**Preparing for an Audit:**

**What steps might make you feel more prepared?**

* Become familiar with:
  + What to expect in the event of an “audit”
  + What an “auditor” will try to do
  + Policies and responses recommended by the ALA
  + What your library’s policies allow or require
* Understand legal grounds for interacting with auditors. (See October 2019, OIF [blog post](https://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=18859).)
* Revisit your library’s behavior policies, [social media policies](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/socialmediaguidelines), and any rules concerning photography.
* Do you need to develop a new policy or make improvements to an existing one? If so, consult the library’s attorney. (Consider ALA’s Intellectual Freedom Committee’s [Video Surveillance in the Library Guidelines](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/privacy/guidelines/videosurveillance) from 2020.)
* Market your policy – put patrons and potential auditors on notice.
* Conduct a walk-through of your facility. Ensure non-public spaces are secured and identified with signs (such as “employees only” or “restricted area – authorized personnel only”).
* Meet with department heads to collaborate on a strategy to prepare staff. Train staff on how you would like for them to respond.
  + Have public-facing departments: go over policies with staff.
  + Don’t overreact. Act with diplomacy and respect. Stay calm.
  + Emphasize importance of applying policies consistently.
  + Ask staff not to intervene or engage unless an auditor is violating behavior policies or harassing library staff or patrons.
  + Role playing exercises might be appropriate way to practice.
* Consider your relationship with your security and local law enforcement ahead of time. How might they react if present at the time or called in? Are they aware of consequences and likely to be helpful in diffusing the situation? Or are they likely to ratchet up the tension? This will vary from place to place.

From Preparing for a 1st Amendment Audit

December 16, 2021

CAH