

ALA Policy Manual Section B: Positions and Public Policy Statements

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ALA Policy Manual
Section B: Positions and Public Policy Statements

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B.1. Core Values, Ethics, and Core Competencies (Old Number 40)

B.1.1 Core Values of Librarianship (Old Number 40.1)

The foundation of modern librarianship rests on an essential set of core values which define, inform, and guide all professional practice. These values reflect the history and ongoing development of the profession and have been advanced, expanded, and refined by numerous policy statements of the American Library Association. Among these are:

- Access
- Confidentiality/Privacy
- Democracy
- Diversity
- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Preservation
- The Public Good
- Professionalism
- Service
- Social Responsibility

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to express our values more eloquently than ALA already has in the Freedom to Read statement, the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Mission Statement, Libraries: an American Value and other documents. These policies have been carefully thought out, articulated, debated, and approved by the ALA Council. They are interpreted, revised, or expanded when necessary. Over time, the values embodied in these statements have been embraced by the majority of librarians as the foundations of their practice. Adopted, 2004.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Core Values Task Force II Report: 2003-04, CD #7.2 - PDF, 5 pgs\)](#)

B.1.2 Code of Professional Ethics for Librarians (Old Number 40.2)

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees, and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; and January 22, 2008

B.1.3 Core Competencies of Librarianship (Old Number 40.3)

This document defines the basic knowledge to be possessed by all persons graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies. Librarians working in school, academic, public, special, and governmental libraries and in other contexts will need to possess specialized knowledge beyond that specified here.

CONTENTS:

1. Foundations of the Profession
2. Information Resources
3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
4. Technological Knowledge and Skills
5. Reference and User Services
6. Research
7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning

8. Administration and Management

A person graduating from an ALA-accredited master's program in library and information studies should know and, where appropriate, be able to employ:

1. Foundations of the Profession
 - a. The ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.
 - b. The role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience).
 - c. The history of libraries and librarianship.
 - d. The history of human communication and its impact on libraries.
 - e. Current types of library (school, public, academic, special, etc.) and closely related information agencies.
 - f. National and international social, public, information, economic, and cultural policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.
 - g. The legal framework within which libraries and information agencies operate. That framework includes laws relating to copyright, privacy, freedom of expression, equal rights (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act), and intellectual property.
 - h. The importance of effective advocacy for libraries, librarians, other library workers, and library services.
 - i. The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.
 - j. Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).
 - k. Certification and/or licensure requirements of specialized areas of the profession.
2. Information Resources
 - a. Concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use to disposition.
 - b. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and de-selection.
 - c. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the management of various collections.
 - d. Concepts, issues, and methods related to the maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.
3. Organization of Recorded Knowledge and Information
 - a. The principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.
 - b. The developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed to organize recorded knowledge and information resources.
 - c. The systems of cataloging, metadata, indexing, and classification standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.
4. Technological Knowledge and Skills

- a. Information, communication, assistive, and related technologies as they affect the resources, service delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.
 - b. The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.
 - c. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.
 - d. The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.
5. Reference and User Services
- a. The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.
 - b. Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.
 - c. The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.
 - d. Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.
 - e. The principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.
 - f. The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.
 - g. The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.
6. Research
- a. The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
 - b. The central research findings and research literature of the field.
 - c. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.
7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning
- a. The necessity of continuing professional development of practitioners in libraries and other information agencies.
 - b. The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.
 - c. Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.
 - d. The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.
8. Administration and Management

- a. The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.
- b. The principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.
- c. The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.
- d. The concepts behind, and methods for, developing partnerships, collaborations, networks, and other structures with all stakeholders and within communities served.
- e. The concepts behind, issues relating to, and methods for, principled, transformational leadership.

[Adopted as amended by the ALA Council, January 27, 2009, 2008-2009 ALA CD#10-10.1 revised. \(PDF, 6 pgs\)](#)

B.1.4 Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Professional Ethics for Librarians (NEW)

Librarians are sources of copyright information for their user communities. Librarians should acquire a solid understanding of the purpose of copyright law and knowledge of its details relevant to library activities. They should do so in order to develop the ability to critically analyze issues of fair use or other limits to the rights of copyright holders, as well as to gain the confidence to implement the law using good judgment. Librarians and library staff should be educated to recognize and observe copyright and its limits, to understand and act on their rights and those of their users, and to be ready to inform or properly refer users with questions pertaining to copyright. When the balance between rights holders and information users' needs to be restored, librarians should engage with rights holders and legislators and advocate on behalf of their users and user rights. Adopted, 2014. [\(See "Policy Reference File": Copyright: An Interpretation of the Code of Ethics, 2013-2014 ALA CD#40.1 63014 act\)](#)

B.2. Intellectual Freedom (Old Number 53)

B.2.1 Library Bill of Rights (Old Number 53.1)

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

[Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980, by the ALA Council \(PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.2.1.1 Challenged Resources (Old Number 53.1.1)

Libraries: An American Value" states, "We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services." The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined written policy for collection development that includes a procedure for review of challenged resources. Collection development applies to print and media resources or formats in the physical collection. It also applies to digital resources such as databases, e-books and other downloadable and streaming media. Adopted 1971, amended 1990, 2014.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Challenged Resources: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.7 63014 act - PDF, 9 pgs\). Formerly titled: Challenged Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights\).](#)

B.2.1.2 Expurgation of Library Materials (Old Number 53.1.2)

The act of expurgation denies access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work is intended to express. This is censorship. Expurgation based on the premise that certain portions of a work may be harmful to minors is equally a violation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Note: At the 2014 Annual Conference, the ALA Council amended the wording in and title to Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*; **now titled: Expurgation of Library Resources**. The policy abstract was not revised.

[Adopted 1973, revised 1990, 2008, 2014. \(See "Policy Reference File": Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, revised, 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.10 63014 - PDF, 7 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.3 Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program (Old Number 53.1.3)

Members of the school community involved in the collection development process employ educational criteria to select resources unfettered by their personal, political, social, or religious views. Students and educators served by the school library have access to resources and services free of constraints resulting from personal, partisan, or doctrinal disapproval. School librarians resist efforts by individuals or groups to define what is appropriate for all students or

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teachers to read, view, hear, or access regardless of technology, formats or method of delivery.
Adopted 1986, amended 1990, 2000, 2005, 2008, 2014.

(See Policy Reference File": [Access to Resources and Services in the School Library: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*, revised, 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.5 - PDF, 15 pgs\).](#)
Formerly entitled: [Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*\).](#)

B.2.1.4 Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors (Old Number 53.1.4)

Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

[Adopted June 30, 1972; amended: AC 1981; AC 1991; AC 2004; AC 2008; and AC2014. \(See Policy Reference File": Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*, revised, 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.4. \(Formerly entitled: Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*; also incorporates content from *Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials, B.2.1.13 \(old number: 53.1.13\)* - PDF, 22 pgs\).](#)

B.2.1.5 Evaluating Library Collections (Old Number 53.1.5)

Evaluation of library materials is not to be used as a convenient means to remove materials that might be viewed as controversial or objectionable.

Adopted 1973, amended 1981, 2008. [\(See "Policy Reference File": Evaluating Library Collections: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*, revised, 2007-2008 ALA CD#19.5. - PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.6 Restricted Access to Library Materials (Old Number 53.1.6)

Participation in a democratic society requires unfettered access to current social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, and religious information. Information and ideas available outside the prison are essential to prisoners for a successful transition to freedom. Learning to be free requires access to a wide range of knowledge, and suppression of ideas does not prepare the incarcerated of any age for life in a free society. Even those individuals that a lawful society chooses to imprison permanently deserve access to information, to literature, and to a window on the world. Censorship is a process of exclusion by which authority rejects specific points of view. That material contains unpopular views or even repugnant content does not provide justification for censorship. Unlike censorship, selection is a process of inclusion that involves the search for resources, regardless of format, that represent diversity and a broad spectrum of ideas. The correctional library collection should reflect the needs of its community. Adopted 2010, amended 2014.

[\(See Policy Reference File: Prisoners' Right to Read: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*: 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.14 63014 act - PDF, 12 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.7 Labeling Systems (Old Number 53.1.7)

Labels as viewpoint-neutral directional aids are intended to facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the resource. The prejudicial label presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they chose to access. Adopted 1951, amended 1971, 1981, 1990, 2005, 2009, 2015.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Labeling Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, 2014-2015 ALA CD#19.4\)](#)

B.2.1.8 Rating Systems (Old Number 53.1.7)

Many organizations use or devise rating systems as a means of advising their opinions of the content and suitability or appropriate age or grade level for use of certain materials. However, the American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read or view. Libraries are not required to provide ratings in their bibliographic records. If they choose to do so, they should cite the source of the rating in their catalog or discovery tool displays to indicate the library does not endorse any external rating system. Adopted 1951, amended 1971, 1981, 1990, 2005, 2009, 2015.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, 2014-2015 ALA CD#19.5\)](#)

B.2.1.9 Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards (Old Number 53.1.8)

Libraries that make bulletin boards available to public groups for posting notices of public interest should develop criteria for the use of these spaces based on the same considerations as those outlined above. Libraries may wish to develop criteria regarding the size of material to be displayed, the length of time materials may remain on the bulletin board, the frequency with which material may be posted for the same group, and the geographic area from which notices will be accepted. Adopted 1991, amended 2004, 2014.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, ALA 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.9 63014 act – PDF 8 pgs.\)](#)

B.2.1.10 Meeting Rooms (Old Number 53.1.9)

Libraries maintaining meeting room facilities should develop and publish statements governing use. These statements can properly define time, place, or manner of use; such qualifications should not pertain to the content of a meeting or to the beliefs or affiliations of the sponsors. If meeting rooms in libraries supported by public funds are made available to the general public for non-library sponsored events, the library may not exclude any group based on the subject matter to be discussed or based on the ideas that the group advocates. A publicly supported

library may limit use of its meeting rooms to strictly “library related” activities, provided that the limitation is clearly circumscribed and is viewpoint neutral.

