

## **Library Services for People With Disabilities Policy**

On January 16, 2001, the American Literacy Association Council (ALA), the governing body of the American Library Association, unanimously approved a policy written by the Americans with Disabilities Act Assembly, a representational group administered by the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA), a division of the American Library Association. The following policy has been adapted from the ALA policy.

### **1. The Scope of Disability Law**

Providing equitable access for persons with disabilities to library facilities and services is required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, applicable state and local statutes and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA is the Civil Rights law affecting more Americans than any other. It was created to eliminate discrimination in many areas, including access to private and public services, employment, transportation and communication. Most libraries are covered by the ADA's Title I (Employment), Title II (Government Programs and Services) and Title III (Public Accommodations). Most libraries are also obligated under Section 504 and some have responsibilities under Section 508 and other laws as well.

### **2. Library Services**

Libraries must not discriminate against individuals with disabilities and shall ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to library resources. To ensure such access, LBWCC will provide individuals with disabilities with services such as

extended loan periods, waived late fines, extended reserve periods, library cards for proxies, books by mail and reference services by fax or email.

### **3. Collections**

Library materials must be accessible to all patrons including people with disabilities. Materials must be available to individuals with disabilities in a variety of formats and with accommodations, as long as the modified formats and accommodations are “reasonable,” do not “fundamentally alter” the library’s services, and do not place an ‘undue burden’ on the Library. Examples of accommodations include assistive technology, auxiliary devices and physical assistance. Well-planned technological solutions and access points, based on the concepts of universal design, are essential for effective use of information and other library services by all people. Libraries should work with people with disabilities, agencies, organizations and vendors to integrate assistive technology into their facilities and services to meet the needs of people with a broad range of disabilities, including learning, mobility, sensory and developmental disabilities. Library staff should be aware of how available technologies address disabilities and know how to assist all users with library technology.