The statement below was provided by Mary Ghikas, ALA Executive Director, to ALA Council on March 4, 2019.

**Statement of Appropriate Conduct: Processes**

Members have requested additional information about ALA’s Statement of Appropriate Conduct, the process for review of complaints related to the Statement, and the number and pattern of complaints received.

Current Process and History

<http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/statement_appropriate_conduct>

The Statement of Appropriate Conduct was developed collaborative by a group of members, working within existing ALA policy, and approved by the ALA Executive Board. It is always on the ALA Conference website and is pushed out to individuals during the registration process. To register, an individual must acknowledge that they have read. The Statement of Appropriate Conduct is regular printed on wallet/badge-sized cards, which are available in the registration area at conferences. The Statement instructs members to report incidents to Paul Graller, Conference Services, either at the ALA Office on-site or by phone (mobile number provided.)

The Statement also indicates that Conference Services will follow-up on all incident reports, involving other legal authorities, senior staff or volunteer leaders as appropriate to the particular incident, and then reporting back to the person who sought review/action. It is important to note that an “incident report” may or may not relate to a potential violation of the Statement of Appropriate Conduct. An “incident report” may also relate to a fall or other accident.

Where the incident involves a potential violation of the Statement of Appropriate Conduct or other interaction between individuals:

* ALA Conference Services takes as complete a statement as possible from the individual making the complaint and makes it clear to that individual that we will:
  + follow-up, including a contact with the other party involved to review the incident as reported and collect the other individual’s recollection of the incident;
  + maintain confidentiality to the extent possibly, taking into account potential legal actions or security risks;
  + involve other individuals or agencies in the review of the incident, as appropriate (ranging from local law enforcement to other ALA senior staff or volunteer leaders); and,
  + report back to the individual making the complaint.
* Follow-up actions vary widely depending on the specific nature of the complaint. Actions taken in previous situations have included the following examples:
  + Met with an individual involved and with ALA legal counsel to review the complaint;
  + Met with an exhibitor to review the nature of the complaint and potential changes they could make;
  + Reported an incident involving a temporary employee to the contractor for further action;
  + Referred an incident to local law enforcement for resolution;
  + Worked with a member group to develop language to distribute to convention center staff; and,
  + Accepted resignation from a governing body.

Internally, “incident” is a broad term encompassing a range from accidents to substance abuse to violations of the Statement of Appropriate Conduct. At the recent Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, there were 5 total “incidents” – two injuries unrelated to the Statement of Appropriate Conduct, one that might be more appropriately described as “incident avoidance” (a request to Conference Services aimed at avoiding a potential incident); and, two violations of the Statement of Appropriate Conduct.

At the 2018 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans, there were two reported Statement of Appropriate Conduct complaints. At the 2018 Midwinter Meeting in Denver, there were no complaints submitted.

As noted in the Statement of Appropriate Conduct, in addition to Conference Services contact information, ALA Conference Service makes local emergency information available to attendees, including venue (convention center, hotel) security, local law enforcement, local emergency and non-emergency medial information, local taxis company(s), and, other local services, such as hotlines.

Conference Services will sometimes get complaints weeks after the end of the conference or meeting. Where the individual wants follow-up -- and depending on the nature of the incident and information reported -- this may make effective review much more difficult.

In some cases, individuals reporting after conference are simply reporting to us on their personal handling of a violation of the Statement of Appropriate Conduct. They want us to know what happened and how they handled it, and are generally not seeking further action from ALA. This is useful feedback to us, particularly as we review conference procedures and practices. Such reports may point us to places where we can improve language, add clarity, enhance training.

Current Related Actions

Conference Services is currently working with ALA staff and legal counsel to review current report form, staff guidance document, and process for reporting to the ALA Executive Board.

A basic software solution for rapidly/ simultaneously contacting a staff “emergency” team will be tested at the ACRL Conference in Cleveland – with the intent to review, make any necessary procedural or training changes, and implement at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington D.C.

Additional staff training will be provided prior to the ACRL Conference in Cleveland and again, if necessary, prior to the ALA Annual Conference.