



ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

ASERL Principles of Mutual Aid

Reviewed / Approved by ASERL Board of Directors – March 22, 2018

Reviewed / Approved by ASERL Membership – May 30, 2018

Background

ASERL member institutions recognize our vulnerabilities to natural and other disasters, the frequency and severity of which seem to be increasing. During and after such events, campuses or library facilities (or both) may be closed for extended periods of time and cities or regions may need to be evacuated, displacing our students, faculty, and staff. Collectively, ASERL members will endeavor to assist each other in ensuring continuity of library services for affected students, faculty, and staff, helping with recovery or replacement of resources, sharing expertise, and providing non-material support in whatever ways may be feasible.

What ASERL will do

To provide benefit to its membership, ASERL will:

- Maintain a web-accessible inventory of preservation/conservation experts, conservation lab facilities, and other equipment within our membership that may be available to assist in recovery efforts. The inventory will be reviewed at least annually to ensure its accuracy.
- Provide access to ongoing professional development activities to ensure our members can share information about their experiences and remain up-to-date on current disaster recovery practices and processes.

ASERL recognizes the many existing groups that aid in disaster recovery; we will not seek to duplicate their efforts.

What ASERL members will do

Rendering assistance will always be voluntary and in compliance with all applicable policies at parent institutions. These principles are subject to periodic review and revision as needed by the ASERL Board of Directors and membership.

ASERL institutions will strive to assist other members that become impacted by disasters, including:

- Extending outstanding interlibrary loans to affected institution(s) and waive late fees as appropriate;
- Providing access to library facilities to affected faculty and students and extend borrowing privileges, where practicable;
- Allowing displaced students and faculty to use chat reference and other library-based remote help systems;

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- Understanding their own institutional policies for extending affiliate status to temporarily displaced faculty/staff who may relocate to a given member's area. Such understanding will expedite the temporary provision of access to library content, services, and facilities as may be appropriate.
- Providing workspace and/or network access for displaced librarians and staff during extended closures;
- Providing/securing donations of materials to rebuild collections, as appropriate;
- Sharing conservation and preservation resources as feasible, including equipment and staff expertise;
- Supporting lines of communication about needs and possible assistance, possibly including call-in services for staff;
- Promoting relief efforts for residents of affected areas (e.g., publicize groups collecting donations of money, food, water, blood drives, clothing, household goods, etc.)

Drafted by ASERL Mutual Aid Working Group – January 2018

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