

# Michigan eLibrary Collection Development Strategy

## Introduction and Description

The Michigan eLibrary (<http://mel.org>) (MeL) is the State of Michigan's online library. This service is largely funded by the Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) via the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) (<http://www.ims.gov>) through the Library of Michigan (<http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>), part of the Michigan Department of Education (<http://www.michigan.gov/mde>) which is also responsible for the eLibrary's management. The resources found in MeL are selected by librarians and MeL Team members at the Library of Michigan with input from the Michigan library community. MeL is available for use by every one of the nearly 10 million Michigan residents.

## Mission Statement

The Michigan eLibrary (MeL), a service of the Library of Michigan in partnership with Michigan's libraries provides Michigan residents with no cost access to a core collection of digital information and other useful e-resources via the Internet. Further, MeL will make available a statewide, shared catalog incorporating a user-initiated interlibrary loan system which will allow for the borrowing of books and other library materials at no cost from participating Michigan libraries. These common resources respond to the educational, professional, and quality of life goals of Michigan libraries and those they serve. MeL strongly endorses the concepts of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and strives to acquire resources that serve all.

## Disclaimer

The resources represented in the Michigan eLibrary are selected for their general value and content relevance to Michigan residents. Although MeL includes links providing direct access to other Internet resources, including Web sites, MeL is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information contained in these sites. Inclusion in MeL does not constitute endorsement of a particular point of view or philosophy by the Library of Michigan.

Additionally, the Library of Michigan does not act *in loco parentis* for children accessing MeL content.

Web sites or other materials that give rise to a reasonable belief on the part of MeL selectors that the creator of the resource is using copyrighted materials without the permission or authorization of the copyright or trademark holder will not be included.

Transmission or reproduction of items found on MeL beyond that permitted by fair use requires the permission of the copyright owners. It is the user's responsibility to determine and comply with all restrictions based upon the intended use of the materials.

### **Structure of the Michigan eLibrary**

The Michigan eLibrary has gone through many iterations since its inception in 1992. With each redesign of the Web site, new features have been added with content being changed or improved. MeL is made up of a number of featured components and a collection of topical gateways that include selected subscription databases and Web sites. MeL contains:

- a suite of subscription databases, MeL Databases, providing full-textual information plus digital images and streaming audio and video content. This "deep web" content is provided by commercial vendors under contract with Library of Michigan.
- a shared statewide catalog, MeLCat, incorporating a user-initiated interlibrary loan system of over 400 Michigan public, academic, K-12 and special libraries who are all responsible for the selection and maintenance of their own library collection.
- a portal, Michigana, including digital Michigan history collections with primary source material from around the state.
- selected best Web sites in the current Gateway areas of: kids, teens, business, jobs, government, health, legal, and books & literacy which includes library and information science.

The MeL Team at the Library of Michigan reserves the right to make periodic changes in the structure of the Web site and the content of the Michigan eLibrary. These changes will be done in accordance with input gained from user studies, statistics, librarians, educators and other individuals with recognized subject expertise.

## **Library of Michigan MeL Team**

The MeL Team at the Library of Michigan shall consist of the Director of Statewide Library Services, the MeL Coordinators, the MeL Web Site Administrator, and the MeL Internet Librarian. The State Librarian shall have final decision-making authority for the Michigan eLibrary.

## **Community**

MeL is designed to be of use to all Michigan residents. The MeL Gateways, portals, and database selections have been constructed to fill the needs of multiple user communities within the State of Michigan looking for information in such areas as:

- kids
- teens
- business
- jobs
- government
- health
- legal
- books and literacy
- Michigan history and culture (Michigana)
- education and teaching
- library and information science

## **Funding**

Funding for the Michigan eLibrary databases and MeLCat, the statewide shared catalog/delivery service is provided by a federal grant to the Library of Michigan from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered through the Library Services and Technology Act. Additional funding is provided by the State of Michigan.

