

## PA Forward Star Library Program - Why Be a Part of This Initiative?

Imagine a future where all Pennsylvania public, special, academic and school libraries unite in a shared vision of helping residents succeed as citizens, parents, students, employers, employees and consumers. This is the goal of The Pennsylvania Library Association's PA Forward initiative.

PA Forward was conceived to give voice to what the library community already knows: With the right support, libraries are ideally positioned to become the community centers of information, technology and learning that will fuel educational and economic opportunity for all of our citizens.

Your library is already participating in this initiative. By offering programs and services such as Story Time, technology workshops, information literacy classes and more, you are promoting the five literacies that are the backbone of PA Forward: Basic Literacy, Information Literacy, Civic and Social Literacy, Health Literacy and Financial Literacy.

By using the PA Forward branding on the programs and services you already offer, you are showing your stakeholders that your library is part of a larger statewide initiative that is powering progress and elevating the quality of life in Pennsylvania. There is influence and credibility in numbers and a shared voice.

You now have the opportunity to be recognized for the work you are doing at your library by earning the PA Forward Star Library designation. Follow the program to complete the necessary actions for each level and follow the instructions for submitting your documentation and you're on your way to becoming a prestigious PA Forward Star Library!

### Brief explanation on how it works:

1. Begin by achieving the Bronze Star Level by completing 8 actions
2. Why stop at the Bronze Star Level? Earn a Silver Star for demonstrating a specialty in one or more of the five core literacies.
3. Once you have earned all five Silver Stars, you are eligible to complete additional actions to receive the highest level of recognition: The PA Forward Gold Star Library.

### Here's how it benefits:

1. Recognition
2. Unified "voice" in legislative budgeting considerations
3. Marketing opportunities for your programs
4. Create partnerships
5. Future PaLA incentives



## Frequently Asked Questions About PA Forward Star Library Program

What is the PA Forward Star Library Program?

The PA Forward Star Library Program was created to give recognition to all libraries incorporating PA Forward in the programs they are already doing. It is designed to help your library be a PA Forward-thinking library.

[More information...](#)

Can the library use activities and events done before starting the program?

The PA Forward Star Library Program will accept submissions beginning in January, and will approve library actions completed two months prior to January that are submitted to complete an item from the action list.

It is permissible to "join" actions?

Yes, for example...under the core requirements it is okay to complete these two actions – show the video explaining the PA Forward initiative and also discuss PA Forward in one meeting – thus completing two actions at one time.

Can we repeat bonus actions?

No. There are sufficient bonus actions listed that you will not have to repeat any in order to complete the level requirements.

If the library signs up for the program after January, would they still have a year to at least earn the Bronze Star level?

No; however, it is quite possible to earn the bronze, all five silver literacy stars, and make it to the gold level in as little as three months.

How long is the star which is achieved by the library good before it expires and the library needs to recertify?

The Bronze expires after one year. The library will need to start over with the actions at the bronze level if they have not moved forward to submitting actions toward earning the five silver literacy stars.

The Silver expires after two years. The library will need to start over with the actions at the bronze level if they have not achieved all five silver literacy stars and moved toward earning the gold star.

The Gold expires after three years; however, this is contingent upon PaLA membership being maintained. If the library does not maintain membership, they will need to start over at the bronze level.

How long can the library take to get to the highest level star?

Once the library signs up for the program in January, the library has one year to achieve at least the first level, which is the bronze star. Based on the expiration of each star level (see question above), if the library works on the next level during the period of time the current level certificate is good, it could take up to four years to get to the gold level.

Can a group of libraries collaborate to earn a star?

The program is meant to involve as many libraries as possible. At this time it is up to the individual libraries...if they want to work together as a system...that is fine. If they choose to work individually toward their star, that is also fine. Just be clear when submitting documentation.

Where do I get the PA Forward posters and window clings?

Contact a member of the PA Forward Project Manager at [brandi@palibraries.org](mailto:brandi@palibraries.org) or call 717-766-7663.