

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 5-7, 2017  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Revised Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action  
(Prepared by SAA Committee on Public Policy)**

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

In the two years since the SAA Council adopted the [Criteria for Advocacy Statements](#) and the [Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action](#), the Committee on Public Policy has experienced a mix of understanding and expectations from COPP, the Council, and SAA members as to how these procedures operate. At times this has resulted in confusion and frustration. This has particularly been evident when requests potentially fall outside either the Criteria for Advocacy Statements or the stated [purpose](#) of COPP to provide strategic information, advice, and recommendations related to public policy issues affecting archives and the profession.

In reviewing the existing procedures COPP discussed several issues, including the lack of clarity about distinctions between public policy actions and issues that fall under the wider umbrella of advocacy, as well as the duplication in procedures that apply when an individual versus a group submits a request. During our deliberations it also became apparent that the procedures lacked a certain clarity as to who was the appropriate initial point of contact, who was responsible for moving a request forward through the process, or who was responsible for communicating with the requester at various stages.

We have edited the procedures to address these issues with a view toward applying them to all types of advocacy actions, not just those related to public policy issues. We have also developed a template to facilitate submissions, as well as a workflow and associated script to illustrate how these procedures might be implemented (Appendix).

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the following revised Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action be adopted (strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition):**

### Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action

#### **FOR SAA MEMBERS: HOW TO SUGGEST THAT SAA TAKE ACTION ON AN ~~ADVOCACY~~ ISSUE**

**If you encounter an ~~public policy~~ issue on which you think SAA should comment (or advocate for in another way), here's how to bring that issue forward.**

- Review the SAA Public Policy Agenda to determine if your issue is included among the priorities outlined there. Use this review to note the types of issues that SAA addresses and also to ensure that your issue is not already being addressed. ~~Gather as much information as you can on the issue.~~
- Also review the [Criteria for Advocacy Statements](#), [SAA Strategic Plan](#), and the [Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics](#) to determine how your issue aligns with these guiding documents.
- Gather as much information as you can on the issue.
- Prepare a brief (1 or 2 page) written Overview of the issue that includes:
- Using the approved Overview template, prepare a brief (1- to 3-page) written overview of the issue that includes:

***Statement of Facts:*** What is the issue? Have SAA or allied professions taken action on this or a similar issue in the past? If so, what was that action?

***Discussion:*** Why is this issue important to archives and/or archivists? Does the issue fit within the priorities outlined in SAA's Strategic Plan, Public Policy Agenda, or Code of Ethics? ~~Advocacy Agenda?~~ If so, where? If not, why should it be considered as a high priority outside of the Agenda? What are the pros and cons or implications of SAA taking a position or action (or not taking a position or action) on this issue?

***Recommendation(s):*** What do you recommend that SAA do? Should SAA act alone in this, or should it seek support from one or more other organizations?

- As you prepare your Overview, consider the following: If you were in a leadership position within the organization, what information would you need to make a good decision on behalf of SAA?

#### **If you are an individual member:**

- Consider whether there is an SAA component group (committee, board, working group, or section) that would have a specific interest or expertise in the issue that you are raising. ~~(e.g., the Intellectual Property Working Group on copyright issues or the Privacy and Confidentiality Section on privacy issues).~~ Collaboration with one or more ~~an~~ existing group(s) is encouraged because it could both avoid the potential for duplication of effort and assist you in gaining support for addressing your issue.
- ~~If so,~~ Contact the chair of that group(s) to determine if the group's leadership team is interested in collaborating with you to put the issue forward and draft or review an Overview.

- ~~Contact the chair of the Committee on Public Policy to discuss whether COPP would support putting the issue forward.~~
- ~~You should always feel free to contact the staff office directly for assistance in determining who to contact.~~
- Submit your Overview as an attachment in an email to the SAA President (president@archivists.org).
- ***On very urgent matters:*** Contact the staff office SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont (nbeaumont@archivists.org or 866-722-7858) so that she we can help you take the issue directly to the SAA President, Executive Committee, or Council. The President may choose to seek advice from the Committee on Public Policy or other groups.

