Equal Employment Opportunity
A Statement of Policy of the American Library Association

Passed by ALA Council on January 25, 1974, the following statement is official
ALA Policy 106.11

I. Whereas: The American Library Association, through its organized resources and membership support, is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity for all library employees, or applicants for employment, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, individual life style (viz., manner and mode of attire, sexual preference, political persuasion), or national origin. This policy of employment equality logically begins with recruitment to the occupation of librarianship.

Commentary: This policy is designed to update and subsume the previous ALA policies on discrimination in employment, to wit, Compliance with Fair Employment Practices (1971), Non-ethnic Minorities (1971) and Equal Opportunity for Women in Librarianship (1971) and reflect the intent of the policy on the advancement of Minorities in Public Library Service (1971) and on Racial Discrimination (1962), which states:

In a free society, a library is one of the primary instruments through which citizens gain understanding and enlightenment. The institution, the people who work for it, and the professional association with which they identify themselves should be worthy examples of the high principles which libraries endeavor to promote.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that member libraries and library schools are in fact drawing from the largest market-place of human resources for staffing purposes and that a critical review is ongoing into appointment, advancement, compensation and discipline practices of the library to insure equality in all phases of employment.

See also Introduction and section IV of the ALA Committee on Accreditation. Standards for Accreditation, Chicago, 1972.

II. Whereas: The Association not only supports the efforts of member libraries and library schools to seek full compliance with all governmental policies against discriminatory practices but also through the approval and promulgation of this policy focuses attention on the positive responsibility of members, both personal and institutional members, to comply with such legislation and to set institutional goals and timetables which will actively eliminate employment discrimination in libraries.

Commentary: Currently existing federal policies include:


EXECUTIVE ORDERS
11246 (September 24, 1965) as amended by EO 11375 (October 13, 1967) and EO 11478 (August 8, 1969).

FEDERAL COURT CASES

Policies of the states are listed in part in American Libraries (June 1972).

III. Be It Resolved That:
(1) The Council of the Association directs the Executive Director of ALA to have all Association activities, programs and policies reviewed in order to assure that fair and equal practices are followed.
(2) The Council urges the Association's investigatory body to be prepared to respond speedily and investigate thoroughly alleged employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, individual life style, or national origin from any individual or group of individuals employed in seeking employment in libraries and to impose sanctions on libraries which are in violation of the law and this policy.
(3) The Association commits itself to continuing efforts for the improvement and implementation of essential legislation prohibiting discrimination.

Commentary: The Staff Committee on Mediation, Arbitration, and Inquiry is hereby assigned responsibility for mediation, arbitration, and inquiry relating to tenure, status, fair employment practices, due process, ethical practices, and the principles of intellectual freedom as set forth in policies adopted by the Council of the American Library Association.

The Committee shall have full authority to interpret all pertinent ALA-approved policies in implementing this Program of Action for Mediation, Arbitration, and Inquiry and conducting activities to meet its committee responsibilities. Sanctions may be defined as the appropriate penalty or penalties incurred for violations of one or more of the ALA-approved policies to which this Program of Action relates.

(a) Publication of a report that includes a statement of censure, indicating the strong disapproval of ALA because of a violation of one or more of the policies to which this Program of Action relates.
(b) Suspension or expulsion from membership in ALA.
(c) Listing of parties under censure in American Libraries as a warning to persons considering employment in an institution under censure that its practices and policies are in conflict with ALA policies concerning tenure, status, fair employment practices, due process, ethical practices, and/or the principles of intellectual freedom.

(Protem of Program for Mediation, Arbitration and Inquiry)

The ALA Committee on Legislation is created: To have full responsibility for the Association's total legislative program on all levels—Federal, State and local. To recommend legislative policy and programs for Council approval and to take the necessary steps for implementation. To protest any legislation or executive policy adversely affecting the welfare and development of libraries. To represent the ALA before executive and legislative branches of government as required at all levels. To provide a forum within ALA to gather information about needed legislation and to keep all units of the Association informed of the ALA legislative programs. To direct the activities of all units of the Association in matters relating to legislation.

