

# Career Services

University at Albany, State University of New York

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## *Establishment & Use of Reference Files*

### ◆ THIS FILE WILL CONTAIN REFERENCE LETTERS ONLY ◆

Reference Files can be established for a five year period, for a **non-refundable \$35.00 fee** (payable with personal check or money order ONLY to: University at Albany), to house **Reference Letters** for matriculated University at Albany students or alumni for the following reasons:

- *application requests for K-12 or university administrative and teaching positions*
- *candidates seeking entrance into graduate or professional school programs*

The material in this packet is necessary to complete your Reference File and must be returned prior to utilizing the Reference service.

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### **Permanent Record Card**

This is for internal office use to establish your File. Please provide ALL requested information and return the Permanent Record Card to the Career Services. If you change your permanent address, please notify us of the change *in writing*. This information will be used for the five-year mailing.

### **Signed Waiver Form**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (P.L. 93-380) specifies that you have the right to see anything in any file an educational institution has maintained on you unless you choose to waive that right in writing in regard to that particular material. Whatever choice you make, both the reference writer and reader must know whether or not you have waived your right to access. When requesting letters of reference, it is necessary for you to first sign each form and indicate your choice on it. Letters in your File must be all confidential or all non-confidential; you may not have a mixed File. To establish a Reference File the Career Services must have a completed *Waiver Form* indicating your choice.

### **Reference Forms**

Candidates are fully responsible for requesting all references and for assuring that these references are sent to Career Services. Three to five letters of reference are suggested for your Reference File. **There is a limit of eight letters.** Letters may be added to your active File at any time. Sign and date each Reference Letter Form and indicate whether or not you waive your right to read the reference. The reference letter must be written on the form provided by Career Services or on the writer's letterhead with the Reference Letter Form attached. By law, all reference letters must have our form attached with your authorization for confidentiality or non-confidentiality, and the writer's signature. The Reference Letter Form can be downloaded from: [www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/refiles.html](http://www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/refiles.html). **Reference writers must mail letters directly to Career Services.**

### **Maintaining Your File**

Make sure your File is complete and up-to-date (outdated letters may not be regarded as highly as current letters). Check periodically on the status of your File. After references have been added to your File, you may wish to have outdated material held from future mailings. **Keep us informed of your most recent address and phone number.**

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## Sending Your File

### **WHEN:**

Send a copy only when you are sure it is required. Do not request that your Reference File be sent to a graduate school until *after* you have submitted your application – only then will that school have established a file for you.

### **HOW:**

Requests will be accepted by mail, fax, or in person (***please note we cannot accept e-mail requests as we need your signature on your request***), and must indicate exactly which letters of reference you want mailed in each instance. If you request your “entire file,” only the information contained in the File at the time of the request will be sent. ***It is your responsibility to know which letters have and have not been received by Career Services.*** When making a request, provide the name and/or title of the person to whom the File must be directed and the precise full address. ***It is also your responsibility to ensure your file has been received. We strongly suggest you verify receipt of your file with the person specified in your written request.***

### **HOW MUCH:**

An initial non-refundable fee of **\$35.00** will be charged to establish your file for a period of five years. You will then receive your first *five* mailings *free*. After that, a fee of **\$7.00** will be charged each time your Reference File is sent -- this includes copies sent to another department on the UAlbany campus. After your five years are up, a non-refundable \$35.00 fee will be charged if you elect to continue your file for an additional five years. Again, you will receive five free mailings. *We accept only checks or money orders made payable to the University at Albany.*

### **MAILING TIMELINE/POLICY:**

From the date your request is received in the Career Services, please allow **two to five business days** to complete your request. *To maintain the confidentiality of your references, we will **not** provide you with sealed copies of your File to hand deliver.* Please plan accordingly.

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## Guidelines for Reference Writers

To assist those writing letters of recommendation for you, we have published guidelines developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). For a copy of those guidelines, please refer your reference writers to the following web address: [www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/refwrite.htm](http://www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/refwrite.htm).

## Guidelines for Students & Alumni

Visit [www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/guides.htm](http://www.albany.edu/cdc/gradschool/guides.htm) for complete information related to Reference Files.

### ***This office does NOT retain reference letters indefinitely.***

I understand that my reference file will be maintained for five (5) years from the date of establishment, or the last date of activity (addition of new letters or more recent mailing requests). *If there is no activity for five (5) years, my file will be destroyed **unless** I specifically request in writing that my file be maintained and I pay the current nonrefundable reactivation fee.*