**If you represent a component group (committee, board, section, or roundtable):**

- ~~Discuss the issue with your steering committee. If the steering committee agrees to proceed on behalf of your group, ask its members to draft/review/approve an Overview of the issue.~~
- ~~Consider whether there are other component groups that would have a specific interest or expertise in the issue that you are raising. Collaboration with one or more groups is encouraged as a means of gaining support for your issue. If so, contact the chair of that group to determine if the group is interested in collaborating with your group to put the issue forward.~~
- ~~Contact the chair of the Committee on Public Policy to discuss whether COPP would support putting the issue forward.~~
- ~~With or without collaboration from other groups, proceed with your request for action by contacting your Council liaison. If your liaison is not available, reach out to the SAA staff for help in moving your request forward. Contact information for Council liaisons is included on each component group's roster.~~
- ***On very urgent matters:*** Contact the staff office so that we can help you take the issue directly to the SAA President, Executive Committee, or Council. The President may choose to seek advice from the Committee on Public Policy or other groups.

**After you've raised your issue or concern:**

- ~~The Council liaison or staff member will pass it along to the President, the Executive Committee, or the Council.~~
- The President, Executive Committee, or Council may ask for additional information, assessment, and/or recommendations from a component group (such as the ~~Committee on Public Policy~~), related professional associations, and/or experts on the specific topic or issue.
- The leadership (either the Executive Committee or the full Council) will determine whether SAA should respond as an organization.
- *If the decision is made to issue a statement and/or take action:* The Executive Committee or Council may designate a person or group to develop a statement of SAA's position. (This is where your Overview can be extremely helpful when time is of the essence.) The Executive Committee will then review and approve the statement for public dissemination or determine that the statement should be reviewed and approved by the full Council before dissemination. The President (or the Executive Director on behalf of the President), ~~Council liaison, or staff member~~ will inform you or your group of the decision.
- *If the decision is made not to develop a statement and/or take action:* The President (or the Executive Director on behalf of the President), ~~Council liaison, or staff member~~ will inform you or your group of the decision.

**Whether or not SAA takes action on your issue or concern:**

~~Your group has an opportunity to inform or educate your members—and the broader SAA membership—on the issue. See, for example, the [Oral History Section’s activities to educate archivists about the issues surrounding the controversial Belfast Project/Boston College Subpoena Case.](#)~~

SAA members and groups have opportunities to inform or educate the broader SAA membership on the issue. See, for example:

- [The Oral History Section’s activities to educate archivists about the issues involved in the controversial Belfast Project/Boston College Subpoena Case.](#)
- [The Issues and Advocacy Section’s Research Teams, Archivists on the Issues blog posts, and Advocacy Toolkit.](#)
- [The Committee on Public Awareness’s \[ArchivesAWARE!\]\(#\) blog.](#)
- [SAA offers \[advocacy resources and toolkits\]\(#\) to help you advocate for your issue within your own organization or local community.](#)

**Support Statement:** The revised procedures support SAA’s Public Policy Agenda by providing members and other prospective audiences with a streamlined process regarding how SAA as an organization responds to the advocacy interests of the profession.

**Impact on Strategic Priorities:** Addresses Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists, Strategy 1.1. Provide leadership in promoting the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society, and Strategy 1.2. Educate and influence decision makers about the importance of archives and archivists.

**Fiscal Impact:** Approval of these procedures does not commit SAA to expend funds on any particular advocacy effort at this time.

**APPENDIX – Submission Form**

**REQUEST THAT SAA TAKE ACTION ON AN ISSUE**

Before completing this form, please review [SAA’s Strategic Plan](#), [SAA's Public Policy Agenda](#), [Code of Ethics](#), [Procedures for Suggesting SAA Advocacy Action](#), and [SAA's Criteria for Advocacy Statements](#). Send completed forms to the SAA President at [president@archivists.org](mailto:president@archivists.org).

Fields marked \* are required.

**Your First and Last Name** \*

**Your Email** \*

**SAA Member:**      Yes      No \*

**Institutional Affiliation (required for nonmembers):**

**Is this request being submitted on behalf of an SAA section or other SAA component group?**

**Title** \*

[Title to summarize your issue and recommendations.]

**Time Sensitivity** \*

[Does a response need to be issued within a specific timeframe?]

### **Statement of Facts \***

[Explain the issue, including whether or not SAA has taken positions on similar issues and links to statements on the issue from allied professions.]

### **Discussion \***

[Describe the significance of this issue to archivists and archives and the relationship of the issue to SAA's Public Policy Agenda and Strategic Plan. If the issue is not explicitly covered by the Agenda, include a justification for why SAA should take a position. Include implications, including financial, of SAA taking action.]

