Detroit Public Library

TIP Database

Data Development Policy

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1) Introduction

The primary function of the TIP Service is to collect, organize and provide access to practical information and information on resources in the community that meet the interests or can be used to solve the everyday problems of area residents. The TIP Database is the PC-based software application that the TIP Service uses to record, maintain, and retrieve the information that has been collected on community resources. The intent of this policy is to identify the priorities and provide guidelines for the selection of material to be added to or updated in the Database. This policy is published on the Detroit Public Library's web site for easy access by staff and the public.

2) Principle Development Objectives

   a) The Database should contain detailed descriptions of the purpose, organizational structure, and services of government agencies and a core set of private nonprofit organizations. Core nonprofit organizations generally meet the following criteria:

   i) They have been organized and are operated exclusively for charitable purposes. (In other words, they are incorporated and are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.)

   ii) They have at least one established service site.

   iii) They employ at least one paid full-time staff person.

   iv) They have been in existence for at least one year.

   b) The Database should also contain descriptions of the purpose, organizational structure, and services of a wide range of other agencies and organizations of interest to the public. These are generally the types of nonprofit organizations that are listed in Section 3a, ii-2 - ii-9 of this document.

   c) Priority should be placed on maintaining the accuracy of the agencies currently in the Database, with the accuracy of the names, addresses and phone numbers of organizations receiving top priority.

   d) The number of agencies listed in the TIP Database should be expanded according to the subject priorities and geographic guidelines outlined in this document.

3) Agency Type Selection Specifications

   a) The following types of agencies are appropriate for inclusion in the TIP Database:

   i) Government Offices

   (1) City

      (2) County

      (3) State of Michigan

      (4) United States

      (5) Special District

  ii) Private Nonprofit Organizations

      (1) Agencies organized and operated exclusively for charitable or educational purposes (501(c)(3) organizations).

      (2) Religious institutions which offer a human service to the general community.

      (3) Trusts that provide direct financial aid to the public for human service or educational purposes (i.e., the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund).

      (4) Professional associations and chambers of commerce not organized for profit.

      (5) Fraternal societies devoted to fraternal, religious, charitable, or educational purposes.

      (6) Organizations of past or present members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their auxiliary units.

  iii) Political Organizations and Officials

  iv) For-Profit Businesses which offer:

      (1) A human service free of charge to the public.

      (2) A service to which clients are referred and their fees paid by a government or private nonprofit agency.

      (3) A unique human service which is not offered by a nonprofit provider.

b) The following types of agencies or services are not appropriate for inclusion in the TIP Database.

  i) Private for-profit businesses that do not meet the criteria listed in item 3-iv.

  ii) Private practitioners (therapists, babysitters, handymen, etc.)

  iii) General services and procedures of hospitals or clinics. (Human services offered to the general community and selected autonomous units/centers which specialize in offering major medical interventions may be included in the Database.)

  iv) Academic programs and specific academic or enrichment classes of educational institutions or community centers. (Selected autonomous units/centers of academic institutions and human services offered to the general community by either an academic institution or community center may be included.)

4) Geographic Selection Specifications

Agencies that meet the following geographic criteria are appropriate for inclusion in the TIP Database:

a) Agencies with an office or contact person located in Macomb, Oakland, or Wayne counties.

b) "Major" agencies located in Monroe or Washtenaw counties are included on a selective basis. An agency is considered "major" if:

   i) It has been organized and is operated exclusively for charitable purposes.

   ii) It employs more than fifty full-time paid employees.

c) Agencies located outside of the five-county area are listed on a highly selective basis if a local organization providing a similar service is non-existent.

5) Evaluation of Material

a) General interest in the type of agency and its services is considered.

b) Scarcity of agencies providing service is considered.

c) Relation to existing collecting is considered.

d) Staff time to process information is considered.

e) Availability of information through other sources is considered.

f) Priority is given to agencies providing direct services to the public.

g) Agencies providing indirect services in the areas of community planning, service licensing, or program funding are also given priority.

h) Where licensing standards for a given type of organization or field of service are known to exist, only those agencies or services that meet the standards are included in the file.

i) Endorsement in the form of financial support from a recognized funding agency, such as the United Way, is considered.

j) Requirements for data processing under a contractual obligation are observed.

6) Policy for Reconsideration of an Agency Listing

Signed, written complaints regarding the absence, selection, description, or removal of an entry from the file are accepted by the TIP Database Assistant Manager, who will consider the complaint in light of the Data Development Policy and will advise the complainant of the final decision and the reasons for the decision. Material is not removed from the file because of the objectionable nature of the agency or its services.

