

Report on the Response of the Library of Virginia

To

The Impact of the Aging of Virginia's Population

November 14, 2014



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Executive Summary

In accordance with § 2.2-55 10 (A.4.) of the *Code of Virginia*, The Library of Virginia submits the following report on its progress for addressing the impact of the aging population on its ability to deliver services. The main issues facing the Library in providing services for older adults are an aging staff and uncertainty about state and federal funding.

Agency Description

The Library of Virginia, the state library and archives for the Commonwealth, acquires, preserves, and promotes access to the state's comprehensive print and manuscript collections documenting more than 400 years of Virginia history and culture. The agency also provides consulting services to Virginia's 91 public library systems and administers state and federal aid to public libraries, and serves as the lead agency for records management services statewide.

1. The Library maintains a regular schedule for review of its reading room facility and equipment to assess continued compliance with ADA best practices.

2. The Library has no direct funding stream dedicated to providing library services to an aging population. However, the Library endeavors to develop public programs and services to serve as wide an audience as possible. Among the programs presented by the Library which attract large audiences in this demographic are our genealogy workshops. Funding for staffing in our reading rooms and for those presenting our genealogical workshops is from the general fund budget. General funds cover most costs of our public programming. Exhibitions are supplemented through grants and by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Limited additional funding to support exhibitions comes from the Library of Virginia Foundation and private corporations and foundations. We provide traveling versions of some of exhibitions to libraries and cultural attractions around the state.

3. Health/Wellness:

The Library maintains a regular schedule for review of its reading room facility and equipment to assess continued compliance with ADA best practices.

Through a grant from the Library Services and Technology Act, the Library of Virginia has acquired new digital microfilm scanners, which are able to produce digitized images from microfilm reels and microfiche sheets. The scanners also allow users to enlarge images for ease of reading.

The Library has upgraded the hearing assistance technology in its Lecture Hall and Orientation Room to be more responsive to older adults.

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The Library Development and Networking Division has assisted LVA and public library staff across the state with training options on the federal health insurance marketplace. Best practices articles on the changing needs of older adults and ways libraries are adapting services and programs for this demographic are routinely shared with the public library community.

Education:

The Library of Virginia continues to partner with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Richmond on programs for students age 50 and better. Programs have included genealogical research, tours of the Library and our exhibitions, and lectures on Virginia history.

The Library partners with Virginia Commonwealth University on the Road Scholars program, which inspires adults to learn, discover and travel. The Library provides history and culture programming for the senior adults involved in the Road Scholar program.

The Library of Virginia administers Find It Virginia (www.finditva.com) which provides free library service 24 hours a day anywhere an individual can connect to the internet. The databases on Find It Virginia are heavily used by public libraries and contain specific health related materials that are of interest to older adults. This resource is supported by federal funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and ensures that all residents of the Commonwealth have equal access to essential resources for lifelong learning.

The Library Development and Networking Division of the Library of Virginia assists local libraries around the state with staff training and career development.

The Library has offered educational exhibitions that appeal to veterans such as *Rewarding Virginia's Warriors: Commemorating 70 Years of the GI Bill* and has sponsored or cosponsored engaging public programs such as *And Now What? The Conundrum of Achieving Racial Equality in America After the Civil Rights Act of 1964*, *Personal Histories: Civil Rights in Black and White*; *A Virginia Story: A Discussion with Earl Hamner Jr.*; *Stories of Virginia's "Greatest Generation" Open House*; and *Exploring Disunion: History, Memory, and Virginia's Civil War Legacy*.

The Library of Virginia was a local partner for the 36th Annual National Genealogical Society's annual family history conference held in Richmond last May. The Library accommodated the 2,000-plus conference attendees with special hours, signage, handouts, and assistance geared to their needs.

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Public Safety:

The Library Development and Networking Division shares information and programming opportunities with the library community on public safety (including adult abuse prevention).

Recreation:

The Library offers free lectures, book talks, and exhibitions suitable for older adults.

Housing/Accessibility:

The Library Development and Networking Division distributes information and programming opportunities to the library community on housing and accessibility (including livable communities <http://www.vadrs.org/vblc/>).

Financial Security/Transportation

The Library promotes to the library community programs, articles, and webinars on financial security and transportation geared to Virginians 60 and older.

4. The Library has to this point been able to meet the demands of an aging population using general funds, grants, corporate and LVA Foundation funding, as well as federal funding. Disruption or further reductions in state or federal funding will limit programming and our ability to meet needs on various levels.
5. The Library does not capture demographic information on the age and gender of its users.
6. Our panel exhibitions travel to institutions able to accommodate the space requirements of the exhibitions.
7. The Library continues to explore the demographic drivers that compel it to transform the ways it serves and engages an aging population. We will conduct focus groups to assess this community's needs and wants in terms of services. Based on that information and the possibility of further reductions in state and federal funding we will develop plans to meet any changes in types and delivery of services.
8. A fundamental step is the availability of accurate data on the demographic, service needs, and ways to provide these services effectively and efficiently to older adults. The need for sustainable funding streams and adequate staff with requisite skills is a major priority.
9. The Library recognizes a need to increase the senior-friendly quotient of its website. The Library anticipates the need to deliver more services and resources electronically to older users. A lack of staffing and funding is impeding that process. The Library provides many services to an aging population through the various databases available free through Find It Virginia but that resource is supported solely through federal funding.
10. The Library currently has no plans to implement additional services in the future for older adults.

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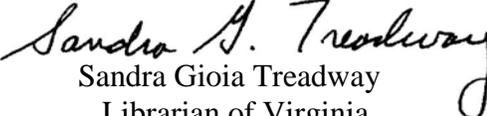
11. The Library of Virginia faces several significant workforce issues. Currently, approximately 18 - 20% of our staff are eligible for unreduced retirement. Over the next 5 years, that percentage will increase. Due to the depth of our collections, employees who work most closely with our collections require years of experience to have a comprehensive understanding of our collections.

To address some of these issues, the Library has been pro-active in our strategic planning. Much of our staff are involved in planning committees assessing issues such as how we deliver service to patrons, work space planning, leadership/development training, and traditional training opportunities. For the past two and half years, we have undergone change management and job-related competency training. We are reviewing our organizational structure and assessing areas where cross-training of staff can be effective. We continue to review our recruitment strategies and have long considered retention strategies such as alternative/flexible schedules and teleworking to promote work/life balance.

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Pursuant to Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-5510 and 51.5-136, the Library of Virginia submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population. This page should be signed by the agency head and include the submission date. Digital signatures should be used if possible. The signature page also must include the name, title, and phone and email contact information for the designated agency official responsible for reviewing policy and programs and accommodating the interests of older adults and adults with disabilities under Code of Virginia § 2.2-604.1.

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