IV. Be It Further Resolved That:
To achieve the goal of equal employment opportunity for all library employees and applicants for employment, the Council of the Association:
(1) directs that the Advisory Committee to the Office for Library Personnel Resources shall with the staff of the Office establish guidelines for the prevention of all forms of employment discrimination in libraries as prohibited by this policy, making these guidelines available to libraries, boards of library trustees, staff associations, civil service groups, library employee unions and individuals who are already employed or are seeking employment in libraries.
(2) directs the Office for Library Personnel Resources to begin immediately an aggressive program of instruction on legal equal employment requirements and the procedure for meeting such requirements.
(3) directs that all libraries and library schools with fifteen or more staff members...
shall formulate written affirmative action plans and shall submit these plans to the Office for Library Personnel Resources which will publish a list of the member libraries submitting affirmative action plans pursuant to this policy. The Office for Library Personnel Resources in cooperation with the Advisory Committee to the OLPR will review these plans in order to ascertain compliance with appropriate federal equal employment guidelines.

Commentary: The following specific areas of concern should be covered in guidelines to promote nondiscriminatory practices: education, recruitment, selection, training, promotion, wages and benefits, procurement of library materials. Program activities for the Office for Library Personnel Resources suggested by this policy statement include publication, e.g., “EEOC Guidelines for Preventing Discriminatory Employment Practices,” American Libraries (December 1972); annual statistical surveys on the employment of women and minorities including job levels, salaries and advancement in libraries; annual published reports on recruitment and placement efforts for women and minorities; major conference programs, fully funded, which will provide leadership in focusing attention on employment equity for all library employees.

See Section 701 (b) of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 and Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Orders 11375 and 11478.

ALN Offers Checklist and Advisory Service for Affirmative Action Plans


In accordance with this policy, the Equal Employment Opportunity Subcommittee of the ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources Advisory Committee has developed guidelines and is now prepared to receive and review the affirmative action plans of libraries in the United States and, where applicable, their parent organizations.

Library administrators are requested to forward two copies of their institution’s affirmative action plan to: Equal Employment Opportunity Subcommittee, c/o Office for Library Personnel Resources, American Library Association, 50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

The names of all libraries submitting affirmative action (a/a) plans for review in compliance with ALA policy will be listed in American Libraries. This list will appear quarterly and will include libraries submitting plans within the previous three months. Members of the EEO Subcommittee will then review the plans, in light of legal requirements and the ALA/EEO policy, and send comments in confidential reports to the library’s administration.

The subcommittee hopes that libraries will voluntarily submit a/a plans as a reaffirmation of concern for equal employment opportunity, and for the benefit of counseling service on their programs.

The EEO Subcommittee has developed a checklist for evaluating the plans sent for review. In creating the checklist, the subcommittee used a variety of guidelines on format and content of good a/a plans. Developers of a/a plans should: 1) refer to more detailed handbooks, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Affirmative Action and Equal Employment: A Guidebook for Employers; 2) consult Revised Order No. 4 of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance; 3) request assistance from OLPR and from federal offices responsible for the review of a/a plans, or employ knowledgeable a/a consultants.

The EEO Subcommittee’s evaluation checklist is detailed below, along with explanatory notes and some questions that committee members will consider in reviewing plans:


A. Affirmative Action Authority

1. Policy statements. Each affirmative action plan should begin with a policy statement that clearly states the organization’s commitment to equal employment and affirmative action.

(a) Is the appropriate level of the organization committed to the policy statement and to the a/a plan?

The highest officer in the organization (or representatives of the highest policy making body) should sign the a/a plan, and ultimately holds responsibility to see that it is enforced.

(b) What specific treatment is given to the library in the plan?

Many libraries are governed by the plan of a larger organization. The level at which the plan originates may affect the amount of detail given specifically on the library and the amount of control the library has in developing and carrying out an a/a plan. The EEO Subcommittee encourages library administrators operating under an umbrella a/a plan to seek to actively participate in its development, to submit specific utilization analyses of library staff for the plan, and to tailor-make action programs to rectify any problems applicable to library affirmative action. The EEO Subcommittee would appreciate details of any a/a programs the library has fostered but which are not specifically mentioned in the a/a plan submitted.

(c) What is the scope of the policy statement and of the a/a plan?

Please note that ALA policy reaffirms equal employment opportunity not only for individuals protected under federal law (for reasons of race, color, creed, sex, age, handicap, etc.) but also for library employees who might suffer discrimination based on their life styles.

2. Implementation.

(a) Who is assigned the responsibility for the implementation of the a/a plan?