## **Gifts**

Individuals or organizations interested in providing gifts of content or funds for the purchase of content are directed to the [Library of Michigan Foundation](#)

(<http://www.libraryofmichiganfoundation.org/index.html>). Established in 1985, the Library of Michigan Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, public charity governed by an independent Board of Directors. The Foundation exists to provide opportunities for charitable giving to benefit the Library and to provide funding for Library programs and projects otherwise not provided through state or federal funding.

All gifts and other unsolicited items from whatever source are subject to the provisions of this guideline.

### **Purpose of the Strategy**

The purpose of this strategy statement is to clarify for the public, Michigan libraries and MeL staff the methodology used for selecting resources as well as the responsibility for the collections.

### **Definition of Selection**

In this context, the term ‘selection’ refers to the decision to add resources to or retain resources already in the Michigan eLibrary. This methodology applies to all components of MeL with the exception of MeLCat, the shared statewide catalog and interloan service. [See MeLCat section of this document.]

### **Goal of Selection**

The Michigan eLibrary’s selection goal is to maintain a balanced core collection of subscription databases, Web Sites, and links to primary source collections that reflect the interests and information needs of its user communities with a particular focus on authoritative resources selected for Michigan residents. The phrase, “core collection of subscription databases,” refers to the inclusion of digital content covering a broad range of topics in demand by the multi-type library users. This allows Michigan libraries to concentrate local purchasing on their own users’ needs and interests thereby reducing duplicative resource spending.

While most individuals living in the United States cite English as their first language, many other individuals do not, and consequently, may experience barriers to accessing online information and resources. In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq. and its implementing regulations, reasonable steps will be taken to ensure broad access to MeL resources for persons with limited English proficiency. Resources offered with built-in translation features and in non-English language versions will be considered.

The following broad subject areas reflect selection goals: kids, teens, business, jobs, government, health, legal, books and literacy, Michigan history and culture (Michigan), and library and information science.

Periodic reassessment of the viability of subjects covered in MeL will be performed by staff considering statistics, RSS news feeds, user feedback, etc. MeL content is subject to change over time. The MeL Collection Development Strategy will be reviewed for possible revision every two years.

### **Responsibility for Selection**

The responsibility for the professional supervision of the selection of eLibrary materials rests with the Director of Statewide Library Services as directed by the State Librarian. To facilitate selection, the Director will designate the MeL Coordinator or an appropriate MeL team member to:

- Poll Michigan libraries and Michigan residents through surveys and other information gathering techniques to determine the information needs of library users regarding full-text resources from the periodical literature, image-based and other digital resources. This will be done as set forth in the Library of Michigan's LSTA 5 year plan.
- Provide for the acquisition of online full-text resources from reputable database vendors that will cover the broad and basic areas of information needed by Michigan libraries/Michigan residents for a contract period determined by the Library of Michigan or as eLibrary funding sources permit.
- Oversee the selection of reputable and authoritative Internet Web Sites for the MeL gateways and components.

### **General Selection Strategy**

The following defined strategies will dictate selection decisions when new and existing content is examined. Selection priority is given to resources that appeal to the largest audience of Michigan residents.

- Scope of Coverage – the extent to which a source explores a topic; time periods, geography or jurisdiction and coverage of related or narrower topics are considered.

- Authority – the expertise or recognized official status of a source. Reputation of the author and publisher is considered as is the official provider of the information if legal or government information.
- Objectivity - the bias or opinion expressed when a writer interprets or analyzes facts. The use of persuasive language, the source’s presentation of other viewpoints, and the reason for providing the information and advertising are all considered.
- Accuracy - describes information that is factually irrefutable and complete. The editing and publishing policy of the source such as whether or not it is peer-reviewed or if fact-checking is employed is considered.
- Timeliness - information that is current at the time of publication. Publication, creation and revision dates are considered. Web site scripting that automatically reflects the current day’s date on the page should be considered with caution.
- Cost and Promotional nature - the resources included in MeL will generally be available at no direct cost to the user. Web Sites that include advertising and solicitations are generally not included.
- Endorsement – the resources represented in MeL are selected for their general value and content relevance to Michigan residents. Inclusion in MeL does not constitute endorsement of a particular point of view by the Library of Michigan.
- Functionality – ease of use, efficiency, and technical aspects of online services and applications. The presence of interfering ads or pop-ups and unreasonable load time is considered.
- Resource Type – Resources found in the Michigan eLibrary may be defined by the following types: instructional, literacy-building, reference, scholarly/research, general/recreational/consumer information. Both current and retrospective materials are included in each level.

