From: Division for Libraries and Technology, Library Services

The following is provided to assist public libraries in municipalities considering exemption from the county library tax for 2023.

How does a municipality qualify for exemption from the county library tax for 2023?

Under Wis. Stat. s. 43.64(2), a municipality with a public library may request exemption from the county library tax if it appropriates an amount to its library above a defined minimum.

The following calculation determines whether a municipality may request an exemption from the county library tax for 2023, which the county board will set in the fall of 2022 and expend in 2023:

1. **Determine the 2021 equalized value of the property taxed for 2022 county library service.** This is the 2021 total county equalized value, less the equalized value of any municipalities exempting from the county library tax for 2022.

    a. To do this, you must first gather data from all libraries within the county, including their exemption status. Use the 2023 Tax Exemption Workbook to record your data.

        i. Open the 2021 Public Library Service Data spreadsheet and enable editing.

        ii. Sort the spreadsheet by county (Column D); that may help to quickly locate all the libraries in the county.

        iii. Locate the appropriate county in that column. *Tip: It may help to color the rows that pertain to your county so that you do not lose your place as you seek data in columns far to the right.*

        iv. Find Column DN. Enter both the municipality name and municipal type of each library listed in the county into Column B of your workbook. (Ex: Hammond village).

        v. Exemption information is found in Column CF. A "1" means they exempted in 2021; a "0" means they did not. Enter "yes" or "no" in the correct row of Column C of your workbook.

    b. Open the 2021 County Apportionment Report. Locate the appropriate county. You will use only the three-column data, and enter the values found in the center column into your workbook.

        i. Find the "County Total." It will be at the end of the county's three-column data. Enter that value in cell D2 of your workbook.

        ii. Enter the values for each of the municipalities you entered in Column B into Column D of your workbook. *BE SURE to use the correct municipal type!* The first column is listed by town, then village, then city. The spreadsheet will do the math for you.

2. **Determine the total county library services appropriation for 2022.** This can be found on your county's website, or by contacting the county. *BE SURE to subtract any amount levied by the county*

for public library capital expenditures, per s. 43.64(2)(b)1; this is usually unnecessary. Enter this value into your workbook.

3. **Determine the county library tax levy rate for 2022.** This is done by dividing the appropriation amount from step 2 by the equalized value determined in step 1. Your workbook will do the math for you.

4. **Determine the minimum amount the municipality must appropriate to the library in 2023 to qualify for exemption from the county library tax in 2023.** This is done by multiplying the county tax levy rate from step 3 by the 2022 equalized value of the municipality being considered for exemption.

    a. Open the 2022 County Apportionment Report. Find they appropriate county and enter the values for each of the municipalities you entered in Column B into Column E of your workbook. The workbook will do the math for you.

    b. Compare the minimum amount calculated in step 4 with the 2023 municipal appropriation for the library (the appropriation made by the municipality in the fall of 2022). The municipal appropriation cannot include any state, federal, or county funds provided specifically for library services.

    If the municipal appropriation is greater than the minimum amount required for exemption, the municipality may request, in writing, to be exempted from the county library tax. The exemption may be refused if, by September 1 of any year, the county board determines the public library has not complied with any minimum standards of operation approved under s. 43.11(3)(d) and (e).

Municipalities that participate in joint libraries may be able to exempt by an alternate means, per s. 43.64(2)(c):

> *Notwithstanding sub. (2m), any city, village, town, or school district in a county levying a tax for public library service under sub. (1) is exempt from the tax levy if all the following apply:*
>
> 1. *The city, village, town, or school district is included in a joint library under s. 43.53.*
>
> 2. *The city, village, town, or school district levies a tax for public library service, less the amount levied for public library capital expenditures, and appropriates and spends for a library fund during the year for which the county tax levy is made an amount that is not less than the average of the previous 3 years.*

Each city, town, village, town, or school district participating in a joint library under s. 43.53 shall be treated individually in determining its eligibility for tax exemption.

Shannon M. Schultz, Public Library Administration Consultant
Division for Libraries & Technology, Library Services
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
(608) 266-7270 | shannon.schultz@dpi.wi.gov