Adopted 1991. ([See “Policy Reference File”: Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. - PDF, 5 pgs](#))

B.2.1.11 Library Initiated Programs as a Resource (Old Number 53.1.10)

A policy on library-initiated programming should set forth the library’s commitment to free access to information and ideas for all users. Library staff select programs based on the interests and information needs of the community. Libraries servicing multilingual or multicultural communities should make efforts to accommodate the information needs of those for whom English is a second language.

Adopted 1982, revised 1990, 2000. ([See “Policy Reference File”: Library Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1999-2000 CD #19.4 - PDF, 7 pgs](#))

B.2.1.12 Diversity in Collection Development (Old Number 53.1.11)

Library collections must represent the diversity of people and ideas in our society. There are many complex facets to any issue, and many contexts in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have an obligation to select and support access to content on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community the library serves. Adopted 1982, amended 1990, 2008, 2014.

([See “Policy Reference File”: Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.8 63014 act – PDF, 17](#))

B.2.1.13 Universal Right to Free Expression (Old Number 53.1.12)

The American Library Association is unswerving in its commitment to human rights, but cherishes a particular commitment to privacy and free expression; the two are inseparably linked and inextricably entwined with the professional practice of librarianship. We believe that the rights of privacy and free expression are not derived from any claim of political, racial, economic, or cultural hegemony. These rights are inherent in every individual. They cannot be surrendered or subordinated, nor can they be denied, by the decree of any government or corporate interest. True justice and equality depend upon the constant exercise of these rights.

Adopted 1989, amended 2014. ([See “Policy Reference File”: The Universal Right to Free Expression: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, ALA CD#19.17 63014 act – PDF, 7 pgs. \)](#)

B.2.1.14

B.2.1.15 Economic Barriers to Information Access (Old Number 53.1.14)

The American Library Association opposes the charging of user fees for the provision of information by all libraries and information services that receive their major support from public funds. All information resources that are provided directly or indirectly by the library, regardless of technology, format, or methods of delivery, should be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users. The ALA opposes any legislative or regulatory attempt

to impose content restrictions on library resources, or to limit user access to information, as a condition of funding for publicly supported libraries and information services.

Adopted 1993. ([See also Policies B.4.2, B.5.2, B.3.1, and B.8.10.1](#)). ([See "Policy Reference File": Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 1992-93 CD #26.6.2. - PDF, 2 pgs](#))

B.2.1.16 Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation (Old Number 53.1.15)

The American Library Association stringently and unequivocally maintains that libraries and librarians have an obligation to resist efforts that systematically exclude materials dealing with any subject matter, including sex, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. The Association also encourages librarians to proactively support the First Amendment rights of all library users, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

Adopted 1993, amended 2000, 2004, 2008, 2010. ([See "Policy Reference File": Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: revised, 2007-2008 ALA CD#19.2 - PDF, 3 pgs](#))

B.2.1.17 Privacy (Old Number 53.1.16)

In a library (physical or virtual), the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Protecting user privacy and confidentiality is necessary for intellectual freedom and fundamental to the ethics and practice of librarianship.

([See "Policy Reference File": Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2001-2002 CD#19.6. - PDF, 5 pgs](#))

B.2.1.18 Use of Filtering Software in Libraries (Old Number 53.1.17)

The ALA affirms that the use of filtering software by libraries to block access to constitutionally protected speech violates the Library Bill of Rights.

([See "Policy Reference File": Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries, 1996-97 CD #19.4 - PDF, 1 pg](#))

B.2.1.18.1 Internet Filtering. (NEW)

The negative effects of content filters on Internet access in public libraries and schools are demonstrable and documented. Consequently, the American Library Association cannot recommend filtering. However, the American Library Association recognizes that local libraries and schools often must rely on federal or state funding for computers and internet access. Because adults and, to a lesser degree minors, have First Amendment rights, libraries and

schools that choose to use content filters should implement policies and procedures that mitigate the negative effects of filtering to the greatest extent possible. Adopted, 2015.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Committee on Professional Ethics Report: 2014-2015 ALA CD#19.3\)](#)

B.2.1.19 Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries (Old Number 53.1.18)

A service philosophy should be promoted that affords equal access to information for all in the academic community with no discrimination on the basis of race, age, values, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural or ethnic background, physical, sensory, cognitive or learning disability, economic status, religious beliefs, or views. Adopted 2000, amended 2014.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*: 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.11-63014 act - PDF 4 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.20 Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks (Old Number 53.1.19)

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. Libraries and librarians protect and promote these rights regardless of the format or technology employed to create and disseminate information.

Adopted 1996, amended 2005, 2009. [\(See "Policy Reference File": Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2008-09 ALA CD #19.5 - PDF, 4 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.21 Services to Persons with Disabilities (Old Number 53.1.20)

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution mandates the right of all persons to free expression and the corollary right to receive the constitutionally protected expression of others. A person's right to use the library should not be denied or abridged because of disabilities. The library has the responsibility to provide materials "for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves." (See also the Library Bill of Rights.) When information in libraries is not presented in formats that are accessible to all users, discriminatory barriers are created.

Adopted 2009. [\(See "Policy Reference File": Services to Persons with Disabilities: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: revised, 2008-2009 ALA CD#19.3 - PDF, 3 pgs\)](#)

B.2.1.22 Advocating for Intellectual Freedom (Old Number 53.1.21)

Libraries of all types foster education by promoting the free expression and interchange of ideas, leading to empowered lifelong learners. Libraries use resources, programming, and services to strengthen intellectual and physical access to information and thus build a foundation of intellectual freedom: developing collections (both real and virtual) with multiple perspectives and individual needs of users in mind; providing programming and instructional services framed around equitable access to information and ideas; and teaching information skills and intellectual freedom rights integrated appropriately throughout the spectrum of library programming. Adopted 2009, amended 2014.

[\(See "Policy Reference File" *Advocating for Intellectual Freedom: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: revised, 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.6 63014 - PDF, 6 pgs*\). Formerly titled: *Importance of Education to Intellectual Freedom: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*\).](#)

B.2.1.23 Minors and Internet Activity (Old Number 53.1.22)

The First Amendment applies to speech created by minors on interactive sites. Use of these social networking sites in a school or library allows minors to access and create resources that fulfill their interests and needs for information, for social connection with peers, and for participation in a community of learners. Restricting expression and access to interactive web sites because the sites provide tools for sharing information with others violates the tenets of the *Library Bill of Rights*. It is the responsibility of librarians and educators to monitor threats to the intellectual freedom of minors and to advocate for extending access to interactive applications on the Internet.

[Adopted 2009, amended 2014. \(See "Policy Reference File": *Minors and Internet Activity: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.13 63014 act*\). Formerly titled: *Minors and Internet Interactivity: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*\).](#)

B.2.1.24 Prisoners' Right to Read (Old Number 53.1.23)

Participation in a democratic society requires unfettered access to current social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, and religious information. Information and ideas available outside the prison are essential to prisoners for a successful transition to freedom. Learning to be free requires access to a wide range of knowledge, and suppression of ideas does not prepare the incarcerated of any age for life in a free society. Even those individuals that a lawful society chooses to imprison permanently deserve access to information, to literature, and to a window on the world. Censorship is a process of exclusion by which authority rejects specific points of view. That material contains unpopular views or even repugnant content does not provide justification for censorship. Unlike censorship, selection is a process of inclusion that involves the search for resources, regardless of format, that represent diversity and a broad spectrum of ideas. The correctional library collection should reflect the needs of its community. Adopted 2010, amended 2014.

[\(See Policy Reference File: *Prisoners' Right to Read: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights: 2013-2014 ALA CD#19.14 63014 act - PDF, 6 pgs.* \)](#)

B.2.1.25 User-Generated Content in Library Discovery Systems (NEW)

Libraries offer a variety of discovery systems to provide access to the resources in their collections. When discovery systems incorporate social media components, intelligent objects and knowledge-sharing tools, they create opportunities for users to contribute to discussions about library resources within the discovery system. Libraries that open their discovery systems to user-generated content should develop and publish viewpoint-neutral policies that describe how users may contribute, how user-generated content will be displayed, and how the personal information of contributors will be protected. Adopted, January 2016.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: User-Generated Content in Library Discovery Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, 2015-2016 ALA CD#19.2. Adopted January 12, 2016\)](#)

B.2.1.26 Religion in Libraries (NEW)

The First Amendment guarantees the right of individuals to believe and practice their religion or to practice no religion at all, and prohibits government from establishing or endorsing a religion or religions. Thus the freedom of, for and from religion, are similarly guaranteed. The First Amendment also guarantees the corollary right of individuals to receive information on religious topics. Libraries support this right by providing access to diverse religious thought without becoming a proponent of any of them. Adopted AC 2016

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Religion in American Libraries: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, 2015-2016 CD #19.9. Adopted June 28, 2016\)](#)

B.2.2 Freedom to View (Old Number 53.2)

The American Library Association endorses Freedom to View, a statement of the American Film and Video Association.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Freedom to View, revised 1990; 1989-90 CD #61.5. - PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.2.3 Freedom to Read (Old Number 53.3)

The American Library Association endorses Freedom to Read, a joint statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers. Adopted 1953, revised 1972, 1991, 2000, and 2004.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Freedom to Read: 2003-04 ALA CD#19.11 - PDF, 17 pgs\)](#)

B.2.3.1 Linguistic Pluralism (Old Number 53.3.1)

The American Library Association opposes all language laws, legislation, and regulations which restrict the rights of citizens who speak and read languages other than English, and those language laws, legislation, and regulations which abridge pluralism and diversity in library collections and services. The Association works with state associations and other agencies in devising ways to counteract restrictions arising from existing language laws and regulations, and encourages and supports the provision of library resources and services in the languages in common use in each community in the United States.

B.2.4 Governmental Intimidation (Old Number 53.4)

The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental prerogatives that lead to the intimidation of individuals or groups and discourages them from exercising the right of free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. ALA encourages resistance to such abuse of governmental power and supports those against whom such governmental power has been employed.