**Significance for archives and archivists:**

**Relevance to SAA Public Policy Agenda:**

**Relevance to SAA's Strategic Plan:**

**Implications of SAA taking action:**

### **Recommendations \***

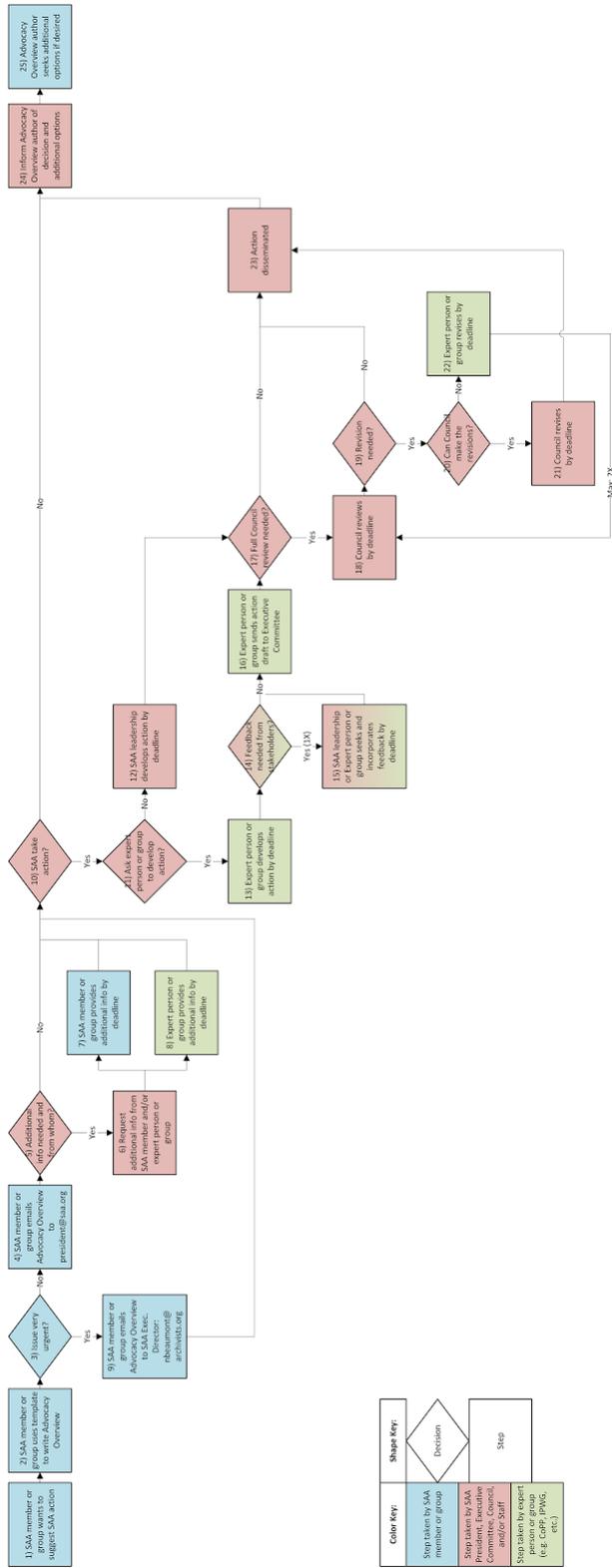
[What do you recommend that SAA do? Should SAA act alone or should it seek support from one or more other organizations?]

#### **APPENDIX – Workflow**

View larger version of image here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By0qISuD-DPbeUs1S1ZxNThPMVU/view?usp=sharing>

# SAA Member or Group Requests SAA Action



Color Key:	Shape Key:
Step taken by SAA member or group	Decision
Step taken by SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	Step
Step taken by expert (e.g. GPPF, IPWIG, etc.)	