### **Web Site Content Selection**

- Focus is on unique Michigan content. Regional, national or international content can be included if it facilitates the information needs of Michigan residents.
- The Michigan eLibrary does not knowingly include:
  - Web Sites that are strictly commercial and have no informational content
  - Web Sites with extremist views

- Subscription/commercial Web Sites that provide free content with the sole purpose of enticing the user to purchase a subscription
- Web Sites or material that clearly violate U.S. copyright or other federal and state laws
- Specific selection methodologies for MeL Michigana, Michigan Government, and Michigan Legal are appended to this document.
- Additional unique methodologies will be added as developed.
- The Library of Michigan reserves the right to omit any material from its collections.

### **MeLCat Content Selection**

The statewide shared catalog resource sharing system is a joint venture by participating Michigan libraries. The Michigan eLibrary staff does not have selection responsibilities with regard to what is added by individual libraries who maintain their own criteria and policies.

The accessibility of information from a library does not constitute an endorsement by the Michigan eLibrary/Library of Michigan. A user of MeLCat who finds inaccurate or offensive information should contact the original producer of that information or the owning library.

### **De-selection Strategy**

The Michigan eLibrary may discontinue access to online subscription databases at the end of the contract period or as funding levels permit. Decisions will be made judiciously keeping in mind the mission of the eLibrary. In general Web resources may be discontinued or removed if they fail to meet selection methodologies as stated in the Selection section of this document.

### **Request for Reconsideration**

Requests for reconsideration of resources included in MeL (databases, gateways, and Michigana) may be submitted by:

- email to [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov)
- letter to Library of Michigan, 702 West Kalamazoo Street, P.O. Box 30007, Lansing, MI. 48909-7507.

All requests for reconsideration **must** contain:

- initiator's name and address
- indication if representing yourself or an organization and organization represented
- the specific resource being questioned
- specific reason(s)/concern(s) for request
- requested remedy
- acknowledgment of reading the Michigan eLibrary Collection Development Strategy

Within 20 days of receipt of a request for reconsideration, the Library of Michigan will reply in writing and the decision of the Library of Michigan will be final. The only issue considered will be whether the Collection Development Strategy has been followed with respect to the resource. Library of Michigan welcomes expression of opinion by the public but will be governed by the Michigan eLibrary Collection Development Strategy in making additions to, or deletions from, the collection.

### **Collection Maintenance and Evaluation**

1. A Web site link checker is run monthly for the MeL gateways and Michigana.
2. A review of the digital collections included in Michigana will be performed annually.
3. Subscription database resources will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

### **Intellectual Freedom, Censorship and Fair Use**

The Michigan eLibrary in order to meet its goals and objectives must protect the freedom of all to choose their own information and the style in which it is presented. To that end, we subscribe wholeheartedly to:

- The Library Bill of Rights and its various interpretations:  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
- The Freedom to Read Statement  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/ftstatement/freedomreadstatement.cfm>
- The Freedom to View Statement:  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/ftvstatement/freedomviewstatement.cfm>

- Fair Use  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/copyright/copyrightarticle/whatfairuse.cfm>

**Appendices:**

- A. Government Gateway
- B. Legal Gateway
- C. Michigana Gateway

# **Appendix A - Michigan Government Information Gateway Selection Strategy**

## **Description**

The MeL Michigan Government Information collection serves as an electronic library comprised of links to websites and publications that provide users with access to the government programs, services, interactive applications and authoritative information offered by the federal, state and local units of government in Michigan.

