legislation.
2. Libraries shall distribute and use financial resources independently. The procedure for the distribution and use of financial resources shall be determined by the regulations of the library.
3. Financial activities shall be controlled by the founders and sponsors of the library.

Article 25 - Funding of target programmes

Nationwide target programmes shall be funded by the State, and programmes of local significance shall be funded by local self-government bodies or agencies.

Chapter VII - Organising a Library

Article 26 - Establishing a library

1. A library may be founded by any legal or natural person in the form of an independent institution or a subdivision of a legal person in the case of the existence of a minimum of library stock, a building and an inventory.
2. The rights and conditions of founding libraries in the territory of Georgia by natural and legal persons from foreign states are determined by the legislation of Georgia.

Article 27 - Founder of a library

The founder of a library shall fund the library, monitor its activities according to current legislation and appoint the head of the library. The founder of a library shall have no right to interfere in the creative activities of the library, except in cases provided for by the statute of the library and current legislation.

Article 28 - Registering a library



1. A library shall start operation only after state registration of the library has been performed.
2. All libraries operating in the territory of Georgia (notwithstanding their forms of ownership and organisational and legal forms), which have more than 1000 (one thousand) library documents, an appropriate space, a relevant license issued by the Ministry of Culture of Georgia and whose statutes do not contradict the legislation of Georgia, shall be subject to registration.
3. The status of legal person shall be granted to a library after its registration, in accordance with the procedures established by law.
4. Refusals of registration shall be reviewed by a court.

Article 29 - Reorganisation and liquidation of a library

1. Libraries shall be reorganised and liquidated in accordance with the procedures established by the current legislation. The property of liquidated state libraries shall be the property of the state library system.
2. The issue of the transfer of the property of a liquidated library, provided it is an object of particular importance, shall be decided by the State.
3. State libraries may not be privatised.

Chapter VIII - Stock of the Library Documents of Georgia

Article 30 - Composition of the stock of the library documents of Georgia

The stock of the library documents of Georgia shall consist of the stocks of state and non-state library documents.

Article 31 - Stock of the state library documents of Georgia

The stock of the state library documents of Georgia is the property of Georgia. It represents the unity of the stocks of all types of library documents preserved in the libraries of the library system of Georgia. The use of library documents shall be unrestricted. Restrictions may be implemented in accordance with the procedures established by law only for the purpose of the protection of state secrets and the interests of citizens provided for by law.

Article 32 - Stock of the library documents of Abkhazia and Ajara

The stock of the library documents of Abkhazia and Ajara represents the unity of all types of library documents of their libraries and is an integral part of the stock of the library documents of Georgia.

Article 33 - Mandatory copies of library documents

A library included in the list of institutions that have the right to receive free mandatory copies shall receive free copies of all documents issued in Georgia and shall preserve them.

Article 34 - Right to acquire a library document

State libraries shall exercise a preferential right to acquire library documents in the case of equal material remuneration terms.

Article 35 - Transfer of library documents left without an owner

Library documents left without an owner shall be transferred to the state library system of Georgia.

Article 36 - Right to exchange and sell library documents

The distribution and the sale of library documents between libraries and other legal or natural persons shall be regulated in accordance with the procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.

Article 37 - Protection of library documents of particular importance



1. Valuables of particular importance of state and non-state library stocks are included in the List of Cultural Valuables of Georgia and represent objects subject to special protection.

2. Library stocks composed of mandatory copies and particularly valuable and rare documents are the cultural property of the country and may be declared as historical and cultural monuments in accordance with the procedures established by the legislation of Georgia. A particular regimen for the use, storage and protection of such stocks shall be established in accordance with the legislation of Georgia.

3. If the library fails to ensure conditions required for the protection and use of stocks declared as historical and cultural monuments, such stocks may be transferred to another library on the recommendation of a state body responsible for the protection of historical and cultural monuments.

4. The liquidation of libraries which possess stocks registered as historical and cultural monuments shall be allowed only by the permission of a state body responsible for the protection of historical and cultural monuments, in order to ensure the further protection and use of such stocks.

5. Citizens who possess publications and collections equal to the value of historical and cultural monuments shall be entitled to the State's support in order to ensure their protection.

Article 38 - Movement of library valuables

Valuables preserved in library stocks may be moved or taken out of Georgia in accordance with the procedures established by the legislation of Georgia, and in consideration of the provisions of international conventions.

Chapter IX - International Cooperation of Libraries

Article 39 - Powers of libraries in the field of international cooperation

1. The libraries included in the library system of Georgia shall be authorised to become members of international library organisations, cooperate with libraries of foreign countries and participate in international library programmes.

2. The State shall ensure the international representation of the state libraries of Georgia.

President of Georgia

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