7) Database Record Types

a) *Comprehensive Records:* These records include sufficient information to give the referral worker a full and complete understanding of the agency and *all* of its services. Records typically include contact information for the main office and all satellite sites, a general description of the organization, indexing of all services,

detailed textual descriptions of all services including eligibility requirements, application procedures, fees, etc., and exact geocoding.

Comprehensive records are prepared for most government agencies and a core set of approximately 300 nonprofit organizations in the database. (See Section 2a for a definition of 'core nonprofit' organizations.)

b) *Partial Records:* These records include complete descriptions of only those services and sites of an agency that are considered pertinent to the TIP Database. Those agency services which are not pertinent to TIP are not included in the records.

Partial records are prepared for entries in the database for which a comprehensive description of the agency is not appropriate or a priority of the database. Detailed partial records can be created for national governmental agencies, for-profit businesses, and special projects with a specific subject focus.

c) *Skeletal Records:* These records include just enough information on an organization to allow accurate referrals to be made. Entries typically include contact information, a brief description of the organization, indexing of major services and geocoding. Detailed service data, such as a textual description, eligibility requirements, etc., is usually not included in the record.

Skeletal records are prepared for most other entries in the database and are used for agencies such as professional associations and civic leagues.

8) <u>Database Record Maintenance</u>
Records in the TIP Database are updated through a variety of methods:

a) *Maintenance Update:* To verify/update key information in all records in the database at least once a year. Key information includes contact information, the availability of programs/services, and service indexing. Methods include surveying agencies using a printout of their record from the database, conducting a cursory review of agency literature, or comparing information against an authoritative third party source.

b) *In Depth Update:* To verify/update all information in each core record at least once every four years. This usually involves a careful review of agency literature and in depth interviews with agency staff. When records are completed a survey document is sent to the agency for final verification. The update cycle for these records is based on the importance of the agency, its stability, and the difficulty of the record.

c) *Ad-Hoc Update:* To incorporate important changes to records within three months of when they occurred at the agency. Staff ascertain possible changes through a continuous program of scanning newspapers, organizational brochures, and other pertinent materials. Changes are usually verified with the agency by telephone and then incorporated into the database.

9) <u>Database Backup Procedures</u>
   Backup procedures are handled by the software vendor, RTM Designs of Anderson, SC, who also host the database and the client software. The database server is physically housed at the Nuvox commercial data center in Greenville, SC (about 30 miles from Anderson), but RTM staff have continuous electronic access to it. When necessary, RTM staff visit the Nuvox Communications facility to physically work on the hardware.

   a) *Nightly Backups:* No human intervention is required when nightly tape backups are automatically made of the three SQL databases (*Provider*, *CallStat*, and *System*). Seven generations of backups (representing one week) are maintained at the Greenville data center, making it possible for RTM staff to roll back to a database image as far back as one week in the past.
   Should the SQL server drive fail on a WED, for instance, RTM could quickly restore the databases from the images created TU evening. Minimal data loss would result.

   b) *Offsite Backups:* Once a week, the most recent week's set of backup tapes is transported by a commercial contractor to the contractor's secure off-site location in case of a disaster that could wipe out the Greenville data center hardware and the backup tapes stored at that location.
   Should the Greenville data center suffer a catastrophe that destroyed both the server and the on-site backups on a WED, operations could be restored at the RTM facility in Anderson using offsite backup images no older than one week.

   c) *Potential for Data Center Redundancy:* While this isn't yet operational, RTM is exploring the possibility of setting up a second data center at a second, remote site running in parallel with the current data center. All database operations (including resource edits and client/call transactions) would be written to hardware at both sites in real time.
   Should a major problem develop at the primary Greenville data center, users would be switched to the secondary data center established by RTM at another location. The end result would be no data loss.
   (If that option is offered by RTM, it would be offered as a premium service. DPL and other RTM customers would have to pay an extra fee for the added level of security in order to defray the additional cost which RTM would incur in setting up the operation.

Technical Staff Availability: DPL staff have the phone number of software vendor, RTM Designs. In the event of an emergency, DPL staff are able to notify RTM at any time to initiate needed recovery actions.
Because DPL isn't a 24 hour operation, emergency contact personnel at DPL's partner agencies have been also been given the phone number and blanket permission to contact RTM to report emergencies which occur when DPL is closed.