MIT Libraries’ Stance on Travel Advisories

The MIT Libraries issued a statement in April 2016 opposing state laws that limit the civil rights of certain marginalized groups. It says:

Respect for diversity is a fundamental value of the MIT Libraries, and we are deeply committed to fostering a community where everyone feels valued and included. For that reason, we deplore state laws that restrict the rights and safety of LGBTQ people.

While the Libraries will not restrict MIT-funded travel to states that have adopted such laws, we will neither require nor encourage anyone to travel on MIT Libraries business or on MIT Libraries-funded professional development to any state with laws that restrict the rights and safety of our LGBTQ colleagues.

Staff members frequently ask which specific destinations should be avoided or whether exceptions can be made. This is a very personal decision; the following guidelines are offered to help individual staff members make the determination that is best for them.

- **Cardinal rule**: you are never required or expected to travel to a location where you do not feel safe for any reason. If you don’t feel safe attending an event, simply tell your manager that you don’t feel comfortable attending – no further explanation is required.

- **Domestic travel advisories**
  - The Pew Charitable Trusts have a map dated August 2017 that shows states that have LGBT travel bans and which states are banned. Our current policy specifically mentions North Carolina and Mississippi as states with legislation that restricts the rights of LGBTQ individuals.
  
  - The NAACP has two travel advisories: one, issued in October 2017, cautions against American Airlines; the other, dating from August 2017, is an advisory for the state of Missouri.

  - Note that our policy does not explicitly forbid MIT-funded travel to any locations with an advisory of this type; the final decision rests with the traveler, in consultation with their supervisor.

- **International travel**
  - MIT urges international travelers to check both Institute and State Department warnings before every international trip.
  
  - The Institute’s full International Travel Risk Policy is [here](#).