

News Release: American Library Association

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JAIL LIBRARY SERVICE INSTITUTE

A National Institute on Library Service to Jail Populations is scheduled for March 9 - 12, 1980, Texas Criminal Justice Center, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX.

The training institute is the first component of the new Improving Jail Library Services Project, sponsored by the American Library Association's Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies. The institute will train 100 participants to develop skills and techniques through a joint-planning, joint participation approach, in the design and implementation of cooperative jail library services at the local, state, and regional levels. The project is cosponsored by the American Correctional Association, National Jail Association, National Sheriffs' Association, Fortune Society and the Texas Criminal Justice Center.

One of the major priorities of the institute is to make staff in librarianship, corrections and related fields more aware of the joint responsibility of both public libraries and jails in meeting the library and information needs of inmates and jail personnel. Applications from teams composed of two or three library personnel and jail staff, or public officials and library trustees, will be given first

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consideration for the institute.

Individual applicants should represent one or more of the following target groups: public library or jail staff involved in or planning to initiate library services, corrections and library consultants with responsibility for jails, trainers and educators in library and correctional fields, correctional and library professional association members whose interests related to institutional library services.

Deadline for applications is December 31, 1979. For more information, and an application form, write or call Connie House, Director, Improving Jail Library Services Project, American Library Association, 50 East Huron, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 944-6780.

Representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin met for two days to work on a number of objectives: establishment of stronger communication channels, identification of common needs and possible barriers to cooperative planning, and planning or expansion of cooperative planning, and planning or expansion of cooperative activities.

Participants identified seven high priority problems which they thought could be successfully addressed through cooperative planning and then action plans were developed to address specific aspects of these problems. A fragmented approach to library network development ranked as the top problem, followed by difficulty in locating materials, lack of consumer health information, increasing costs of library materials and services, lack of funds for provision of medical information to the general public, lack of access for medical library to non-medical literature and reference services, lack of resources to answer questions at the local level, and the need for better assessment of health information needs of public libraries.