

## **Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques Position Statement on Equitable Compensation for Library Workers**

*Approved by Executive Council ~ October 5, 2007*

The Canadian Library Association endorses efforts to ensure that library workers are compensated at a level that is equitable to workers in other professions whose skills, education, working conditions and responsibilities are comparable, particularly when the same source of funding provides the primary support for both library workers and for those workers with whom they should be compared. The Canadian Library Association believes that library systems and labour organizations have a mutual interest in resolving issues that may prevent the implementation of equitable compensation.

### **Background**

The Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on Equitable Compensation for Library Workers was approved by Executive Council in recognition of the increasing interest in compensation issues in Canada.

The Canadian Library Association's position statement is not intended to judge the eventual compromises that local parties may decide to reach. Indeed, CLA encourages local parties to work through issues related to equitable compensation in ways that address their unique circumstances.

It is possible, for example, that all parties may know that the speedy implementation of equitable compensation agreements will likely cause layoffs. Where legislation permits, some libraries have tried to address this issue by agreeing to an implementation process that allows for some of the necessary staff reductions to be made through attrition. The relative value of compromises that balance job security and equitable compensation cannot be judged by any outside party.

The Canadian Library Association's resolution states that library workers should be compensated at a rate that is comparable with workers whose "skills, education, working conditions and responsibilities are comparable." This element of the resolution assumes that gender-neutral job evaluations can be fairly conducted. It assumes that such a process measures more than educational qualifications or job descriptions but includes job elements such as consequences of error and the extent of a person's authority to make critical decisions outside of set policy and procedure. It assumes that

the jobs of both the library workers and those with whom they are to be compared are rated using an identical methodology.

The Canadian Library Association recognizes that the use of a proper job evaluation process means that some library workers may receive lower levels of compensation once their responsibilities are fairly compared with others. It is possible, as well, that job hierarchies within library systems may change. While most library workers and managers applaud the concept of equitable compensation, some supporters may be disappointed with the results.

The Canadian Library Association's resolution states that, where there is a single primary source of funding, a unified or at least linked job evaluation and compensation system with employees of that funding body is the ideal goal. At the same time, library managers may not be able to promise such an outcome without the consent of the organizations that provide them with funding.

Equitable compensation for library workers is a goal that virtually all library managers and all library workers support. Reaching for and attaining equitable compensation (getting from point A to point B) requires a strong commitment to jointly navigate a treacherous, twisting path. The successful implementation of any scheme that tries to achieve the notable goal of equitable compensation is made easier when there is a clear understanding of where the path will end and what route will be taken to get there.

*Related document: [CLA/ACB Discussion Paper on Equitable Compensation](#)*