

(editor note: general meeting, “public” version)

Events and Programs Code of Conduct Massachusetts Library Association

The Massachusetts Library Association is committed to supporting an open dialogue and fostering an inclusive environment and community. Massachusetts Library Association is a place where people should feel safe to engage, share their point of view, build and grow.

Statement of Intent

The Massachusetts Library Association provides conferences, meetings and events for our members and the library community at large to develop new skills, engage in a continuation of their own education, build upon professional relationships and networks and learn about new products and trends within the field of librarianship.

The Massachusetts Library Association is dedicated to supporting open dialogue across its Membership. Massachusetts Library Association maintains professional courtesy, active listening, and mutual respect as core tenets of its culture. In line with the welcoming and respectful environment for persons expected at its physical events, Massachusetts Library Association is committed to maintaining the same level of respect and balance in its virtual spaces.

Our Standards

At any of our sponsored conferences, meetings and events, the Massachusetts Library Association is committed to providing an atmosphere that is free from all forms of harassment and that is inclusive of all people. As such, we prohibit the following types of behaviors:

- Harassment or intimidation based race, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, appearance, age or other group status.
- Sexual harassment, discrimination or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
- Invasion of another person’s privacy, including harassing photography or recording.
- Speaking aggressively, yelling at or threatening another person (verbally or physically).

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

If a Complaint is Lodged About the Behavior of an MLA Event Participant:

- MLA staff or Board Member must report the complaint to the MLA Administrative Board

as soon as possible.

- MLA staff or Board Member will intervene if the incident is on-going, and call for assistance or authorities as needed. If one or both participants in the event cannot resolve their differences, the Staff or Board Member may use their judgement to ask the party or parties to leave the event.
- Following the incident, MLA Staff or Board Member will gather information related to the incident and provide that information to the Administrative Board.
- Consequences of violation of this policy may include, but are not limited to, being asked to leave the event (no refunds will be issued to participants expelled for violating this policy), being barred from future MLA events, revocation of MLA membership, or other such actions as deemed necessary by the MLA Administrative Board. If such actions are taken, the violating participant will be notified of the Association's decision.

If You Feel You Have Been Harassed, Intimidated or Bullied:

- If you feel threatened or violated as a result of intimidating, bullying, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning conduct, contact MLA Staff, members of the MLA Administrative Board, or event venue staff immediately with evidence of the incident.
- MLA Administrative Board members will determine and carry out the appropriate course of action and may consult with MLA staff, Executive Board members, law enforcement, event security and/or legal counsel as necessary.
- You may be asked to provide a follow up statement to MLA staff or Administrative Board members charged with investigating the incident.
- Incidents of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously and discreetly.
- A follow-up report will be provided to individuals who report being harassed and to the MLA Executive Board within 30 days of the reported incident.

If You Have Been Accused of Harassment or Other Conduct Violations at an MLA Event:

- You will be notified of the accusation and provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- You may make a request in writing to the Association President to have the issue adjudicated.

If a Request for Adjudication is Made:

- The President of the Association will investigate the complaint or the President may appoint one or more individuals to investigate the complaint. If an Investigator is appointed, the person(s) will be unbiased and not involved in the incident(s) that preceded the complaint.

Investigation

- The investigation into the complaint will be conducted discreetly and confidentially. The parties involved in the complaint (the accuser(s) and the accused) will not be invited to influence the investigation.

- Each party involved in the complaint (the accuser(s) and the accused) will be allowed to submit letters or statements detailing their concerns, but the investigator(s) will have discretion to interview other parties who may have been affected or may have witnessed the activity that is the subject of the complaint.
- The investigator(s) will issue a written report to the Association President (or highest-ranking Officer if the President is the subject of the complaint). The report will detail the information gathered but will not contain an opinion regarding the outcome.

Resolution

- The Administrative Board will read the report, form a view of the outcome, and decide if any action will be taken. Both parties involved in the complaint will be notified of the outcome. The Administrative Board might ask the Executive Board to be involved in deciding the outcome. Confidentiality must be maintained before and after the outcome is determined.
- The decision of the Administrative Board is final. No appeals will be entertained.

Queries & Escalation Management for MLA Social Media Channels

The Massachusetts Library Association Public Relations Committee (MLA PR) is able to provide limited member services through the Association's social media platforms. Authorized social media contributors will not discuss confidential and/or non-Association related matters via Massachusetts Library Association's official social media accounts. MLA PR reserves the right to direct queries toward formats, platforms, or persons best equipped to provide resolutions.

Criteria used by MLA to determine how a query received through social media will be handled includes:

- Ability to quickly and easily resolve a query or provide requested information
- Committee and/or section-specific related queries that are best suited for the respective committee and/or section chair(s) to address
- Confidential and/or sensitive information is being exchanged
- Publicity requests, vendor, or contract inquiries
- Suitability of platform

In the event of an escalating situation or heated interaction that directly involves Massachusetts Library Association, MLA PR committee members are directed to disengage and contact the Public Relations Chair(s) as quickly as possible. The Public Relations Chair(s) will advise on MLA's response and/or handle the situation directly. In the absence of a Public Relations Committee Chair, authorized social media contributors will notify and elevate the issue to the attention of MLA's Administration Board.