B.2.5 Support of Academic Freedom (Old Number 53.5)

The American Library Association reaffirms the principles of academic freedom embodied in the American Association of University Professors' "Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure" (1940), and opposes any legislation or codification of documents (e.g. the "Academic Bill of Rights" (ABOR)) that undermine academic or intellectual freedom, chill free speech, and/or otherwise interfere with the academic community's well-established norms and values of scholarship and educational excellence.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom 2005-2006 ALA CD 36 - PDF, 9 pgs\).](#)

B.2.6 Shield Laws (Old Number 53.6)

The American Library Association supports the enactment by Congress of a broad and effective federal shield law. The Association exhorts its chapters to work vigorously for the enactment of broad and effective shield laws in every state.

B.2.7 Loyalty Oaths (Old Number 53.7)

The American Library Association protests conditions of employment predicated on inquiries into library employees' thoughts, reading matter, associates, or memberships in organizations. The Association also protests compulsory affirmations of allegiance as a condition of employment in libraries and calls on libraries not to impose loyalty tests or oaths as conditions of employment.

B.2.8 Destruction of Libraries (Old Number 53.8)

The American Library Association deplores the destruction of libraries, library collections and property, and the disruption of the educational process by that act, whether it be done by individuals or groups of individuals and whether it be in the name of honest dissent, the desire to control or limit thought or ideas, or for any other purpose.

B.2.9 Libraries: An American Value (Old Number 53.9)

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.

To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select and effectively use the library's resources; We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services; We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners – informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.
- Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.
- By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

B.2.10 Violence in the Media: A Joint Statement (Old Number 53.10)

The American Library Association endorses Violence in the Media: A Joint Statement, a statement of the Association of American Publishers, Inc.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Violence in the Media: A Joint Statement: 2000-2001 CD #19.3 - PDF, 6 pgs\)](#)

B.2.11 Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles (Old Number 53.11)

All businesses, organizations, libraries, educational institutions, and non-profits that buy, sell, loan, or otherwise make available books and other content to the public utilizing RFID technologies shall:

1. Implement and enforce an up-to-date organizational privacy policy that gives notice and full disclosure as to the use, terms of use, and any change in the terms of use for data collected via new technologies and processes, including RFID.

2. Ensure that no personal information is recorded on RFID tags, which, however, may contain a variety of transactional data.
3. Protect data by reasonable security safeguards against interpretation by an unauthorized third party.
4. Comply with relevant federal, state, and local laws as well as industry best practices and policies.
5. Ensure that the four principles outlined above must be verifiable by an independent audit.

Adopted 2005. ([See "Policy Reference File": Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification \(RFID\) Technology and Privacy Principles: 2004-05 CD#19.1 - PDF, 6 pgs](#))

B.2.12 Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation (Old Number 53.12)

The American Library Association supports the inclusion in library collections of materials that reflect the diversity of our society, including those related to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. ALA encourages all American Library Association chapters to take active stands against all legislative or other government attempts to proscribe materials related to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression; and encourages all libraries to acquire and make available materials representative of all the people in our society.

Adopted 2005, Amended 2009, 2010. ([See "Policy Reference File": Resolution on Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation, 2004-2005 ALA CD#57](#))

B.3. Diversity (Old Number 60)

The American Library Association (ALA) promotes equal access to information for all persons and recognizes the ongoing need to increase awareness of and responsiveness to the diversity of the communities we serve. ALA recognizes the critical need for access to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially those who may experience language or literacy-related barriers; economic distress; cultural or social isolation; physical or attitudinal barriers; racism; discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression; or barriers to equal education, employment, and housing.

Libraries can and should play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full participation in a democratic society. In order to accomplish this, however, libraries must utilize multivariate resources and strategies. In the library workforce, concrete programs of recruitment, training, development, advancement and promotion are needed in order to increase and retain diverse library personnel who are reflective of the society we serve. Within the American Library Association and in the services and operations of libraries, efforts to include diversity in programs, activities, services, professional literature, products and continuing education must be ongoing and encouraged.

B.3.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 60.1)

The American Library Association will implement these objectives by:

1. Promoting the removal of all barriers to library and information services.

2. Promoting the publication, development, and purchase of materials, resources and exhibits that present positive role models from diverse populations.
3. Promoting full funding for existing legislative programs in support of equal education and employment, and exploring alternative funding sources for scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships in order to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds into librarianship.
4. Promoting training opportunities for library personnel that will give them the skills needed to both provide effective services to diverse populations and to raise funds to enhance library services for diverse communities.
5. Promoting the incorporation of programs and services designed for diverse populations into the budgets of all types of libraries, rather than supporting these activities solely from “soft monies” such as private grants or federal monies.
6. Promoting adequate funding of library personnel, resources, facilities and equipment for the provision of equitable library services to diverse populations.
7. Promoting supplemental support for library resources for diverse communities by urging local, state, and federal government, and the private sector, to provide adequate funding.
8. Promoting public awareness of the importance of library resources and services among all segments of society, especially in diverse communities.
9. Promoting the creation of output measures through the encouragement of community needs assessment.
10. Promoting the career advancement of diverse personnel by providing increased professional and leadership development opportunities.

[\(See 1.3-A and “Policy Reference File”: Equity at Issue \[1985-1986 CD #30\] adopted by Council June 1986. - PDF, 7 pgs\)](#)

B.3.2 Combating Racism (Old Number 60.2)

Since 1936, the American Library Association has been actively engaged in combating any and all attitudes, behavior, services or programs which amount to the exclusion or restriction of a targeted group of people based on a designation of race, skin color, ethnic origin or descent.

ALA also recognizes that institutionalized inequities based on race are embedded into our society and are reinforced through social institutions and further perpetuated by policies, practices, behaviors, traditions, and structures. And, since libraries are a microcosm of the larger society and play an important and unique role in the communities they serve, they must seek to provide an environment free of racism, where all are treated with respect and dignity.

B.3.3 Combating Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination (Old Number 60.3)

The American Library Association actively commits its programs and resources to those efforts that combat prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination against individuals and groups in the library profession and in library user populations on the basis of race, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, creed, color, religious background, national origin, language of origin or disability. Nothing in the Resolution on Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination authorizes censoring, expurgation, or restrictive labeling of materials. Actions and programs to raise the awareness of library users to any problem or condition would not be

in conflict with the Library Bill of Rights when they are free of any element of advocacy. Both documents respect the rights of all who use libraries to do so freely and without being subjected to pressure or censorship from within the institution.

Furthermore, ALA believes that the struggle against racism, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination is a continuous effort and must extend throughout its membership.

Specifically, the American Library Association and libraries will:

1. Seek to facilitate equitable participation of all people within decision-making processes in the Association and will strive to create an environment where all are welcome and where diversity is a collective goal.
2. Encourage its membership, libraries, vendors and stakeholders to implement anti-racism policies that outline the organization's expectations of its participants, staff and members.
3. Support anti-racism work within the broader society by monitoring, evaluating and advocating for human rights and equity legislation, regulations, policy and practice.

Thus, the American Library Association will endeavor to ensure full representation of all racial groups and have this reflected in its policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in its relations with staff, members, stakeholders, and the community at large, thereby reaffirming its commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, and mutual respect for all human beings.

[\(See "Policy Reference File" for full Resolution on Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination, a revision of the Resolution on Racism and Sexism Awareness.\)](#)

B.3.4 Native American Themes (Old Number 59.3)

ALA and its divisions are encouraged to consult with the American Indian Library Association before using or creating Native American themed illustrations, graphics, programs, or publicity.

B.3.5 Goals for Inclusive and Culturally Competent Library and Information Services (Old Number 60.4)

Cultural competency is defined as the acceptance and respect for diversity, continuing self-assessment regarding culture, and the ongoing development of knowledge, resources, and service models that work towards effectively meeting the needs of diverse populations. Cultural competence is critical to the equitable provision of library and information services; therefore, the American Library Association urges library personnel to commit themselves to the following guidelines.

1. To ensure equitable services to every community member or group, training and ongoing education that promote awareness of and sensitivity to diversity must be stressed for all library personnel.
2. Care must be taken to acquire and provide materials that meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of diverse communities.
3. Efforts to identify and eliminate cultural, economic, literacy-related, linguistic, physical, technological, or perceptual barriers that limit access to library and information resources must be prioritized and ongoing.

4. The creation of library services and delivery operations, which will ensure rapid access to information in a manner reflective of the communities they serve.
5. A diverse workforce is essential to the provision of competent library services. A concerted effort must be undertaken to recruit and retain diverse personnel at every level of the library workforce. Opportunities for career advancement must also be available to these individuals.
6. To ensure the development and enhancement of library services to diverse populations, library personnel from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds must be encouraged to take active roles in the American Library Association and other professional library organizations.

B.3.6 Library and Information Studies Education to Meet the Needs of a Diverse Society (Old Number 60.5)

The American Library Association, through the Committee on Accreditation, will encourage graduate programs in library and information studies seeking accreditation or re-accreditation to ensure that their student bodies, faculties, and curricular effect the diverse histories and information needs of all people in the United States. Collaboration between these programs and local libraries and community-based organizations serving diverse populations is to be particularly encouraged.

B.3.7 Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Personnel (Old Number 60.6)

In order to ensure that libraries are both reflective of and relevant to the communities they serve, the American Library Association encourages and supports recruitment and continuing education initiatives that facilitate the hiring and promotion of a diverse workforce in libraries of all types and at all organizational levels.

B.3.8 Leadership Development and Advancement (Old Number 60.7)

The American Library Association encourages libraries and library professional organizations to develop internal and collaborative initiatives that will assist library personnel from diverse backgrounds in identifying and preparing for career advancement and management opportunities. Such continuing education programs and learning modules may promote the development of skills necessary for leadership in 21st century information environments.

