

American Association of Law Libraries Code of Ethics

The American Association of Law Libraries espouses the statement of professional ethics promulgated by the American Library Association, which states that: "A librarian

- has a special responsibility to maintain the principles of the Library Bill of Rights.
- should learn and faithfully execute the policies of the institution of which one is a part and should endeavor to change those which conflict with the spirit of the Library Bill of Rights.
- must protect the essential confidential relationship which exists between a library user and the library.
- must avoid any possibility of personal financial gain at the expense of the employing institution.
- has an obligation to insure equality of opportunity and fair judgement of competence in actions dealing with staff appointments, retentions, and promotions.
- has an obligation when making appraisal of the qualifications of any individual to report the facts clearly, accurately, and without prejudice, according to generally accepted guidelines concerning the disclosure of personal information."

In addition, the Association, in light of the special character and mission of its membership, espouses the principles that law librarians, while engaged in their professional work,

- have a duty neither to engage in the unauthorized practice of law nor to solicit an attorney-client relationship.
- have a duty to avoid any situations posing a possible undisclosed conflict of interest.
- have a special duty, given the nature of their patron base, to treat confidentially any private information obtained through contact with library patrons and not to divulge any confidential information to persons representing adverse interests.
- have a duty to exercise scrupulous care in avoiding any acts or even the appearance, of misappropriating the work product of library patrons or professional colleagues to their own credit or profit.
- have a duty actively to promote free and effective access to legal information.
- have a duty to society and the legal profession to work both individually and through their professional organizations toward improving the quality and minimizing the cost of the library component of the delivery of legal services.

Adopted, September 1978