

Exercise #10

Make an Accessibility Policy for Your Library

In this exercise you will begin to draft an accessibility policy for your library. The outline and notes in this exercise are based upon the American Library Association "Library Services for People with Disabilities Policy."

Instructions: Fill in the form with text that would replace italicized section of the ALA policy with specifics of your library's services.

Title.

My Library Services for Persons with Disabilities Policy -or-
My Library Accessibility Policy

Purpose.

Include your library's mission statement. Consider adding a statement regarding accessibility for users with disabilities.

Services.

My Library does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal access to library resources. To ensure such access, My Library provides for individuals with disabilities (*list or describe services, e.g. extended loan periods, waived late fines, extended reserve periods, library cards for proxies, books by mail, reference services by fax or email, home delivery service, remote access to the OPAC, remote electronic access to library resources, volunteer readers in the library, volunteer technology assistants in the library, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or real-time captioning at library programs, and radio reading services.*)

Library users with disabilities are participants in the planning, implementing, and evaluating of library services, programs, and facilities.

Facilities.

(*Describe accessibility in your facilities.*) _____, _____, _____, branch libraries are fully wheelchair accessible. *Detail other accessible features, e.g. accessible parking, clear paths of travel to and throughout the facility, entrances with adequate, clear openings or automatic doors, handrails, ramps and elevators, accessible tables and public service desks, and accessible public conveniences such as restrooms, drinking fountains, public telephones and TTYs, assistive listening devices, visible alarms, signs that have easily visible character size, font, contrast and finish or Braille.*

Collections.

My Library makes available library materials in a variety of formats, *including large print books and magazines, (cassette, CD, downloadable) audio books, (captioned, closed-captioned, audio-described) videos and DVDs,*

The MyLibrary collection includes materials with accurate and up-to-date information on the spectrum of disabilities, disability issues, and services for people with disabilities, their

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families, and other concerned persons. *(Depending on the communities being served, your library may include related medical, health, and mental health information and information on legal rights, accommodations, and employment opportunities.)*

Assistive Technology.

To make it possible for people with learning, mobility, sensory and developmental disabilities to use its print and electronic resources, My Library works with people with disabilities, local agencies, and vendors to integrate assistive technology into its facilities and services.

Assistive technology provided includes: *(list AT resources and locations)*

Library staff knows how assistive technologies address disabilities and how to assist all users with library technology. *(Describe what staff actually knows, e.g. where AT for people with various disabilities is located, how to launch programs, how to train users, where to refer users for training, etc.)*

Employment.

My Library is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified Minorities, Women and Persons with Disabilities are encouraged to apply for open positions.

My Library provides reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities unless such accommodations would impose an “undue hardship” on its operations. My Library ensures that its policies and procedures are consistent with the ADA and other laws.

Professional Development.

My Library provides 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.

Programs and Meetings

My Library considers the needs of users with disabilities in the planning and layout of public programming and meeting spaces and facilities. The Library makes every effort to provide accommodations *(list - sign language interpreters, real-time captioning, audio description, etc.)* as requested by individuals with special needs. Programs of particular interest to people with disabilities are among those offered for My Library users.

Publications and Communications My Library publications, including *(list: flyers, newsletter, bibliographies, etc.)* are available in alternative formats, including *electronic text*, as requested by individuals with special needs.

The My Library website confirms with currently accepted guidelines for accessibility, such as those issued by the World Wide Web Consortium.

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Specifics to Add to Your Library Accessibility Policy

List or note below information about your library that will be included in your finished policy.

Title

Purpose

Services

Facilities

Collections

Assistive Technology

Employment

Professional Development

Programs and Meetings

Publications and Communications