1. Libraries will be encouraged to provide information, training, and skill development activities to enhance leadership capabilities for diverse populations in the library profession.
2. ALA will assist in identifying proven leaders willing to participate as mentors to provide feedback, encouragement, and advice regarding continuing education, professional development, and career advancement opportunities for interested members.
3. Opportunities for learning and strengthening leadership skills will be available as workshops and conference programs in all sectors of the Association. Program developers will acknowledge the concerns of diverse populations and take this into consideration when developing these programs, by involving the appropriate representation in program planning and advertising.
4. Diversity initiatives will include leadership development components to prepare the leaders of tomorrow.

B.4. Equity and Access (Old Number 50—part of)

B.4.1 Equal Rights Amendment Legislation (Old Number 50.2)

The American Library Association supports the equality of women both in the profession and in society at large. To this end the Association (a) supports implementation of the national plan of action as amended at the National Women’s Conference in Houston in November 1977; (b) supports through employment practices policy the equal treatment of women in the work place; (c) supports the elimination of sex--stereotyping terminology through avoiding the use of such terminology in ALA publications and (e) supports adherence to affirmative action policies through its support of the enforcement of such policies in its library school accreditation standards and guidelines.

B.4.2 Free Access to Information (Old Number 50.3)

The American Library Association asserts that the charging of fees and levies for information services, including those services utilizing the latest information technology, is discriminatory in publicly supported institutions providing library and information services.

The American Library Association shall seek to make it possible for library and information service agencies which receive their major support from public funds to provide service to all people without additional fees and to utilize the latest technological developments to insure the best possible access to information, and ALA will actively promote its position on equal access to information.

B.4.3 Bibliographic Data Bases (Old Number 50.4)

The American Library Association supports open access to information, including the information contained in online data bases, and encourages data base providers and other organizations to minimize restrictions placed on their members’ use of bibliographic records maintained in their online data bases.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: 1984-1985 CD #41 - PDF, 16 pgs\)](#)

B.4.4 Funding for Community Access Cable Programming (Old Number 50.5)

Libraries should work cooperatively with other groups in promoting the widest possible access to communications and information, including community access cable casting. The American Library Association, in order to support stable sources of funding for community access channels, endorses the following principles articulated by Open Channel and Publicable, two organizations with knowledge and experience in community access cablecasting:

1. That a portion of cable revenues be designated to provide financial and technical assistance for community access programming.
2. That this support be sufficient to promote genuine access.
3. That this assistance increase as the cable operator’s revenue increases.
4. That the specific structures, funding formulas, and monitoring arrangements be left to the local community.

B.4.5 Trade Publishers Discounts (Old Number 50.14)

The American Library Association supports the concept of equal discounts on equal volume orders for all buyers.

B.4.6 Electronic Environment (Old Number 50.15)

B.4.6.1 Principles for the Networked World (Old Number 50.15.1)

Libraries are crucial to assuring that society benefits from the promises of technology but are increasingly challenged by a number of critical policy debates. There are seven policy areas intrinsic to libraries, technology, and the role that libraries play in connecting people to an increasingly networked world. These specific areas are:

- intellectual freedom, the right to access and express ideas;
- privacy, the freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is made available;
- equitable access to information;
- intellectual property;
- infrastructure, physical and social architectures within the context of the networked world;
- content, including public and government information; and
- information literacy, the ability to access and effectively participate in the networked world.

By establishing a baseline for ongoing policy discussions and decisions, the fundamental public policy requirements needed to support the ability of libraries to serve the public's information needs are well defined.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Principles for the Networked World: 2001-2002 CD 20.2 - PDF, 8 pgs\)](#)

B.4.6.2 Principles for Digitized Content (Old Number 50.15.2)

The accelerating mass digitization of collections in libraries and cultural heritage institutions demands a framework of principles and a body of policy to guide decision-making and to enable values-driven choices. The principles for the digitization of content will provoke a review of American Library Association policies that address the creation, access, use and preservation of digital materials and that require revision, enhancement and creation. This is critical to the advancement of ALA's leadership role in the information society and to the support provided to members. This will also sustain the relevance and impact of libraries and librarians in their communities.

1. Values

Digital collections are as important to libraries as all other types of collections. The policies of the Association apply fully to digital collections, including values such as intellectual freedom, commitment to access, respect for confidentiality and privacy, freedom of information, service for the public good, and professionalism.

Digital content must be given the same consideration as other library materials when conducting collection development, organization and cataloging of works, reference services, and preservation.

Digital content must be provided in various and alternative ways to meet the unique needs and circumstances of all people.

Equitable access to digital library materials is ensured through maximum accessibility, ubiquity, sustainability, and barrier-free access

2. Intellectual Property Rights

Access to and use of digital content that is protected by copyright should be provided in a fair and equitable manner, balancing the rights and privileges of users, creators, and owners.

Rights management policies and procedures must promote the advancement and sharing of knowledge, innovation, and creativity.

3. Sustainable Collections

A library's digital collections and associated activities must be sustainable.

Sustainability requires secure and ongoing funding, technology solutions that are appropriate to the longevity of the cultural record, and long-term management capabilities.

4. Collaboration

Collaboration enables the building of collections that support research, scholarship and information needs of diverse communities.

Collaboration will require strong organizational support and promotion by library and cultural heritage practitioners, their institutions, and their associations.

5. Advocacy

A library's digital programs and associated activities require ongoing communication for its success.

The library and cultural heritage communities must reach out to the public, to government, and to funding institutions with a clear and compelling message regarding the role of digital libraries and collections.

6. International Scope

Digital collections increasingly serve an international audience and are part of a global information infrastructure that is not limited by geography.

The library and cultural heritage communities must understand the origination of materials in digital collections, respect the ownership of these materials, and be attentive to issues surrounding cultural asset exploitation and repatriation.

Digital collections and services must be developed with goals of technical and social interoperability in the international information sphere.

7. Continuous learning

Digital collections are developed and sustained by an educated workforce.

Members of the library and cultural heritage professions must engage in ongoing learning. They must explore new technology, work with new partners, and reach new audiences.

8. Preservation

Digital resources must receive appropriate preservation

Preservation activities require the development of standards, best practices, and sustainable funding models to support long-term commitment to digital resources.

9. Importance of Standards

Digital collections must be built upon standards and best practices that maximize their usefulness.

Such standards and best practices must serve the broadest community of users, including those with disabilities, support sustainable access and use over time, and provide user functionality that promotes the core library values.

Preference should be given to open standards and non-proprietary technologies that support long-term sustainability.

B.5. Libraries and the Public Good (Old Number 50—part of)

B.5.1 Nominations to the Posts of Librarian of Congress and of Archivist of the United States (Old Number 50.7)

The privilege of reviewing nominations made by the President of the United States to the highest government posts in their respective professions is one accorded the major national professional organizations. The American Library Association strongly supports the extension of a similar privilege to ALA, enabling it to review the recommendations and nominations for the positions of Librarian of Congress and of Archivist of the United States whenever new appointments to those posts are under consideration.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: July 1975 CD #58, 1986-1987 CD #18 - PDF, 8 pgs\)](#)

B.5.2 Financing of Libraries (Old Number 50.8)

In order to assist libraries facing severe economic problems resulting from inflation, the American Library Association will engage in a broad media information program to make the public aware of the benefits to be gained through tax support of libraries, and will simultaneously explore public financing alternatives for libraries facing financial problems.

B.5.3 Disarmament and Conflict Solving Information in Libraries (Old Number 50.10)

Libraries should make available and readily accessible information on possibilities for disarmament and alternative ways of solving conflicts.

B.5.4 Nuclear Freeze, the Arms Race and National Security (Old Number 50.11)

The American Library Association supports the concept of a nuclear freeze on the development and deployment of nuclear weapons. It urges libraries to establish balanced up-to-date collections of library materials on national security in the nuclear age, on nuclear arms, and the movements for disarmament and a nuclear moratorium. The Association furthermore urges libraries to stimulate public interest in these issues and make information available about various courses of action concerned individuals may take.

(See “Policy Reference File.”)

B.5.5 Environmental Issues (Old Number 50.12)

The American Library Association urges librarians and library governing boards to collect and provide information on the condition of our Earth, its air, ground, water, and living organisms from all available sources.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": 1989-1990 CD #48 - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.5.6 Federal Legislative Policy (Old Number 51)

The Federal Government's Role in Library and Information Services **

A democratic society depends on the Federal government's ensuring the right of access for all its citizens to a comprehensive range of knowledge and variety of communications media. Through declaration of policy, by legislation, regulation, and the appropriation of financial support, the Executive Branch and the Congress of the United States have responded to requests for a Federal role in support of libraries as vital institutions serving the needs and well-being of individuals and the nation. Thus, while most libraries are regional and local institutions, under local, state, or private control, the Federal government plays an essential role in helping ensure access to resources and services for all.

Open government is vital to a democracy. Federal policy makers must continue to recognize the unique role of libraries, their delivery systems, and their community base in the dissemination of information to the public. The Federal government must continue to assume special responsibility to ensure that information produced or funded by the government is readily accessible to the people through the nation's libraries within the constraints of national security, privacy, efficient decision-making, and costs.

The Federal government must also provide leadership in the development and application of new technologies and services. Federal action stimulates local pilot programs for innovative services designed for specific user groups, programs that require specialized materials and technology, and education programs for library personnel.

Emerging technologies and advancements in telecommunications are altering the profile of library service. The Federal government initiates and facilitates cooperation, encourages resource sharing among all types of libraries, and establishes standards and practices for development of quality library networks that extend beyond state and national boundaries. The Department of Education through its mandate to assist libraries across the country raises standards of service and develops new programs to benefit library users. The Department not only administers important grant programs to public libraries, elementary and secondary school library media centers, and academic and research libraries, but also provides leadership, technical assistance, and dissemination of information. These functions must continue.

The Federal government also plays a critical role in the compilation and timely dissemination of statistical information, including data about libraries, information essential to long-range planning, and library development.

In an age of international communication and interchange of resources, the Federal government is pivotal in the development of libraries as institutions that transcend national boundaries. International protocols, participation in international organizations, transnational data flow and monetary policies are within the domain of the Federal government and all affect libraries throughout the world. The Federal role complements, without supplanting, the basic responsibilities of state and local governments and institutions to assure quality library and information service.