The plan should clearly delineate who must carry out the plan and the policy backing up the a/a plan. All managerial and supervisory staff should be held accountable for infringement of the policy and should be made aware of that fact. Ultimately the authority for implementing affirmative action resides in the highest officer in the organization, who generally delegates responsibility for the development and evaluation of the plan to an EEO Officer.

(b) Identification of the EEO Officer and his or her responsibilities.

The EEO Officer should have administrative-level decision-making authority. He or she should report directly to the highest administrator in the organization and should be able to evaluate personnel procedures relating to affirmative action in an unbiased fashion. The EEO Subcommittee recommends that the primary responsibility for the development and enforcement of an a/a plan should not be placed in the hands of the organization’s personnel director or staff. If a library is small and/or a sub-unit of a larger organization and does not have its own EEO Officer, a library...
B. Identification of Problem Areas

1. Utilization analysis.

- The EEO officer should involve in all aspects of personnel work within the library.
- Utilization analyses should provide a broadened base for ideas on affirmative action programs and can serve as a liaison between the staff and administration on a/a matters.
- The EEO officer should be clearly designated to deal with a/a questions.
- The entire staff should be encouraged to contribute ideas for good a/a programs.
- Utilization analyses for minorities and women in the work force should be considered carefully to define the area from which the library can expect to recruit.
- Utilization analyses indicate a shortage of women and minorities whenever a/a-oriented activity is determined.

2. Personnel procedures and practices.

- The plan should outline the reports and records kept on the application and selection process and should specify who is responsible for keeping them.
- The plan should be updated at least once a year.
- The plan should be reviewed to ensure that the qualifications needed for the job are worded in a nondiscriminatory fashion.
- Validation analysis should extend to job requirements, application forms, notices of job vacancies, oral and written examinations, promotional rating forms, and so forth.

ii. How is recruitment accomplished?

- Are job notices widely distributed to the public? Is there sufficient posting time allowed so that the job notices will be seen in time?
- Does the employer recruit through media used by women and minorities, and does the employer send notices of vacancies to or interview at educational institutions with a high minority enrollment?
- Are members of a/a classes actively involved in the analysis of recruitment procedures and the testing of candidates?
- Is the EEO officer involved in the recruitment process?

iii. Selection process.

- Do any of the mechanisms of the selection process (e.g., filing fees) inappropriately deter certain classes of individuals?
- Is the selection process adequately explained to applicants?

iv. Applicant hire reporting system.

- The plan should outline the reports and records kept on the application and selection process and should specify who is responsible for keeping them.

C. Goals and Timetables

1. Are goals related to the problem areas?

2. Are the goals and timetable periods adequate?

The goals should be specific, and the timetable equally explicit and related to the goals.

D. Internal Audit and Reporting System

1. Format and frequency.

- Does the format conform with federal EEO requirements?
- Is a/a progress reported at least annually to enable a speedy identification and solution of problems?
The EEO Officer and the administrators of any agency covered by the plan, including the library administration, should be actively involved in the regular evaluation of the a/a program. If the organization has an a/a committee from the general staff, this group should also aid in the evaluation process.

3. Are reports disseminated to the staff and public?
Information on the library’s progress toward meeting its a/a goals and timetables and status reports on programs developed to solve a/a problems should be distributed to the entire staff and should also be made available to the public.

The plan should describe action the library will take which is reasonably broad in scope and is again addressed to problem areas. The action programs should be specifically related to affirmative action and not to all staff training programs, all recruitment procedures, etc.

2. Is the action program relevant to the specific problem areas identified? The following represent possible action programs:
(a) Special recruitment efforts to at-
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Amend “Equal Opportunity”—Or Abolish It

Ed. note: Although the following is related in subject to the preceding documents and is therefore placed here, it was submitted as an unsolicited article, and represents only the opinion of the author, George Toth. After an earlier library education in Paris, Mr. Toth earned a bachelor’s and graduate library degree from the University of Arizona. He specializes in technical services and Slavic and European studies.
The article has been slightly edited for purposes of space and clarity.

In times of rising unemployment, some Federal regulations turn out to be a hindrance. This is particularly true for “equal opportunity” and “affirmative action” laws and guidelines requiring employers to advertise every opening, allow reasonable time for applications to arrive before selecting the most qualified applicant, and give preference to a female or to a member of a “federally recognized minority group.” The intent of these acts is clear and laudable: minorities and women, traditionally treated as second-rate personnel resources, must get their fair share of the better paying professional and administrative jobs.