## APPENDIX – Script

Task #	Task Name	Description	Actor	Timeline
1	SAA member or group wants to suggest SAA action.	Contact SAA office/leadership if there are questions or clarification on process.	SAA Member or Group	
2	SAA member or group prepares request for action.	Use template to write Advocacy Overview to provide background on requested action.	SAA Member or Group	
3	Issue very urgent?	Requestor indicates any time and response parameters that may be required. (Ex: Need action/response within 1 week/1 month/or other.)	SAA Member or Group	Define urgency? 2-5 days; 1-2 weeks; 1 month; 3 months.
4	SAA member or group emails Advocacy Overview to president@archivists.org. Receipt acknowledged.		SAA Member or Group, President	Email monitored daily. Acknowledgement of receipt w/in 24 hours.
5	Request receives initial review for completeness, content. Determine if additional info needed and from whom?	President and ED monitor email for advocacy requests. Inform Executive Committee/Council of request received.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	Initial review within 48 hours unless President/Exec Director determine need for less or more time to consider.
6	Request additional info from SAA member and/or expert person or group.	If needed, President/ED provide requestor with a response regarding additional information needed. Questions, points for clarification, or need for additional information/verification will be provided in writing.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	Timeframe will be provided by which requestor needs to submit additional information.
7	SAA member or group provides additional info by deadline.	Requestor refines the request providing additional information requested.	SAA Member or Group	
8	Expert person or group provides additional info by deadline.	If request will benefit from review from a specialist/expert, an existing appointed group, or a section, President/ED provide the request submission and identify what information/perspective/assessment is being sought by leadership to facilitate determination on advocacy request.	Expert person or group (e.g., CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	President/ED and group/person from whom advice is being sought determine a viable deadline.
9	SAA member or group emails Advocacy Overview to president@archivists.org.		SAA Member or Group	

10	SAA take action?	Advocacy request and support materials are reviewed/discussed by designated review group to determine if SAA should act.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	Determination of whether and how to proceed will take place usually within 3-5 business days unless a different time frame is deemed necessary.
11	Ask expert person or group to develop action?	For some issues, leadership may determine that the action to be taken should be developed by an expert or a group. A written set of parameters or instructions for what is needed will be provided.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	President/ED determine deadline.
12	SAA leadership develops action by deadline.	Leadership determines format of response (position/policy statement, or defined action) needed. Identifies who will be asked to prepare in writing by designated person/group. Provides written instruction on parameters/content to person/group responsible for preparing action document.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff	President/ED determine deadline.
13	Expert person or group develops action by deadline.	Statement drafted by group; seek clarification, further information on document content/direction as needed from President/ED.	Expert person or group (e.g. CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	President/ED determine deadline.
14	Feedback needed from stakeholders?	President and ED determine if feedback is needed from stakeholders, requestor, or others. Expert person/group may determine feedback is needed; if so, inform President/ED of intention and get agreement to seek feedback.	Expert person or group (e.g., CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	Request for feedback will have deadline that supports completion of task by deadline established for the action statement.
15	Expert person or group seeks and incorporates feedback by deadline.	Review and revisions as needed.	Expert person or group (e.g., CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	
16	Expert person or group sends action draft to President at <a href="mailto:president@archivists.org">president@archivists.org</a> , who then determines appropriate review body (i.e., Executive Committee or Council).	Person/group sends draft action; if there is not consensus in the group preparing the draft, provide a statement of the points of concern/contention if group feels they cannot come to a true consensus.	Expert person or group (e.g., CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	Deadline determined by President/ED. Need for adjustments should be negotiated with President/ED.
17	Full Council review needed?	President/Council/ ED use agreed-upon general criteria for determining if full Council review is needed.	SAA President, Executive Committee,	

			Council, and/or Staff.	
18	Council reviews by deadline.	Council members review; provide comments on content/direction in writing to President/ED, who then share comments with requester(s).	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	Deadline determined by President/ED. Need for adjustments should be negotiated with President/ED.
19	Revision needed?	Based on extent/nature of comments and questions, President/ED determine if revisions are needed.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	
20	Can the Council make the revisions?	Based on extent/nature of comments and questions, President/ED determine if Council member(s) can revise; make assignment.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	
21	Council revises by deadline.	Designated member(s) draft action statement; review/comment by Council members, revision to final version.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	
22	Expert person or group revises by deadline.	Designated person/group draft action statement; review/comment by Council members, revision to final version. Approval by Executive Committee/Council.	Expert person or group (e.g., CoPP, IPWG, etc.)	
23	Action disseminated.	Post on SAA website, circulate via SAA listservs/communication routes, social media. As appropriate, develop dissemination plans to related professional groups, institutions, media, or specific people/groups.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	Post to SAA website w/in 24 hours of approval.
24	Inform Advocacy Overview author of decision and additional options.	Inform requesting person/group of decision. In event they raise concerns, provide options as appropriate.	SAA President, Executive Committee, Council, and/or Staff.	Prior to posting on SAA website, inform requesting person/group in writing.
25	Advocacy Overview author seeks additional options if desired.		SAA Member or Group.	