***The ALA Federal Legislative Policy, the product of an on-going revision, was adopted by Council in January, 1993. The entire text, from which the preceding is taken, is available online (PDF - 16 pgs), or may be ordered for free from the ALA Washington Office, 1615 New Hampshire Ave NW, 1st Floor, Washington DC 20009-2520, Phone : 202-628-8410, Toll Free Number: 1-800-941-8478.*

Sections of the ALA Federal Legislative Policy are:

- *The Federal Government's Role in Library and Information Services.*
- *Access to Information: Public Access to Federal Information: Public Access to Federal Information; Depository Libraries; Sale of Government Information; Access to Unpublished and Classified Government Information; Equal Access to Library Services.*
- *Intellectual Freedom.*
- *Federal Policies: Postal Rates and Quality of Postal Service; Statistics; Taxation; Copyright; Preservation of Library Materials.*
- *Federal Programs: Federal Libraries: A National Resource; Library of Congress; Other National Libraries; Federal Libraries; Bibliographic and Reference Services; National Commission on Libraries and Information Science; U.S. Department of Education; National Archives and Records Administration; National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities; Federal Support for State Library Agencies; Federal Aid to Libraries, Systems, Education Agencies and Institutions; School Library Media Centers; Technical, Professional and Vocational Institution Libraries; College and Research Libraries; Public Libraries; Youth Services; Services to People in Institutions; Federal Support for Library Facilities.*
- *Information Technologies: National Library and Information Networks; Technical Standards; Telecommunications and Broadcast Media.*
- *Education, Research, and Personnel Education: Education; Research; Personnel.*
- *White House Conference on Library and Information Services.*
- *Equal Rights Amendment.*
- *International Programs: United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); International Exchange of Persons; International Flow of Publications; Florence Agreement; United States Libraries and Information Centers Abroad; International Copyright; International Postal Policy; Economic and Educational Development Programs.*
- *Existing Federal Laws Affecting Librarians, Libraries and Their Users.*

B.6. International Relations (Old Number 58)

B.6.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 58.1)

The ALA Charter states that the Association was formed “for the purpose of promoting library interest throughout the world by exchanging views, reaching conclusions and inducing cooperation in all departments of bibliothecal science and economy.”The commitment in the area of international relations is carried out, in part, through the activities and programs of ALA’s International Relations Office. The American Library Association establishes these objectives and responsibilities for its international relations programs:

1. To encourage the exchange, dissemination, and access to information and the unrestricted flow of library materials in all formats throughout the world (ALA Key Action Area: Equitable Access to Information and Library Services).
2. To promote and support human rights and intellectual freedom worldwide (ALA Key Action Area: Intellectual Freedom; ALA Key Action Area: Diversity)
3. To foster, promote, support and participate in the development of international standards relating to library and information services, including informational tools and technologies (ALA Key Action Area: Transforming Libraries).
4. To promote legislation and treaties that will strengthen library, information and telecommunications services worldwide (ALA Key Action Area: Transforming Libraries).
5. To encourage involvement of librarians, information specialists, and other library personnel in international library activities and in the development of solutions to library service problems that span national boundaries (ALA Key Action Area: Transforming Libraries).
6. To promote the education of librarians, information specialists, and other library personnel in such ways that they are knowledgeable about librarianship in the international context (ALA Key Action Area: Education and Lifelong Learning).
7. To promote public awareness of the importance of the role of librarians, libraries, and information services in national and international development (ALA Key Action Area: Advocacy for Libraries and the Profession).

[\(See “Policy Reference File” for full text, including implementation: 1989-1990 CD #14 - PDF, 30 pgs\)](#)

B.6.2 Human Rights and Freedom of Expression (Old Number 58.4.1 for heading)

B.6.2.1 Article 19 of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Old Number 58.4)

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: 1990-1991CD#24and CD #76 - PDF, 3 pgs\)](#)

B.6.2.2 Abridgment of the Rights of Freedom of Foreign Nationals (Old Number 58.3)

Threats to the freedom of expression of any person become threats to the freedom of all; therefore ALA adopts as policy the principles of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Association will address the grievances of foreign nationals where the infringement of their rights of free expression is clearly a matter in which all free people should show concern. Resolutions or other documents attesting to such grievances will be brought to the attention of the Executive Board and Council by the ALA International Relations Committee.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Policy on Abridgment of the Rights of Freedom of Foreign Nationals and Freedom of Expression of Foreign Nationals; Abridgment of Human Rights in South Africa: 1985- 1986 CD #58 - PDF, 19 pgs\)](#)

B.6.2.3 ALA and IFLA (Old Number 58.4.1—for policy language)

The ALA shall work with other associations and institutions that belong to IFLA to develop positions and programmatic plans of action in support of human rights and freedom of expression. The president or the member officially representing the Association at IFLA conferences shall be directed to support and carry them out; and, in the absence of such specific direction, the president or the member officially representing the Association at IFLA conferences is empowered to vote on new IFLA resolutions related to human rights and freedom. Their votes shall be guided by ALA’s adoption of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the good of the Association.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: 1996-1997 CD #18.4 - PDF, 3 pgs\)](#)

B.6.3 Selection of Consultants to Serve Abroad (Old Number 58.2)

The American Library Association, serving the public interest, assigns a high priority to the development of libraries, librarianship, and information services throughout the world. ALA reaffirms its continuing desire to foster international library development in all countries and, in return, hopes to continue to learn from its participation.

In response to requests for assistance from abroad, ALA must be able to recommend librarians and information specialists who are both highly qualified and sensitive to cultural and national differences. ALA will therefore apply its approved guidelines and criteria in recommending, nominating, and selecting international consultants.

[\(See “Policy Reference File” for full text and guidelines and criteria - PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.6.4 Rights of Librarians and Library Workers to Travel (Old Number 58.5)

The American Library Association affirms and supports the rights of librarians and library workers in or from the U.S. to travel to all countries in order to attend and participate in conferences, to purchase books and other library materials, to meet and develop working relationships with librarians, to develop gift and exchange programs, to pursue and establish ties with library and other professional associations and libraries, and to conduct educational and professional library-related activities. In addition, ALA affirms and supports the rights of librarians and library workers from outside the U.S. to travel to the U.S. and not be prohibited or impeded by U.S. government policies, to attend and participate in conferences, to purchase books and other library materials, to meet and develop working relationships with librarians

and library staff, to develop gift and exchange programs, to pursue and establish ties with library and other professional associations and libraries, and to conduct educational and professional library-related activities.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Resolution on Rights of Librarians and Library Workers to Travel: 2005-2006 ALA CD# 18.2\)](#)

B.7. Library Education (Old Number 56)

B.7.1 Graduate Programs in Library and Information Studies (Old Number 56.1)

The American Library Association supports the provision of library services by professionally qualified personnel who have been educated in graduate programs within institutions of higher education. It is of vital importance that there be professional education available to meet the social needs and goals of library services. Therefore, the American Library Association supports the development and continuance of high quality graduate programs in library and information studies (LIS) of the quality, scope and availability necessary to prepare individuals in the broad profession of information dissemination.

The American Library Association supports education for the preparation of professionals in the field of library and information studies (LIS) as a university program at the master’s level. LIS programs are central to a discipline that will continue to concern itself with the development of information literate citizens and to fill a necessary role in the information society of the next century. LIS education is currently challenged by dynamic changes in the society it serves and prepares students for a rapidly growing information profession that can extend well beyond the customarily defined parameters of libraries. It is undergirded by a growing research base that is diverse and draws upon a broad range of disciplines, and its faculty members are expected to translate their knowledge into improved library and information services.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: 1992-1993CD#13.1- PDF, 4 pgs\)](#)

B.7.2 Affirmative Action (Old Number 56.2)

The American Library Association encourages ALA-accredited programs of library and information studies to continue to implement their affirmative action programs in admissions and in employment in the wake of the Bakke case decision by the Supreme Court.

(See “Goals for Inclusive and Culturally Competent Library and Information Services” [B.3.5] , “Standards of Accreditation in Library Education: Appeals Procedure” [B.7.4])

B.7.3 Continuing Education (Old Number 56.3)

The American Library Association is committed to a national comprehensive long-range plan for continuing education to improve the quality of library service with appropriate support from ALA funds. Standards for libraries and library education and guidelines for services developed by any ALA unit should include a significant continuing education component where appropriate.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Continuing Education.- PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.7.4 Standards of Accreditation in Library Education: Appeals Procedure (Old Number 55.4)

A graduate program in library and information studies may file a written appeal against any accreditation decision, by the Committee on Accreditation, which does not result in accreditation. Details regarding the appeals procedure shall be supplied to all programs participating in the accreditation process.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Executive Board Appeal Procedure - PDF, 31 pgs\)](#)

B.8. Services and Responsibilities of Libraries (Old Number 52)

B.8.1 Literacy (Old Number 50.6)

B.8.1.1 Literacy and State Library Agencies (Old Number 50.6.1)

The American Library Association supports the achievement of national literacy through educational activities utilizing the historical and cultural experience of libraries and librarians.

The American Library Association urges state library agencies to address the problems of illiteracy and give high priority to solutions in their short and long range plans for library development and use of federal and state funds.

B.8.1.2 Literacy and the Role of Libraries (Old Number 50.6.2)

The American Library Association reaffirms and supports the principle that lifelong literacy is a basic right for all individuals in our society and is essential to the welfare of the nation. ALA advocates the achievement of national literacy through educational activities utilizing the historical and cultural experiences of libraries and librarians.

ALA confirms that libraries of all types, as appropriate to their mission, have the responsibility to make literacy a high priority in planning and budgeting for library services. As pioneer and equal partners in the national literacy movement, libraries will continue to take a strong leadership role and must join with other literacy providers to urge local, state, federal, and private agencies to promote active development of literacy on a policy level and to support funding of the literacy services in libraries.

