

Resolution to Classify Library Workers as 1b Workers to be Listed as a Priority Workforce in Receiving the COVID-19 Vaccine

Whereas COVID-19 is a deadly pandemic, and for safety reasons most library services and buildings have offered limited access to services or are outright closed;

Whereas American Library Association (ALA) Policy Manual A.1.1 (Mission, Priority Areas, Goals) states: "...ALA promotes the creation, maintenance, and enhancement of a learning society, encouraging its members to work with educators, government officials, and organizations in coalitions to initiate and support comprehensive efforts to ensure that school, public, academic, and special libraries in every community cooperate to provide lifelong learning services to all";

Whereas ALA Policy Manual B.8.11 (The Role of Libraries in Providing E-Government and Emergency Services) states: "The American Library Association urges governments at all levels to acknowledge and support the essential role local libraries play in providing e-government and emergency response/recovery services, and to include libraries in relevant legislative or other policy actions";

Whereas ALA Public Policy & Advocacy Office states: "Libraries are integral to community healing—even more so when it becomes safe to reopen their facilities,"¹ and sees libraries committed to response and recovery;

Whereas many library workers have been providing in-person library services to their users throughout the pandemic, and may have been supporting critical front-line services that can help the whole community slow the spread of the virus, such as operating as vaccine sites, offering vaccine appointment registration, and finding accurate vaccine information;

Whereas the physical libraries provide additional crucial services to populations which are underserved by broadband and other internet services;

Whereas all kinds of libraries serve an essential role in any community as sources of trustworthy information²;

Whereas a crucial step in the abatement of COVID-19 in communities is to inform and educate the population about the safety and efficacy of the various vaccines; and

Whereas all types of library workers (NAICS 51912x) are currently classified as 1c according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)³, and the Department of Homeland Security's Advisory Memorandum on Ensuring Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers' Ability to Work During the COVID-19 Response ⁴ (Version 4, December 2020, page 11) list media specialists and librarians and they "support prioritization decisions related to COVID-19 vaccines, especially in the early stages when the vaccines are in short supply."; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. asks the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to classify library workers who have direct contact with their community as Phase 1b workers;
2. asks the National Conference of State Legislatures and Council of Governors to list library workers who have direct contact with their community be classed as a priority workforce in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine;
3. encourages libraries to work together to share resources and success stories in reclassifying library workers' priority level; and
4. supports the right of library workers providing direct service to users to, at their discretion, receive the vaccine as soon as possible as a means to make library services safer for library workers and the public.

Mover: Jennifer C. Boettcher, Councilor at Large

Seconder: Stephanie Chase, PLA Division Councilor

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Endnotes:

- 1) http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/pdfs/CommunityOnePager_Custom.pdf
- 2) <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/30/most-americans-especially-millennials-say-libraries-can-help-them-find-reliable-trustworthy-information/>
- 3) <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/categories-essential-workers.html>
- 4) <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>