## **Intended audience**

The MeL Michigan Government Information collection user is anyone who ...

... needs to interact with a component of the federal government, the State of Michigan or local government entities (counties, townships, municipalities)

... wishes to begin research utilizing authoritative government publications and resources from home or office

... has little or no knowledge of the workings of government and needs authoritative direction to locate services, programs and information

## **Sources of information**

The information resources highlighted in this collection are generally created and disseminated by government entities. Finding aids such as bibliographies, indexes or databases compiled by authoritative creators such as librarians, educators or research organizations outside of government may be included after a thorough evaluation using the standard established under the Michigan eLibrary Collection Development Strategy.

The links in this collection originate from all levels of government displayed below. In line with the Michigan-specific focus of MeL, priority has been given to populating the collection with websites and resources from the State of Michigan and Michigan local units of government. The U.S. Federal government section will contain only the primary branch-level and all-inclusive aggregating resources as these access points are well-developed and need no further breakdown.

#### U.S. Federal government

- Executive
- Legislative
- Judicial

#### State of Michigan

- Executive
- Legislative
- Judicial

#### Local units of government

- Counties
- Townships
- Municipalities (Cities and Villages)
- Federally recognized tribal governments

Users may encounter the following domain extensions in this collection. The brief descriptions are 'typical' uses for these extensions and only intended to apply within the context of this collection.

.gov – government-created or maintained websites

.mil – military domains

.org – non-profit organizations

.edu – educational organizations

.net – network providers

.com – commercial interests (This domain is typically NOT used for official government websites. See the information under 'Proprietary nature' for further clarification of use within this gateway.)

### Selection Criteria

The Library of Michigan uses the following criteria in reviewing websites and resources for inclusion in this collection.

- **Authority**

Information linked or sourced for this collection generally will originate from official, authoritative government websites that may include educational, research and non-profit organizations operating under contract or as partners and presenting government created or sanctioned information. In addition, this collection may include links to private entities that provide support, assistance, education and advocacy for government entities.

- **Timeliness**

Government information may have long-standing authority that retains relevance despite the passage of time. Websites in this collection will be reviewed to assure currency of content and recent activity.

- **Cost**

The websites and resources in this collection will be available at no cost to the user, except in cases where a creator is allowed or required by law to recover associated costs for providing individual copies of the information to the user.

- **Objectivity**

Objectivity of government information is rooted in the statutory authority and obligation of the government unit to compile and disseminate that information. Government information is generally accepted as authoritative and objective. The federal government has regulations addressing objectivity of government information, but none exist at the state or local level(s).

- Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg\\_reproducible](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_reproducible)

- **Proprietary nature**

Commercial websites, and websites that represent private, non-government interests are generally not included, but, in select cases, a .com resource may be included if the information appears authoritative, is up-to-date and free or low cost.

- **Endorsement**

The Library of Michigan supports and endorses the use of authoritative government information.

### **Types of information included**

This site is intended to help users locate government programs, services, interactive applications and authoritative publications, documents and data. The categories below represent the types of information aggregated in the gateway, not a complete listing of the categories or content. More specific categories may be developed as needed.

## **Contact**

Information and resources for users to make direct contact with government agencies and workers

- Directories
- Contact information pages

## **Navigate/Find**

Links to information and resources that aggregate by subject, provide alternative textual or list-based access to webpages and inform on government structure

- Subject specific websites
- Site maps
- Organization charts

## **Interact**

Links to online services that allow the user to search, compile and/or download information, apply or request government services, or otherwise communicate and do business with government

- Databases
- Service portals
- Online applications and forms

## **Most requested/hot topics**

Links to the most requested programs, services and applications or information with wide-spread immediate relevance to constituents and other government entities.

- Current events
- New or recently modified services and programs
- New or recent publications affecting or representing the demonstrated interests of Michigan citizens (i.e. Great Lakes, federal health care, roads, etc.)

