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## **FACTS ABOUT PUBLIC LIBRARIES, INTERNET CONNECTIVITY AND E-GOVERNMENT**

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- Virtually all – **98.9%** – U.S. public libraries offer public access Internet services, according to a 2005 study by John Carlo Bertot, Charles R. McClure and Paul T. Jaeger
- Public library computer access is a **necessity** for people without a computer or Internet access at home
- Libraries have become **agents of e-government**, providing access to federal, state and local services available via the Internet, some of which are available *only* online
- Many Florida public libraries have proven crucial to hurricane recovery efforts for both survivors and emergency personnel as shelters, communication centers, and often the only places with Internet access for people to search for missing family or friends or to complete FEMA and insurance claims forms online
- Many of Florida's state agencies lack public access computers and Internet access and routinely direct recipients of their services to public libraries for Internet access and the assistance of library staff in explaining agency services, navigating agency Websites, locating contact information, and helping download, complete or submit applications
- By default, library personnel have become knowledgeable of the inner workings of a variety of governmental agencies and programs, as well as information technology in general – with no additional funding or training
- This trend will only continue as government functions and services become more paperless

- more -

**The following is a partial list of governmental and other online services accessed by visitors to Florida's public libraries, according to a survey of Florida public library directors:**

### **Federal**

- Auto safety information
- CIA Factbook
- FEMA - hurricane recovery and assistance
- Immigration and passport applications and appointments; locating INS offices
- Income tax forms and filing
- Medicare Part D enrollment and information
- National Archives to request military records
- National Do Not Call Registry
- Passport information
- Social Security Administration
- Student loan applications
- U.S. Postal Service

### **State**

- Agency for Workforce Innovation - to apply for unemployment compensation
- Online Driver's Education Programs
- Food Stamps, including Electronic Benefits Transfer cards
- Hurricane or other disaster recovery – filing homeowners' insurance claims online, locating lost loved ones, determining the status of one's residence or neighborhood
- Medicaid
- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Florida Statutes
- Florida Department of Law Enforcement
- Florida Department of Motor Vehicles – driver's licenses, vehicle registration
- Florida Department of Agriculture
- Florida Department of Consumer Affairs – seeking information on consumer fraud
- Florida Department of Corrections
- Florida KidCare enrollment
- Florida Office of Insurance Regulation
- [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com)
- State Children's Health Insurance Plan
- Checking the state sex offender registry

### **Local/Miscellaneous**

- Airline reservations, maps
- Bus schedules and street closings
- Checking email or accessing existing accounts
- Job searches or applications; searching for federal, state and local employment
- Comparing insurance rates
- School registration
- Vital records
- Voter registration