

Charter of Library Mutual Disaster Assistance

*Sponsored by the Library of Congress Federal Library and Information Center
Committee and Preservation Directorate*

Preamble

This charter represents principles guiding a program of mutual disaster assistance (hereinafter referred to as the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program]) created among [The Group] librarians and others having responsibility for research materials and services as a framework in which to share expertise, experience and mutual assistance efforts with the goal of mitigating damages that could occur in the face of a disaster, and thereby impact the operations of the [The Group] of libraries, or a specific library.

Assumptions

- It is beneficial to the [The Group] and to individual libraries for librarians to be aware of and share each other's disaster response policies, procedures, practices, materials, and training programs and to thus create a cadre of "First Preservers."
- [The Group] libraries have many common concerns and challenges in preparing for and dealing with disaster.
- Regular and formalized communication among [The Group] libraries regarding mutual disaster assistance will result in better use of resources and higher levels of success in coping with disaster, should it occur.
- Participation in a mutual disaster assistance program will provide confidence in the library from senior management, the library's constituents, others whom the library serves, and "first responders."
- Access to education and expertise is more easily garnered through group participation.
- The [The Group] working group/task force/committee will function as the facilitator, clearinghouse, and spokesperson for the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] participants to provide service and guidance within the [The Group] region.

Guiding Principles

It is therefore hereby agreed that all those whose signatures appear at the bottom of this document are desirous of participating in the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] and as such subscribe to the following guiding principles:

- ✓ Each party shall develop plans for effective mobilization of resources to cope with a disaster occurring within the party's control and shall share that plan with the other [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] signatories.

- ✓ Each party shall identify areas of its own mutual disaster assistance interest, needs, expertise, experience, education, and specifically define its own, if any, ability to provide mutual assistance in form of personnel, supplies, equipment, or other resources to the signatories to the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program].
- ✓ Each party shall devise a formal and regular schedule for reviewing said plans and shall share any changes made with [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] signatories.
- ✓ Each party shall designate a principal and alternate to represent that party within the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program].
- ✓ Each party shall agree to participate in periodic, regular and formal surveys, assessments and meetings sponsored by the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program].
- ✓ If at any time a signatory elects to discontinue participation in the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program], explicit notice shall be provided of said party's termination in the program.
- ✓ Nothing in this Charter will be deemed to create a contract, legal agreement, employment relationship, partnership (or fiduciary relationship) among the signatories.
- ✓ No party to this Charter shall be liable for any action spoken, written or taken.
- ✓ Signatories to this Charter shall agree on any action to be taken in the name of the [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] by conducting a vote among the signatories via their representative, and action may go forward as long as a simple majority is received.
- ✓ Methods of communication among the signatories to this Charter shall be determined to assure that all parties will have easy and equal access to these methods.
- ✓ Information shared among the signatories shall be kept secure and in full confidence, and will not be shared with any non-signatory without the express written permission of the affected signatory.
- ✓ The [Mutual Disaster Assistance Program] shall identify and collaborate, when possible, with related entities having common concerns and shared interests.

This charter, created by [The Group], has been executed and approved, and is effective immediately upon signing.