B.8.2 Service to Detention Facilities and Jails (Old Number 52.1)

The American Library Association encourages public libraries and systems to extend their services to residents of jails and other detention facilities within their taxing areas. ALA instructs its Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies in cooperation with the Public Library Association, The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, and other interested units to design a plan to assist public libraries in extending their services to local jails and detention facilities.

B.8.3 Preservation (Old Number 52.2)

B.8.3.1 Definition of Digital Preservation and the Revised Preservation Policy (Old Number 52.2.1)

Digital preservation combines policies, strategies and actions to ensure the accurate rendering of authenticated content over time, regardless of the challenges of media failure and technological change. Digital preservation applies to both born digital and reformatted content.

Publishers and distributors of content in digital form must address the usability and longevity of their electronic works. The Association encourages publishers to provide metadata that will facilitate the life cycle management of works in digital formats and to deposit digital works in repositories that provide for the long-term persistence and usability of digital content. The Association will work with the publishers to develop guidelines on digital preservation to help ensure that such information will not be lost when publishers can no longer retain and disseminate it. The Association encourages research on metadata, software, operating systems, and life cycle management techniques that may affect the preservation of digital works.

ALA affirms that the preservation of library resources protects the public's right to the free flow of information as embodied in the First Amendment to the Constitution and the *Library Bill of Rights*.

The Association supports the preservation of information disseminated and published in all media and formats. The Association affirms that the preservation of information content and information resources are central to libraries and librarianship.

The Association will actively support its Divisions and other organizations in developing preservation guidelines and best practices that may serve as catalysts for official national and international standards.

It is the Association's official position that publishers, information distributors and manufacturers have an obligation and responsibility to libraries and to the public to report appropriate information about the usability, durability and longevity of media. The Association strongly urges publishers to use paper and other media that meet standards promulgated by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the International Standards Organization (ISO) for all publications of enduring value. Publishers should include a statement of compliance on the verso of the title page of a book or the masthead or copyright area of a periodical, and in catalogs, advertising, and bibliographic references.

The Association will engage in active education and public relations efforts to develop, promote, and publicize standards for the usability, durability, and longevity of information media; to engage both librarians and information producers in the preservation process; and to produce educational materials devoted to promoting the longevity of information resources. The federal government must provide leadership in developing an expansive and inclusive national preservation policy. The Association urges the federal and state government to take responsibility for the longevity of information that it publishes on paper, in microform, and in digital formats.

The Association, through its ALA Washington Office and its Legislation Agenda, will strongly support the efforts of librarians to increase Federal and state government funding for preservation programs.

The preservation of primary source documents is integral to our right to know about and understand ourselves and the communities in which we live. Libraries have an obligation (a) to inform donors, users, administrators, and local officials about the ephemeral nature of primary source materials, (b) to promote strategies for the proper care, handling, and storage of these materials, and (c) to recommend the use of durable media and methods of documentation.

[\(See "Policy Reference File" 2007-2008 CD#55, Resolution Adopting the Definition of Digital Preservation and the Revised Preservation Policy for the American Library Association.\)](#)

B.8.3.2 Recycled Paper (Old Number 52.2.2)

The American Library Association urges all publishers, including the government, to use recycled paper for publications normally issued on nonpermanent paper and urges librarians to dispose of discarded paper so that it is available for recycling.

B.8.4 School Library Media Programs (Old Number 52.2.3)

B.8.4.1 Instruction in the Role of Libraries in Teacher Education (Old Number 52.3)

The American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians Division recommend instruction in the role of libraries and the use of information resources as an integral part of all teacher education programs.

B.8.4.2 The School Library Media Program (Old Number 52.3.1)

The purpose of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. Within the program, the school library media specialist serves as an information specialist, teacher, and instructional consultant.

B.8.4.3 School Library Media Programs: Materials Selection Policy Statements (Old Number 52.3.2)

The American Library Association recommends that every school district have a written materials selection policy-formally adopted by the school board that includes criteria and procedures for the selection and reconsideration of resources, following the principles of the Library Bill of Rights. The Association recommends that each school building have its own collection development plan that supplements the district selection policy and provides specific guidelines for developing the school's collection.

B.8.5 Confidentiality of Library Records (Old Number 52.4)

B.8.5.1 The Rights of Library Users and the USA PATRIOT Act (Old Number 52.4.1)

The American Library Association opposes any use of governmental power to suppress the free and open exchange of knowledge and information or to intimidate individuals exercising free inquiry. All librarians, library administrators, library governing bodies, and library advocates are encouraged to educate their users, staff, and communities about the process for compliance with the USA Patriot Act and other related measures and about the dangers to individual privacy and the confidentiality of library records resulting from those measures. ([See "Policy Reference File" The USA PATRIOT Act and Related Measures That Infringe on the Rights of Library Users: 2002-2003 CD #20.1 - PDF, 8 pgs](#))

B.8.5.2 Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information about Library Users (Old Number 52.4.2)

The American Library Association strongly recommends that the responsible officers of each library, cooperative system, and consortium in the United States:

1. Formally adopt a policy which specifically recognizes its circulation records and other records identifying the names of library users with specific materials to be confidential.
2. Advise all librarians and library employees that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government except pursuant to such process,

order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigatory power.

3. Resist the issuance or enforcement of any such process, order, or subpoena until such time as a proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Policy Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information About Library Users: 2003-04 CD#19.9 - PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.8.5.2.1. Protect Library User Confidentiality in Self-Service Hold Practices (NEW)

ALA urges all libraries that implement self-service holds to protect patron identity by adopting practices and procedures that conceal the library user's personally identifiable information in connection with the materials being borrowed; and, urges libraries, librarians, and the responsible bodies of ALA to work with vendors to incorporate applications into integrated library systems that enable libraries to conceal a library user's identity in a cost-effective manner. Adopted AC 2011.

(See "Policy Reference File" Resolution to Protect Library User Confidentiality in Self-Service Hold Practices: 2010-2011 ALA CD#19.3-PDF, 4 pgs.)

B.8.5.3 Immigrants' Rights to Free Public Library Access (Old Number 52.4.3)

The American Library Association in cooperation with REFORMA and other affiliates works to inform and educate public libraries and member constituents about alternate forms of identification that will encourage the use of free public library services by all immigrant populations.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Resolution in Support of Immigrants' Rights to Free Public Library Access. 2004-2005 ALA CD #65 - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.8.5.4 Retention of Library Records (Old Number 52.4.4)

ALA urges all libraries to:

- limit the degree to which personally identifiable information is collected, monitored, disclosed, and distributed;
- avoid creating unnecessary records;
- limit access to personally identifiable information to staff performing authorized functions;
- dispose of library usage records containing personally identifiable information unless they are needed for the efficient and lawful operation of the library, including, but not limited to data-related logs, digital records, vendor-collected data, and system backups;
- ensure that the library work with its organization's information technology unit to ensure that library usage records processed or held by the IT unit are treated in accordance with library records policies;

- ensure that those records that must be retained are secure;
- avoid library practices and procedures that place personally identifiable information on public view;
- assure that vendor agreements guarantee library control of all data and records; and
- conduct an annual privacy audit to ensure that information processing procedures meet privacy requirements by examining how information about library users and employees is collected, stored, shared, used, and destroyed.

ALA also urges all libraries and the library community to:

- adopt or update a privacy policy protecting users' personally identifiable information;
- communicate to library users how their information is used;
- explain the limited circumstances under which personally identifiable information could be disclosed; and
- advocate that records retention laws and regulations limit retention of library usage records containing personally identifiable information to the time needed for efficient operation of the library.

B.8.5.5 Support of Immigrant Rights (Old Number 52.4.5)

ALA strongly supports the protection of each person's civil liberties, regardless of that individual's nationality, residency, or status; and that ALA opposes any legislation that infringes on the rights of anyone in the USA or its territories, citizens or otherwise, to use library resources, programs, and services on national, state, and local levels.

B.8.6 Library Services for Youth (Old Number 52.5)

B.8.6.1 Youth Services (Old Number 52.5.1)

The American Library Association recognizes that the future of libraries and of society itself depends upon the preparedness of youth to carry adult responsibilities for business, government, parenthood and other leadership. Children and young adults cannot fulfill their potential or that of society without high quality library opportunities through both public and school libraries. ALA is committed to the support and development of resources and services for children and young adults through both school and public libraries.

B.8.6.2 Sex Education Materials in Libraries (Old Number 52.5.2)

ALA affirms the right of youth to comprehensive, sex-related education, materials, programs, and referral services of the highest quality; affirms the active role of librarians in providing such; and urges librarians and library educators to reexamine existing policies and practices and assume a leadership role in seeing that information is available for children and adolescents, parents, and youth-serving professionals.

B.8.6.3 Selective Service Information in Libraries (Old Number 52.5.3)

Librarians should have available information on the full range of alternatives within and without the military services for those young persons who are facing the prospect of conscription.

B.8.7 Instruction in the Use of Libraries (Old Number 52.6)

In order to assist individuals in the independent information retrieval process basic to daily living in a democratic society, the American Library Association encourages all libraries to

include instruction in the use of libraries as one of the primary goals of service. Libraries of all types share the responsibility to educate users in successful information location, beginning with their childhood years and continuing the education process throughout their years of professional and personal growth.

B.8.8 Privatization of Publicly Funded Libraries (Old Number 52.7)

ALA affirms that publicly funded libraries should remain directly accountable to the public they serve. Therefore, the American Library Association opposes the shifting of policy making and management oversight of library services from the public to the private for-profit sector.

