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California libraries may lose millions under Trump cuts

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Stacks of books. Photo by Chris Stone

California libraries are bracing for cutbacks to early literacy, information access and other education programs, the Los Angeles Times reported, due to the Trump administration’s push to slash funding for the nation’s libraries and museums.

The California State Library, which helps local libraries and maintains its own collection, said it was notified this week that a federal grant supporting programs across the state had been eliminated, axing \$3

million that had already been awarded.

In a **release Thursday**, the California State Library said it had not yet received more than 20% of a \$15.7-million grant awarded under the Library Services and Technology Act for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The funds had been distributed to support a wide range of programs across California's libraries, including story times for low-income families, summer reading initiatives, workforce-readiness skills for at-risk young people and opportunities to earn high school diplomas.

“We are deeply disappointed by this ill-informed decision, which immediately affects critical programs supported by these funds,” Rebecca Wendt, the California deputy state librarian, said in a statement, the Los Angeles Times **reported**.

“The California State Library remains committed to serving all of the people of California and will explore alternative means to ensure continued access to essential library services.”

The grant's cancellation comes amid chaos at the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency that provides the bulk of support for the nation's libraries, according to its website and the **American Library Association**.

Much of the agency's staff were placed **on leave** this week, on the heels of President Trump signing an **executive order** aimed at the further “reduction of the federal bureaucracy.”

The order mandated key functions of the library agency, as well as several others, to “be eliminated to the maximum extent consistent with applicable law.”

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