In a near-full employment situation, present mobility rates and some federal funding incentive, these laws could bring about their ultimate goal: the same proportion of minority groups and women in administrative units as their proportion in the community.

But unemployment and recession are among the main reasons “equal opportunity” has backfired (for a third economic reason, one could list the heavy federal involvement in every area of American life from education to city planning to farming). The Federal Government gives out recession-sized grants with economic-boon-sized strings attached. Equal opportunity requirements place a heavy administrative burden on employers. Advertising, correspondence, and work time spent in committees and interviewing all add up to a long, “reasonable” delay of getting a qualified applicant.

Though the applicant’s lot is never easy in this sort of administrative game, the situation becomes tragic when the employer is playing it just to satisfy federal requirements.

There are many victims of current hiring practices, among them:
- The young applicant who answers an announcement boasting of a marvelous opportunity for a beginner, and who learns one month before the deadline for applications that someone “more qualified” has already applied, so that as a beginner he is now rejected.
- Another young applicant who is found qualified, but must wait until a higher administrative office gives the green light for hiring a male (agony of several months, new applications elsewhere, rejections, frustration).
- The not-so-young applicant who is qualified for an academic job, but not hired because the school needs the Ph.D. and prestige of the next candidate. The pay and job are way below the Ph.D. level, and rumors start about reclassification by the next fiscal year. (The academic world seems especially prone to forward and reverse discrimination."
- The applicant who is bluntly told that, although perfectly qualified, he cannot be hired because the administration is pressed to hire a woman and/or a minority group member. There is no deadline in this case, and the position is unfilled for nine months.
- The applicant who answers an announcement with letter resume, fills out a special application form sent by the employer, gathers and has sent four recommendation letters, and has his alma mater send an official grade transcript—only to learn that someone from the employer’s staff has been promoted to the nationally advertised position, and he is not qualified for the resulting vacancy.

Equal opportunity is exceptionally unfair to beginners (whether or not they are minority people) and to anybody residing some distance away from the advertised job. Today, institutions rarely have money to invite prospective candidates for an interview. On the other hand, few candidates can afford risking a couple of hundred dollars in order to be among several candidates. Again fresh graduates are penalized because of their financial situation.

The myth of a “geographical” equal opportunity is widespread; that is, if one is willing to relocate, supposedly one is bound to find something. It is time to do away with such myths. It is time to realize that we are in a recession, and elsewhere it is as bad as it is here. Unemployment is becoming a permanent fixture of American life. Before it becomes institutionalized, something should be done about it.

Congress and local governments should view the situation with a realistic eye and work on the restructuring of equal opportunity-affirmative action laws.

To adapt the (right) concept of “equal opportunity” to a strained job market, one or more of the following options might give some relief:
- Waiving the equal opportunity requirements by Congressional action for a specific period of time. Probably this solution is the least satisfactory, especially for those who need the law’s help the most. This solution is also contrary to the spirit of the law.
- “Regionalizing” equal opportunity. According to this option, announcement for an opening should be made only on the local level—in the city first, then in the country, and later in the state, etc., going on to the next step only if the preceding one fails to bring satisfactory response. The two main advantages of this solution would be 1) that the ethnic origin or minority status of applicants for any given job might better reflect the community composition, and 2) the community could demonstrate its ability to take care of its own jobless, thus cutting welfare expenses unemployments, food stamp costs, etc.
- Extending equal opportunity vertically into job hierarchies; in other words, considering for each level of work the corresponding level in the candidate’s preparation. An opening at the beginning- or entry-level would be given to a beginner in the profession, no matter how much appropriate work experience other candidates may have. This solution would help place scores of fresh graduates who now are competing with “more qualified” applicants for entry-level positions at entry-level salaries.

Equal opportunity laws are a necessity. But since their enactment, shortcomings and loopholes have developed. Congressional and local action must repair the most blatant imperfections before it becomes simpler to abolish equal opportunity altogether.
JULY / AUGUST 1976

Retirements

FERN LONG, deputy director of the Cleveland Public Library since 1969, retired early.

EMMIE S. HAYES, who headed the Adult Services Department of the Miami-Dade (Fla.) Public Library System, retired April 5.

After thirty-eight years of service to the University of Wisconsin/platteville, MARY W. BARNES retired as technical services and special collections librarian in May.