## **FAQs and fact sheets by subject**

Links to government FAQ pages and fact sheets by Michigan-specific core subject categories

- Agriculture, Natural Resources, Environment
- Business , jobs and employment
- Consumer protection
- Crime, Corrections, and Courts
- Economics (budget and taxes)

- Education
- Health and human services
- History, Arts , Culture and Travel
- People and Groups
- Transportation and Motor Vehicles

### **Publications library**

Links to government webpages that host 'libraries' or collections of government documents, and/or group related resources by topic

- Agency news and publications pages
- Bibliographies/core collection guides

### **Data**

Links to government resources that compile, aggregate and present data and data trends

- Dashboards
- Compiled statistical data reports, charts and graphs
- Data sets

## **Appendix B-** **Michigan Legal Information Gateway Selection Strategy**

### **Description**

The MeL Legal Gateway serves as a digital law library for those who wish to have ready access to basic legal resources of relevance in Michigan and to Michigan citizens. The Legal Gateway may help the user to decide when it is necessary to seek a more extensive collection of legal materials at a traditional law library or the services of an attorney.

The Legal Gateway is not designed to provide users with legal advice or assistance, nor does inclusion of a website or other information on the Legal Gateway constitute a recommendation concerning how to proceed in a given situation, or an endorsement of or preference on the part of State of Michigan, the Library of Michigan and its employees, the State Law Library, MeL Team or MeL Legal Coordinator for a particular vendor, publisher or service provider.

### **Intended Audience**

- **Members of the general public** who wish to find less-specialized information on a variety of legal topics or to gain access to some primary legal authorities and information about the Michigan and federal judicial systems.
- **Government and legal workers** who wish to find inexpensive or free sources of legal information, gain the understanding of an informed layman about a particular topic, or who would benefit from a readily-accessible springboard for more extensive research.
- **Librarians** unfamiliar with legal resources who would benefit from having a legal reference portal that emphasizes Michigan resources.

### **Sources of Information**

The MeL Legal Gateway is comprised of links to websites and original documents meant to assist users in finding primary legal authority and trustworthy secondary resources available at little or no cost to the end-user.

The MeL Legal Gateway provides quick access to the full text databases in MeL that have a legal focus or are of interest to someone doing legal research. For example, besides law, databases

featured on the Legal Gateway might include also those covering business, health, social sciences or legislative resources that cover or discuss legal issues or concepts.

MeLCat, easily accessible from the Legal Gateway, offers information on the holdings of local libraries throughout the state, enabling users to locate relevant print and digital materials for library use or loan.

Websites may be chosen from the following internet domain categories:

**.gov** - government-created or maintained websites (executive, legislative, judicial)

**.org** - websites discussing or focusing on legal issues or legislative information. Neutral presentation of materials is preferred

**.edu** - educational institutions with special areas of interest in law that provide a neutral discussion of a legal topic

**.com** - law firms/legal organizations that present papers written by attorneys or scholars on specialized legal topics are considered, especially if the paper has been published by a third party.

The preceding list is not exhaustive. As authoritative resources develop, they will be considered for inclusion on the Legal Information Gateway based on selection methodology discussed *infra*.

### **Selection of Websites:**

Websites are selected for inclusion in the Legal Gateway in accordance with the MeL Selection Strategy and the following additional considerations:

- Use of authority: Websites should preferably cite to primary authority (e.g., a statute or regulation, case or administrative decision) as a basis for statements made on the website or should provide links to recognized, authoritative sources of information.
- Updates: A website that has not been updated in over a year should not be included or should be considered for removal.
- Cost: the material on the website must be available at no or low-cost to the user. Exceptions for websites of particularly high-quality or well-known or acceptable to the

legal community and considered useful for the lay person may be considered, particularly where comparable material cannot be found online at no cost.

