

ALA Policy A.4.2.3 Council Resolutions: Guidelines for Preparation (formerly: ALA Policy 5.3)

The following guidelines are addressed to individuals and units preparing resolutions to come before Council.

Definition: A resolution is a main motion, phrased formally, with (a) *whereas* clauses, stating the background and reasons for a proposed policy, advocacy position, or action), followed by (b) *Resolved* clauses in numbered order (stating the proposed policy, advocacy position, or action).

CONTENT:

1. A resolution must be complete so that, upon passage, it becomes a clear and formal expression of the opinion or will of the assembly.
2. Resolutions, including memorials, tributes, and testimonials, must show the initiating unit, mover, and seconder and provide specific contact information from submitting parties. A resolution without a sponsor will not be presented.
3. The resolution should address a specific topic or issue, use concise direct language, conform to proper grammar, and present an affirmative identifiable action.
4. The terms used in a resolution should be readily understandable or have specific definitions.
5. The intent, objective or goal of the resolution should be clear and purposeful.
6. Resolutions should clearly support ALA's Strategic Plan, its mission and/or its core values.
7. All *whereas* clauses that relate to an ALA policy, must include a parenthetical notation of the title of the policy and the section where it can be found in the ALA Policy Manual.
8. If the resolution calls for specific action or program with a timetable, the timetable shall be clear and achievable.
9. Resolved clauses at the end of a resolution gain in clarity, brevity and are easier to read by following the resolution methodology of Congress and other deliberative bodies. The suggested wording states the resolved phrase *only once*: "now, therefore, be it; *Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:..." or *Resolved*, by the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members that... after which each separate resolved is stated directly in numbered order without repeating "...be it Resolved by....".
10. All "*Resolved*" clauses within a resolution should use the objective form of the verb (e.g., "*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: (1) supports...; (2) provides...; and [last resolved] urges...."). Do **NOT** use the subjunctive form of the verb (e.g., "*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members: (1) support...; (2) provide...; and [last resolved]. urge....").

11. If the resolution is addressed to or refers to a specific group or groups, it shall name in full the group or groups in both the 'resolved' and 'whereas' clauses followed by the acronym in parenthesis. Thereafter the acronym may be used.

PROCESS:

1. All resolutions submitted by Council members must be sent to the ALA Resolutions Committee for review and must be accompanied by a completed ALA Resolution e-Form.
2. All resolutions, except memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials, must be submitted by either a voting member of Council or an ALA Committee chair; memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials are exempted.
3. All resolutions, including memorials, tributes, and testimonials, must show the initiating unit, mover, and seconder. Cell phone or local telephone numbers must be given for movers and seconders.
4. A supplement explanation consisting of one or more expository paragraphs should accompany every resolution clearly stating how the resolution supports ALA's Strategic Plan as well as its mission and/or its core values.
5. The Resolutions Committee must submit to the Executive Director (ED) and the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) all resolutions that the Resolutions Committee deems to have fiscal implications at least 24 hours before they appear on the Council agendas, so that BARC can provide fiscal information as required in by ALA policy. Standing committees of ALA and Council presenting resolutions to Council will follow the same process of submission to the Executive Director and BARC. Committee resolutions need no second. After such a resolution is submitted to the Executive Director and the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC), the following procedure is to be followed:
 - a. At a Council meeting, a resolution which the Resolutions Committee has deemed to have fiscal implications is moved and seconded by its proponents.
 - b. The proponents of the resolution open the debate on the resolution they have initiated.
 - c. Council members are then invited to briefly debate the resolution.
 - d. After a brief debate, BARC Chair (or designate) moves to refer the resolution to BARC and then explains the potential fiscal implications that necessitate the referral.
 - e. Other members are then invited to debate the motion to refer.
 - f. The motion to refer to BARC is then put to a vote.
6. Memorial resolutions, tributes, and testimonials are submitted to the Resolutions Committee but are not reviewed by the Committee. They will be presented to Council at the beginning of the last session of Council at each Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference, and to the Membership at the beginning of the last Membership Meeting at each Annual Conference:

a. If copies are to be sent to other parties, the maker of the resolution shall provide names and addresses.

b. The Presiding officer will read the names of persons/organizations recognized by a formal resolution; the names will be displayed on the screen and copies of each resolution will be available at the information table.

c. *American Libraries* will carry an annual "memorial page" listing those members who have died since the preparation of the previous Conference Program.

7. All members are urged to submit a resolution or resolutions prior to the Annual Conference or Midwinter Council meetings by communicating the resolution to the chair of Resolutions Committee through electronic mail.

8. The Executive Director shall disseminate all adopted resolutions to identified and pertinent parties. Dissemination should occur as soon as possible, and not to exceed one month without explanation of the Executive Director to Council.

Revised: 1995 MW; 1999 AC; 2000 AC; 2003 AC; 2008 AC; 2011AC; 2013 MW; 2018 AC