Among recent appointments at the Library of Congress are: LUCIA J. RATHER, formerly assistant chief of the MARC Development Office, as assistant director (cataloging) of the Processing Department; PAUL E. EDLUND, formerly chief of the Cataloging Distribution Services, as executive officer of the Processing Department; FRANK MCCOWAN, chief of the Overseas Operations Division of the Processing Department; and HARRIET OSTROFF, formerly assistant head of the Manuscripts Section of the Descriptive Cataloging Division, as head and editor of the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC).

Deaths

JOHN MURRY HETRICK, staff librarian of the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) after World War II and a pioneer of the Air Force library program during the postwar period, died December 7. His final federal library post was as chief librarian of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

CARLYLE J. FRAREY, senior lecturer at Columbia University's School of Library Service, died March 13 at the age of 57. Frarey came to Columbia in 1964 from the University of North Carolina School of Library Science, where he had been an associate professor since 1954 and acting dean from 1960 to 1964. He was an active member of ALA, the Association of American Library Schools, N.Y. State Library Association, N.Y. Technical Services Librarians, and Archons of Colophon.

MARY A. DULANY died March 4, shortly after she had retired as head of adult services for the Montgomery County (Md.) Library System.

ELIZABETH CAVEN SEELY, librarian emeritus of Sarah Lawrence (N.Y.) College, died on February 2. She was librarian of Sarah Lawrence in 1964-74.

NINA GREIG, children's librarian of the Multnomah County (Ore.) Library since 1956, died February 19. Ms. Greig had been a member of the Newbery-Caldecott Committee and a director of ALA's Children's Services Division board.

A former Stanford University librarian, JANETTE HITCHCOCK HOPKINS, died April 27 at the age of 85. At the time of her retirement some twenty years ago, she was chief of Stanford's Division of Special Collections.
Racial and sexual parity

WHEREAS, Multiracial, sexually balanced library managements and staffs are at least one hundred years overdue; and

WHEREAS, Development of socially responsible library staffs will increase the attractiveness of library employment; and

WHEREAS, Sexually and racially balanced library staffs will enhance the quality, relevance, and utilization of library services, particularly by the young; and

WHEREAS, Racial and sexual parity are even more urgently needed in a depressed job market; and

WHEREAS, The library profession may achieve racial and sexual parity at all levels in the 1970's, if its leaders and members choose to do so; and

WHEREAS, A minorities recruitment specialist could recruit from universities and colleges attended by students of the various minorities; and

WHEREAS, A minorities recruitment specialist could also participate in image-changing public relations programs; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Council and the Executive Board strive to fulfill the intent of the civil rights and fair employment laws by establishing a position of recruitment specialist on the Association staff, and appoint to this position a librarian possessing extensive knowledge of and direct experience in minority life and culture, and also possessing communication skills which would enable him effectively to recruit young men and women of ethnic and racial minorities to careers in the library profession, and to instruct ACONDA and ANACONDA to take into account this manifestation of the will of the Association in its deliberations and recommendations to Council.
Social responsibilities of librarians.

VOTED, That the Executive Board of the American Library Association supports the right of all library employees as individuals to express their opinions freely on pertinent questions concerning their social responsibilities. Currently the Board is cognizant of the concern of some members of the ALA about the continuing war in Viet Nam and that library employees may wish to participate in protest activities related to the war as part of their social concern.

The Executive Board, therefore, recommends that members of library staffs who may wish to participate in protest activities on social issues to express their concern be allowed to do so, without prejudice, under regular or special leave policies of the libraries affected. The Executive Board urges, however, that normal library services not be jeopardized.
WHEREAS, Equal opportunity for women is a growing social concern in American society; and

WHEREAS, Within librarianship where women represent the majority, the issue is particularly relevant; and

WHEREAS, Statistics show that women librarians typically earn lower salaries than men and are underrepresented in top-level positions in libraries; and

WHEREAS, The underutilization of this talent and education wastes needed professional resources and assaults our sense of human dignity;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the American Library Association should take steps to equalize salaries and opportunities for employment and promotions.
Residency requirements

WHEREAS, It is the practice of numerous municipalities and other units of government to impose a requirement of local residency or U. S. Citizenship as a condition of employment, and

WHEREAS, These prerequisites have nothing to do with proper qualifications for library employment, such as ability and experience, and

WHEREAS, Such rulings and practices can only aggravate the problem of obtaining qualified librarians, particularly in areas of lesser population or in relatively isolated locations;

THEREFORE, 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.