B.8.9 Disinformation, Media Manipulation and the Destruction of Public Information (Old Number 52.8)

The ALA opposes the use by government of disinformation, media manipulation, the destruction and excision of public information, and other such tactics, and ALA encourages its members to help raise public consciousness regarding the many ways in which disinformation and media manipulation are being used to mislead public opinion in all spheres of life, and encourages librarians to facilitate this awareness with collection development, library programming and public outreach that draws the public's attention to those alternative sources of information dedicated to countering and revealing the disinformation often purveyed by the mainstream media.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Resolution on Disinformation, Media Manipulation and The Destruction of Public Information. 2004-2005 ALA CD #64 - PDF, 6 pgs\)](#)

B.8.10 Library Services to the Poor (Old Number 61)

The American Library Association promotes equal access to information for all persons, and recognizes the urgent need to respond to the increasing number of poor children, adults, and families in America. These people are affected by a combination of limitations, including illiteracy, illness, social isolation, homelessness, hunger, and discrimination, which hamper the effectiveness of traditional library services. Therefore it is crucial that libraries recognize their role in enabling poor people to participate fully in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies. Concrete programs of training and development are needed to sensitize and prepare library staff to identify poor people's needs and deliver relevant services. And within the American Library Association the coordinating mechanisms of programs and activities dealing with poor people in various divisions, offices, and units should be strengthened, and support for low-income liaison activities should be enhanced.

B.8.10.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 61.1)

The American Library Association shall implement these objectives by:

1. Promoting the removal of all barriers to library and information services, particularly fees and overdue charges.
2. Promoting the publication, production, purchase, and ready accessibility of print and non-print materials that honestly address the issues of poverty and homelessness, that deal with poor people in a respectful way, and that are of practical use to low-income patrons.

3. Promoting full, stable, and ongoing funding for existing legislative programs in support to flow income services and for pro-active library programs that reach beyond traditional service-sites to poor children, adults, and families.
4. Promoting training opportunities for librarians, in order to teach effective techniques for generating public funding to upgrade library services to poor people.
5. Promoting the incorporation of low-income programs and services into regular library budgets in all types of libraries, rather than the tendency to support these projects solely with "soft money" like private or federal grants.
6. Promoting equity in funding adequate library services for poor people in terms of materials, facilities, and equipment.
7. Promoting supplemental support for library resources for and about low-income populations by urging local, state, and federal governments, and the private sector, to provide adequate funding.
8. Promoting increased public awareness through programs, displays, bibliographies, and publicity of the importance of poverty related library resources and services in all segments of society.
9. Promoting the determination of output measures through the encouragement of community needs assessments, giving special emphasis to assessing the need so low-income people and involving both anti-poverty advocates and poor people themselves in such assessments.
10. Promoting direct representation of poor people and anti-poverty advocates through appointment to local boards and creation of local advisory committees on service to low-income people, such appointments to include library paid transportation and stipends.
11. Promoting training to sensitize library staff to issues affecting poor people and to attitudinal and other barriers that hinder poor people's use of libraries.
12. Promoting networking and cooperation between libraries and other agencies, organizations, and advocacy groups in order to develop programs and services that effectively reach poor people.
13. Promoting the implementation of an expanded federal low-income housing program, national health insurance, full-employment policy, living minimum wage and welfare payments, affordable daycare, and programs likely to reduce, if not eliminate, poverty itself.
14. Promoting among library staff the collection of food and clothing donations, volunteering personal time to antipoverty activities and contributing money to direct-aid organizations.
15. Promoting related efforts concerning minorities and women, since these groups are disproportionately represented among poor people.

B.8.11 The Role of Libraries in Providing E-Government and Emergency Services (Old Number 50.16)

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. The American Library Association also encourages continued research documenting library needs and capacity to provide effective e-government and emergency response/recovery services, and help libraries develop best practices and train staff to deliver these essential services.

B.9 Library Personnel Practices (Old Number 54)

B.9.1 Library and Information Studies and Human Resource Utilization: A Statement of Policy (Old Number 54.1)

To meet the goals of library service, both professional and supportive staff are needed in libraries. Thus, the library occupation is much broader than that segment of it which is the library profession, but the library profession has responsibility for defining the training and education required for the preparation of personnel who work in libraries at any level, supportive or professional.

Skills other than those of library and information studies also have an important contribution to make to the achievement of superior library service. There should be equal recognition in both the professional and supportive ranks for those individuals whose expertise contributes to the effective performance of the library.

The title “Librarian” carries with it the connotation of “professional” in the sense that professional tasks are those which require a special background and education.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: ALA Library and Information Studies Education and Human Resource Utilization: A Statement of Policy 2001-2002 CD #3 - PDF, 23 pgs\).](#)

B.9.2 Librarians: Appropriate Degrees (Old Number 54.2)

The master’s degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association (or from a master’s level program in library and information studies accredited or recognized by the appropriate national body of another country) is the appropriate professional degree for librarians.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Historical Note on the Use of Terminology Pertaining to Degree Programs Accredited by the American Library Association - PDF, 4 pgs\).](#)

B.9.2.1 Academic Librarians (Old Number 54.2.1)

The master’s degree in library and information studies from a library school program accredited by the American Library Association is the appropriate terminal professional degree for academic librarians.

B.9.2.2 School Librarians (OLD NUMBER #54.2.2)

The master’s degree in library and information studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association or a master’s degree with a specialty in school librarianship from an ALA/AASL Nationally Recognized program in an educational unit accredited by the Council

for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation is the appropriate first professional degree for school librarians.

(Adopted July 11, 1988, by ALA Council; revised 2008, MW2013.)

B.9.3 Equal Employment Opportunity (Old Number 54.3)

The American Library Association is committed to equality of opportunity for all library employees or applicants for employment, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, individual life-style, or national origin: and believes that hiring individuals with disabilities in all types of libraries is consistent with good personnel and management practices.

B.9.3.1 Affirmative Action Plans (Old Number 54.3.1)

Member libraries and library schools with 15 or more staff shall formulate written affirmative action plans and shall submit these plans to HRDR for review.

B.9.3.2 Library Services for People with Disabilities (Old Number 54.3.2)

The American Library Association recognizes that people with disabilities are a large and neglected minority in the community and are severely under-represented in the library profession. Disabilities cause many personal challenges. In addition, many people with disabilities face economic inequity, illiteracy, cultural isolation, and discrimination in education, employment and the broad range of societal activities.

Libraries play a catalytic role in the lives of people with disabilities by facilitating their full participation in society. Libraries should use strategies based upon the principles of universal design to ensure that library policy, resources and services meet the needs of all people.

ALA, through its divisions, offices and units and through collaborations with outside associations and agencies, is dedicated to eradicating inequities and improving attitudes toward and services and opportunities for people with disabilities.

For the purposes of this policy, “must” means “mandated by law and/or within ALA’s control” and “should” means “it is strongly recommended that libraries make every effort to . . .” Please see <http://www.ala.org/ascla/asclaissues/libraryservices> for the complete text of the policy, which includes explanatory examples.

1. The Scope of Disability Law. Providing equitable access for persons with disabilities to library facilities and services is required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, applicable state and local statutes, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).
2. Library Services. Libraries must not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to library resources. Libraries should include persons with disabilities as participants in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of library services, programs, and facilities.
3. Facilities. The ADA requires that both architectural barriers in existing facilities and communication barriers that are structural in nature be removed as long as such removal is “readily achievable.” (i.e., easily accomplished and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.)
4. Collections. Library materials must be accessible to all patrons including people with disabilities. Materials must be available to individuals with disabilities in a variety of formats and with accommodations, as long as the modified formats and accommodations are “reasonable,” do not “fundamentally alter” the library’s services, and do not place an “undue burden” on the library. Within the framework of the library’s mission and collection policies, public, school, and academic library collections should include materials with accurate and up-to-date information on the spectrum of disabilities,

disability issues, and services for people with disabilities, their families, and other concerned persons.

5. **Assistive Technology.** Well-planned technological solutions and access points, based on the concepts of universal design, are essential for effective use of information and other library services by all people. Libraries should work with people with disabilities, agencies, organizations and vendors to integrate assistive technology into their facilities and services to meet the needs of people with a broad range of disabilities, including learning, mobility, sensory and developmental disabilities. Library staff should be aware of how available technologies address disabilities and know how to assist all users with library technology.
6. **Employment.** ALA must work with employers in the public and private sectors to recruit people with disabilities into the library profession, first into library schools and then into employment at all levels within the profession. Libraries must provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities unless the library can show that the accommodations would impose an “undue hardship” on its operations. Libraries must also ensure that their policies and procedures are consistent with the ADA and other laws.
7. **Library Education, Training and Professional Development.** All graduate programs in library and information studies should require students to learn about accessibility issues, assistive technology, the needs of people with disabilities both as users and employees, and laws applicable to the rights of people with disabilities as they impact library services. Libraries should provide training opportunities for all library employees and volunteers in order to sensitize them to issues affecting people with disabilities and to teach effective techniques for providing services for users with disabilities and for working with colleagues with disabilities.
8. **ALA Conferences.** ALA conferences held at facilities that are “public accommodations” (e.g. hotels and convention centers) must be accessible to participants with disabilities. The association and its staff, members, exhibitors, and hospitality industry agents must consider the needs of conference participants with disabilities in the selection, planning, and layout of all conference facilities, especially meeting rooms and exhibit areas. ALA Conference Services Office and division offices offering conferences must make every effort to provide accessible accommodations as requested by individuals with special needs or alternative accessible arrangements must be made. Conference programs and meetings focusing on the needs of, services to, or of particular interest to people with disabilities should have priority for central meeting locations in the convention/conference center or official conference hotels.
9. **ALA Publications and Communications.** All ALA publications, including books, journals, and correspondence, must be available in alternative formats including electronic text. The ALA website must conform to the currently accepted guidelines for accessibility, such as those issued by the World Wide Web Consortium.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy, 2000-2001 CD #24 - PDF, 20 pgs\)](#)

B.9.4 Comparable Rewards (Old Number 54.4)

The American Library Association supports salary administration which gives reasonable and comparable recognition to positions having administrative, technical, subject, and linguistic requirements. It is recognized that all such specialist competencies can be intellectually vigorous and meet demanding professional operational needs. In administering such a policy, it can be a useful guide that, in major libraries, as many non-administrative specialties be assigned to the top classifications as are administrative staff. Whenever possible there should be as many at the top rank with less than 30 percent administrative load as there are at the highest rank carrying over 70 percent administrative load.

