



The American Society for Investigative Pathology www.asip.org

ASIP Public Affairs

2001 – ASIP Position on Electronic Publishing

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Although at first glance this cause may seem attractive, the fact is that making the full text of *The American Journal of Pathology* and *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics* available free of charge would have irrevocably damaging effects on the financial strength of our journals and our Society. It would have similar effects on all but the largest and best endowed scientific societies. We believe that our editorial office provides a valuable service in the thoughtful review and careful production of its journals. The proponents of the proposal feel that this costly service should be provided by scientific societies. We believe that we have maintained and tried to balance return of income (e.g. publication charges and subscription revenues) with the uses of that income, much of which is associated with the management of peer-review and journal production.

After consideration of this and related issues, the officers of ASIP have recommended and implemented a policy of free online access to the full text of *The American Journal of Pathology* after **one year**. Thus, articles dating from July 1998 through February 2000 are currently available free of charge to all internet users. The tables of contents, abstracts, instructions to authors and Society information have always been available free of charge on our website <http://www.amjpathol.org>. In December 2000, the full text of all issues of *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics* was also introduced online. Because this publication is co-owned by the Association for Molecular Pathology, and the online version is a very recent development, a determination has not been made yet concerning its long-term accessibility. However, as we are actively promoting visits to the site, there are currently no access controls <http://jmd.amjpathol.org>.

ASIP understands the deleterious effects of unreasonable journal pricing on institutional libraries. Although *The American Journal of Pathology* is arguably undervalued, ASIP has tried to translate modest amounts of income from the publication into securing the future of the Society. With this income, ASIP continues to publish top-notch research journals, and to invest in online publishing technologies at no cost to members or libraries. We also work toward fostering the careers of young pathologists, and protecting the interests of investigative scientists by promoting sound public policy that impacts not only on Pathology, but on the scientific community as a whole.

We urge you not to sign the letter in circulation, and to share this explanation of why the policy endangers our journals with your colleagues. The officers of ASIP value your comments. If you would like to articulate your support or opposition to our current position on this important issue, please write to ajp@asip.org.