- Websites that exist for promoting a particular point-of-view or cause should not be included unless they also provide a substantial amount of authoritative or unbiased information. If the site is timely and of high interest, it could be included as a “Talking Point” site for temporary inclusion only.
- Websites that urge a user to make a purchase - prepackaged legal forms, for example - or exist only to promote the services of a given organization or individual are generally not included.

### **Types of Information Included**

Websites for the Legal Information Gateway are chosen by the MeL Legal Coordinator with the assistance of Library of Michigan staff in the State Law Library. Civil and criminal law topics are covered. Informational links will be grouped into the categories that follow. A description of the level of coverage (“LOC”) in each category or area also follows. Categories as well as links/websites under a particular category may be added or deleted as determined by the MeL Legal Coordinator based on changing informational needs of the intended audience and usage data provided by the MeL Team.

- Michigan law (LOC: Comprehensive) *LINK NAME: Michigan*  
Michigan primary authority – statutes and regulations  
Michigan Government websites (maybe some overlap with Michigan Government Gateway)  
Michigan judicial system and court decisions  
Summaries of Michigan law
- Federal law (LOC: Selective) *LINK NAME: Federal*  
Federal primary authority – current compilations  
Federal agency websites  
Federal judicial system
- Michigan Municipal and County law (LOC: Comprehensive) (may exclude if overlap with Michigan Government Gateway too extensive) *LINK NAME: Local Government*
  - Michigan Counties
  - Michigan Townships
  - Michigan municipalities

- Multistate resources (LOC: Selective) *LINK NAME: Multistate National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Council of State Governments*
- Links to organizations that provide legal assistance and other professional legal organizations such as bar associations. (LOC: Portal) *LINK NAME: Finding Legal Assistance)*
- Links to other legal portals with different areas of emphasis and focus (LOC: Portal) *LINK NAME: Doing Legal Research*
- Doing legal research for the non-lawyer (LOC: Portal) (*LINK NAME: Doing Legal Research*)

Levels of coverage are:

- Comprehensive: everything in an Informational Category that corresponds to the general MeL and Legal Information Gateway selection methodology;
- Selective: basic resources plus a wide selection of governmental agency resources
- Portal: provides access to basic resources on the topic, but emphasizes websites with collective information or that themselves function as gateways to information.

## **Appendix C**

### **Michigana Information Selection Strategy**

#### **Description**

Michigana consists of links to digital collections and websites that focus on Michigan historical materials from all subject areas. Historical materials are defined as those published through 1987, the year of Michigan's Sesquicentennial.

Selected sources enhance the knowledge of the State and its people.

#### **Intended audience**

Any individual, group or organization needing to conduct research or find resources related to the state of Michigan.

#### **Sources of information**

Most information resources highlighted in Michigana are generally created and disseminated by non-commercial entities. Materials such as bibliographies, indexes or databases compiled by authoritative creators such as librarians, educators or research organizations and governmental units of all levels may be included.

#### **Types of information prioritized**

This site is intended to help users locate materials, programs, services, and organizations about Michigan.

- History
- Arts and Culture
- People and Groups
- Transportation and Tourism
- Business
- Government

## Sources of information

Websites and digital collections are generally chosen from the following domain categories:

**.org** Non-profit organizations that hold a unique interest in state relevant topics and maintain scholarly standards in their work.

**.edu** Educational institutions with special areas of interest in the region or programming on related topics.

**.gov** Government-created or maintained websites

**.mil** Military domains

## Selection criteria

- Use of authority: Websites should reference primary and secondary authority as a basis for statements made on the website or should provide links to recognized, authoritative sources of information.
- Updates: A website that has not been updated in over a year may not be included or may be considered for removal.
- Cost: the material on the resource website must be available at no or low-cost to the user.
- Websites that exist for promoting a particular point-of-view or cause will not be included unless they also provide a substantial amount of authoritative or unbiased information.
- Websites that urge viewers to make a purchase or exist to only to promote the paid services of a given organization or individual are not included.
- Websites must be of potential interest to the general population and not specific to a single family or family organization.