**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**FROM:** PLA Staff

**RE:** **Statement of Appropriate Conduct at PLA Conferences**

**DATE:** March 18, 2019

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

Below is the Statement of Appropriate Conduct at PLA Conferences as it appeared on the PLA 2018 Conference website (now archived at <http://2018.placonference.org/appropriate-conduct/>):

The Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association, holds professional conferences to enable its members to receive continuing education, build professional networks, and discover new products and services for professional use. To provide all participants—members and other attendees, speakers, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers—the opportunity to benefit from the event, the Public Library Association is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion, or other group identity.

As an association, PLA is strongly committed to diversity, equity, and the free expression of ideas. These values have been repeatedly delineated in ALA policy (for instance: [Policy A.1.4 – Core Organizational Values](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section1/1mission#A.1.4%20Core%20Organizational%20Values%20(Old%20Number%201.3.1)); [Policy B.1.1 – Core Values of Librarianship](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/40corevalues#B.1.1); [Policy B.1.2 – Code of Professional Ethics](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/40corevalues#B.1.2)). Taken cumulatively, the values and beliefs delineated within ALA policy describe conduct based on a firm belief in the value of civil discourse and the free exploration of competing ideas and concepts—with a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity, and value of *all* persons.

Within the context of ALA policy and the professional practices of librarianship, critical examination of beliefs and viewpoints does not, *by itself*, constitute hostile conduct or harassment. Similarly, use of sexual imagery or language in the context of a professional discussion *might not* constitute hostile conduct or harassment.

PLA seeks to provide a conference environment in which diverse participants may learn, network, and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual human respect. *We recognize a shared responsibility to create and hold that environment for the benefit of all.* **Some behaviors are, therefore, specifically prohibited:**

* Harassment or intimidation based on race, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, appearance, or other group status.
* Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
* Yelling at or threatening speakers (verbally or physically).

Speakers are asked to frame discussions as openly and inclusively as possible and to be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others. Participants may—and do—exercise the “law of two feet.” Exhibitors must follow all PLA Exhibits rules and regulations and ALA policies.

**All participants are expected to observe these rules and behaviors in all conference venues, including online venues, and conference social events. Participants asked to stop a hostile or harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.** Conference participants seek to learn, network, and have fun. Please do so responsibly and with respect for the right of others to do likewise.

Please contact PLA staff in the PLA Office at conference (location and phone number TBD) if you believe you have been harassed or that a harassment problem exists. All such reports will be directed immediately to the PLA Executive Director, who will determine and carry out the appropriate course of action, and who may consult with and engage other PLA/ALA staff, leaders, and legal counsel as appropriate. Event security and/or local law enforcement may be involved, as appropriate based on the specific circumstances. A follow-up report will be made to individuals who report being harassed.

Prior to each PLA Conference, PLA staff will make the following information available:

* Emergency contact information:
  + Pennsylvania Convention Center security, emergency, local law enforcement and medical (emergency and non-emergency) – All emergency calls should go through the Command Station so they can dispatch first responders to the correct location in the Convention Center; from any house phone dial 4911 or from a cell phone, dial 215-418-4911. DO NOT dial 911 directly.
  + Local taxi company(s) – [Local Transportation](http://2018.placonference.org/getting-around-philadelphia/)
  + Other local services, e.g. hotlines – The Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) has put together [a list of resources to help people connect with the right professional, peer, social, community-based and self-help care](http://healthymindsphilly.org/en/resources). These resources include important phone numbers and supports found in Philadelphia’s neighborhoods.
* Information on how to report incidents of *any sort* to Conference Management (following the conference please contact Barb Macikas, PLA Executive Director, at 312-280-5028 or [bmacikas@ala.org](mailto:bmacikas@ala.org))