B.9.5 Faculty Status of College and University Librarians (Old Number 54.5)

The intellectual contributions made by academic librarians to the teaching, research, and service mission of their colleges and universities merit the granting of faculty status. Faculty status for librarians should entail the same rights and responsibilities granted to and required of other members of the faculty.

B.9.6 Security of Employment for Library Employees (Old Number 54.6)

Security of employment means that, following the satisfactory completion of a probationary period, the employment of a library employee under permanent appointment* carries with it an institutional commitment to continuous employment. Job competence, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the library, should be the criterion for acceptable performance for a library employee with permanent appointment. Library employees shall not be terminated without adequate cause and then only after being accorded due process.

*Permanent appointment in different types of libraries is variously called tenure, continuous appointment, career service, regular contract, etc.

Employing anyone for successive, limited periods with the intent to avoid the granting of permanent appointment is deemed unethical.

Security of employment, as an elementary right, guarantees specifically

1. Intellectual freedom, defined as freedom to assume the responsibility placed upon a person by a democratic society to educate oneself and to improve one's ability to participate usefully in activities in which one is involved as a citizen of the United States and of the world, and institutional adherence to the Library Bill of Rights.
2. Appointments and promotions based solely on merit without interference from political, economic, religious, or other groups.
3. A sufficient degree of economic security to make employment in the library attractive to men and women of ability.
4. The opportunity for the library employee to work without fear of undue interference or dismissal and freedom from discharge for racial, political, religious, or other unjust reasons.

B.9.7 Inclusiveness and Mutual Respect (Old Number 54.7)

The American Library Association values, respects, and welcomes the contributions and participation of all library workers. ALA actively promotes inclusiveness within the Association and communicates images and information about all types of library careers. ALA provides services and developmental opportunities for all library workers.

The American Library Association affirms the importance of inclusiveness and mutual respect as essential for employee productivity, morale, and learning. Library employers that have developed respectful organizational cultures with inclusive language and developmental opportunities for all library workers should be recognized as models for others.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": ALA Policy on Inclusiveness and Mutual Respect, 2004-2005 ALA CD#49 - PDF, 4 pgs\)](#)

B.9.8 The Library's Pay Plan (Old Number 54.8)

In order to assure equal pay for equal work, libraries should have a well-constructed and well-administered pay plan based on systematic analysis and evaluation of jobs in the library.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": The Library's Pay Plan: A Public Policy Statement. - PDF, 4 pgs\)](#)

B.9.9 Permanent Part-Time Employment (Old Number 54.9)

The right to earn a living includes a right to part-time employment on a par with full-time employment, including prorated pay and fringe benefits, opportunity for advancement and protection of tenure, access to middle-and upper-level jobs, and exercise of full responsibilities at any level.

ALA shall create more voluntarily chosen upgraded permanent part-time jobs in its own organization and supports similar action on the part of all libraries.

B.9.10 Equal Opportunity and Salaries (Old Number 54.10)

The American Library Association supports and works for the achievement of equal salaries and opportunity for employment and promotion for men and women.

The Association fully supports the concept of comparable wages for comparable work that aims at levels of pay for female-oriented occupations equal to those of male-oriented occupations; ALA therefore supports all legal and legislative efforts to achieve wages for library workers commensurate with wages in other occupations with similar qualifications, training, and responsibilities.

ALA particularly supports the efforts of those library workers who have documented, and are legally challenging, the practice of discriminatory salaries, and whose success will benefit all library workers throughout the nation.

B.9.11 Collective Bargaining (Old Number 54.11)

The American Library Association recognizes the principle of collective bargaining as one of the methods of conducting labor-management relations used by private and public institutions. The Association affirms the right of eligible library employees to organize and bargain collectively with their employers, or to refrain from organizing and bargaining collectively, without fear of reprisal.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Collective Bargaining, Statement of Guidelines. - PDF, 2 pgs\)](#)

B.9.12 Residency and Citizenship Requirements (Old Number 54.12)

The American Library Association is opposed to any rule, regulation or practice, imposing as a condition of new or continued employment in any library, a requirement of residence or U.S. citizenship except where a demonstrable danger to national security is involved.

B.9.13 Drug Testing (Old Number 54.13)

The American Library Association opposes mandatory drug testing of library employees and advocates employee assistance programs as the best way for library employers to respond to performance deficiencies due to drug use.

[\(See "Policy Reference File": 1987-88 CD #61 - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.9.14 Information and Referral Services (Old Number 54.14)

ALA provides, through its offices, divisions, round tables, and committees, information and referral services regarding tenure, status, fair employment practices (including discrimination and sexual harassment), and the principles of intellectual freedom as set forth in policies adopted by Council.

B.9.15 Institutional Support of ALA Members to Attend ALA Conferences (Old Number 54.15)

The American Library Association supports the principle of giving preference, in libraries, to members of ALA in providing financial support and administrative leave to attend ALA Conferences. ALA supports encouraging staff in both administrative and nonadministrative positions in libraries to attend the annual ALA Conference.

B.9.16 Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights (Old Number 54.16)

The American Library Association supports equal employment opportunity for gay, lesbian, and transgender librarians and library workers. [\(See "Policy Reference File." A Resolution Reaffirming Equal Employment Opportunity for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Librarians and Library Workers, 2010-2011 ALA CD#43\)](#) (See also B.9.3)

B.9.17 Advertising Salary Ranges (Old Number 54.17)

Available salary ranges shall be given for positions listed in any placement services provided by ALA and its units. A regional salary guide delineating the latest minimum salary figures recommended by state library associations shall be made available from any placement services provided by ALA and its units.

All ALA and unit publications printing classified job advertisements shall list the salary ranges established for open positions where available and shall include a regional salary guide delineating the latest minimum salary figures recommended by state library associations for library positions.

B.9.18 Reproduction of Noncommercial Educational and Scholarly Journals (Old Number 54.18)

ALA encourages authors writing primarily for purposes of educational advancement and scholarship to reserve to themselves licensing and reproduction rights to their own works in the publishing contracts they sign.

ALA, in cooperation with other educational organizations, urges publishers to adopt and include in their journals or similar publications a notice of a policy for the noncommercial reproduction of their materials for educational and scholarly purposes.

B.9.19 AIDS Screening (Old Number 54.19)

The American Library Association opposes mandatory AIDS screening of library employees and advocates employee assistance programs as the best way for library employers to respond to performance deficiencies related to [such illness as] AIDS and AIDS-Related Complex (ARC).

[\(See "Policy Reference File": 1988-89 CD #22. - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.9.20 Comprehensive Health Care (Old Number 54.20)

ALA recognizes the importance of comprehensive health care for all Americans and its impact on libraries.

ALA encourages that that potential employers specify explicitly in their job announces in ALA publications or website whether or not they provide domestic partner benefits by means of appending one of the following two phrases; 'Domestic-partner benefits are not offered by this institution' or 'Domestic-partner benefits are offered by this institution.'

ALA urges other publishers and providers to encourage potential employers to specify explicitly in their job announcements whether or not they provide domestic partner benefits by means of appending one of the following two phrases: 'Domestic-partner benefits are not offered by this institution' or 'Domestic-partner benefits are offered by this institution'. Adopted 2005.

Amended 2010

[\(See "Policy Reference File": Clarification within Job Listings as to the Presence or Absence of Domestic Partner Benefits, ALA CD#35\)](#)

B.9.21 Workplace Speech (Old Number 54.21)

Libraries should encourage discussion among library workers, including library administrators, of non-confidential professional and policy matters about the operation of the library and matters of public concern within the framework of applicable laws.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Resolution on Workplace Speech, 2004-2005 ALA CD#38.1 - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.10 Research and Statistics (Old Number 57)

The American Library Association recognizes the need to continuously build and strengthen the knowledge base upon which library services and the library profession depend. Basic and applied research in the field of library and information studies, as well as research results in related disciplines will, in large measure, shape library and information services and the nature of the library profession in the future. Statistics are a necessary foundation for many kinds of research, as well as for policy and planning. Through its Office for Research and Statistics (ORS), as well as through related groups in its membership units, ALA strives to reach ALA’s goals in the areas of research and statistics.

In order to reach these goals:

- ALA defines and identifies priority research areas;
- stimulates and promotes the funding required to conduct research;
- cooperates with library education research programs;
- coordinates with other institutions and associations implementing the profession’s research agenda;
- stimulates discussion of research methodologies;
- proposes programs designed to improve the quality, quantity, and impact of research;
- promotes the role, importance, and necessity of research.

In addition, the Association performs and supports research and participates in cooperative research activities related to those research areas and topics identified as Association priorities.

[\(See “Policy Reference File”: Research and Statistics Policy Statement: 1993-1994 CD #41 Revised - PDF, 1 pg\)](#)

B.11 Public Relations (Old Number 59)

B.11.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 59.1)

Through public information programs, and through its publications and membership activities, the ALA seeks to:

- keep the American public aware of libraries,
- encourage greater use of libraries, and
- stimulate citizen support of libraries.

It is ALA’s policy to engage in public information programs that are primarily national in scope, that benefit all types of libraries and their constituents, and that, in turn, inspire local or special libraries to engage in promotion and education activities in their own communities.

Through its Public Information Office, ALA will maintain a close relationship with the library press, both national and international, and sustain a steady flow of information about the organization and its activities, as well as major developments affecting the library profession.

Through its Washington Office, ALA seeks to inform and educate the United States legislature and the various federal agencies about events generally, and legislation specifically, which influence library-related activities.

[\(See "Policy Reference File" for full statement. - PDF, 3 pgs\)](#)

B.11.2 Public Information Office Responsibility (Old Number 59.2)

The responsibility for implementing national public information programs and for coordinating ALA contact with the national and international media outlets rests with the Public Information Office of the Association with support from other, appropriate ALA and related groups.

B.11.3 National Library Symbol (Old Number 50.13)

The American Library Association endorses the symbol recommended by the ALA President's Task Force and promotes its use.