

California public library and board types by state law

Library type	Formed under which state law or constitutional provision	Type of library board in state law	Number of board members constitution of board	Powers outlined in state law
County library	County Free Library Act (Education Code §19100-19180)	Advisory (county board of supervisors governs)	Varies by local law, usually includes representation from all local communities or county districts	Varies by local law
City library	Municipal Library Law (Education Code §18900-18965)	Governing, but varies by local law*	5 (may include additional ex-officio/non-voting members)	Education Code §18910-18927
City library	City charter formed under the “home rule” doctrine (Constitution Article XI, §3)	Varies by charter provisions	Varies by charter provisions	No provision in state law
Special district library	Library District Law (Education Code §19400-19532)	Governing	Either 3 or 5, depending on the original petition establishing the district (see Education Code §19402)	Education Code §19460-19483
Special district library	Library and Museum District Law (Education Code §19600-19734)	Governing	5 (Education Code §19611)	Education Code §19640-19664
Independent special district library	Unified School Districts/Union High School Districts Public Libraries Law (Education Code §18300-18571)	Governing (if commission established, if not district board governs)	District board may establish a library commission consisting of 5 members (Education Code §18440)	Education Code §18400-18411
Independent special district library	Community Services District Law (Government Code §61000-61250)	Governing	Either 3 or 5, depending on the original petition establishing the district (Education Code §19402 or Education Code §19611).	Government Code §61100(k) (powers same as in library district laws)
Joint powers of authority (JPA) library	Government Code §6500-6599.3	Governing (dependent on JPA contract)	Dependent on JPA contract	Dependent on JPA contract
County law libraries	Business and Professions (BPC) Code §6300-6363	Governing	3-7 depending on number of county superior court judges (membership specifically spelled out in BPC §6301-6301.5)	Business & Professions Code §6340-6350

* The Municipal Library Law designates the library board as governing, but a city council may appoint its own members as the library board and create an advisory board to help govern the library system.