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# **BRAMPTON LIBRARY**

## **Information Services Policy**

### **Purpose of Policy**

- This policy will provide a statement of general principles for the provision of information services that support the mission and strategic plan of Brampton Library. Information services are defined as those services which the Library provides to connect customers to appropriate resources in fulfillment of their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.
- This policy will encourage a uniform standard of service of the highest quality possible consistent with available time and resources.
- This policy will serve as an orientation and training tool for new staff as well as a resource for library staff and the public.

### **Service Objectives**

- Staff will meet the information needs of library customers as efficiently, accurately and as completely as possible.
- Staff will assist or educate customers in the use of the library and its resources.
- Staff will refer customers to other libraries, agencies and community resources if unable to find an answer using Brampton Library resources.
- In order to meet these objectives, access to an up-to-date, relevant and readily accessible working collection of electronic and paper materials is vital. Collection acquisitions and maintenance are regulated in accordance with the "Brampton Library Collection Development Policy".

### **Guiding Principles**

- Customers will be served with respect and courtesy, in a nondiscriminatory, timely manner. Library staff will accord equal attention and effort to each information request. Time spent by staff may vary in response to resources available.
- All staff is responsible for making each transaction a positive experience.

- Professional librarians, graduates from a recognized library techniques program or a person with recognized equivalent training and experience are available to meet customer needs.
- Professional judgment and initiative are encouraged to satisfy customers' needs.
- Staff will not attempt to interpret legal, medical, technical, mathematical or other specialized information. Customers will be referred to appropriate information in the library and/or organizations where the required expertise and/or advice may be available.
- Whenever appropriate, staff will consult with colleagues at Brampton Library when such collaboration could assist in answering customers' questions.

### **Special Needs**

Brampton Library is committed to providing equal access to information for those who request it. The Library will provide special services and devices to enable persons with disabilities to access and use reference sources. Printed and electronic materials will be made available in alternate formats as needed and/or upon request.

### **Types of Service**

Brampton Library offers customers a variety of information services as described below:

- **Quick Reference** - These questions can be answered immediately using a variety of resources readily available.
- **General Reference** – These questions require more time and resources to provide a complete answer. Staff will assist customers in locating the information required, and to those interested in learning, offer informal instruction on the use of library resources.
- **Reader's Advisory** – Staff will assist customers by helping them identify their reading preferences and making recommendations for selection based on criteria the customer and staff have established.
- **Community Information and Referral** – Staff will provide customers with information about and referral to community services and programs as required.
- **Consultation** – Staff will consult with customers in an attempt to assist in defining more in-depth information needs and will employ a variety of methods to reach an answer. Duration and depth of assistance will be determined by the customer's needs, staffing and time constraints.
- **Location of Material** – Staff will check library collections to see if the preferred material is available. Staff will place requests or provide instruction on how to place a request for materials not immediately available. If the Library does not own the material, assistance will be provided in borrowing the item from another library or finding information on where the customer may purchase the item.

- **Library Instruction, Orientation and Researchers Needs** – Staff will familiarize customers with all library services and provide instruction in the use of library materials and equipment. The type and amount of assistance will depend on customer need as well as time, resources and staff available. Where necessary, arrangements for specialized assistance will be made. Staff will perform formal library instruction and orientation to groups or individuals upon request.
- **Referral** – When the request for information is established to be beyond the scope of the Library's resources, staff will refer a customer to sources elsewhere. When circumstances warrant, staff may assist the customer in contacting alternative or outside sources. Every attempt is made to satisfy customer requests in the library before referring to outside sources.
- **Special Collections Assistance** - Brampton Library provides specialized reference services to support local history and genealogy requests. The level of these services will depend on time, resources, staff availability and expertise.
- **Telephone Service** – Staff will provide their full attention to telephone information requests. If a request cannot be answered immediately, arrangements should be made to return the customer's call within a mutually agreed upon time. Staff will request that the customer come in to the library to participate in their research should the situation warrant extensive research.
- **Correspondence** – Staff will provide their full attention to information requests received by correspondence (email, paper mail, or fax). Staff will respond to such requests in a timely manner.
- **Interlibrary Loan Service** - Brampton Library is part of an information network within the community, within the Southern Ontario Library System and in cooperation with other library systems across Ontario and Canada.
  - Staff will offer interlibrary loan service whenever the information cannot be located among Brampton Library's resources and falls within the scope of the regional and national interlibrary loan code.
  - Brampton Library likewise shares its resources while maintaining priority preference for its own customers.

### **Priorities of Service**

Personal service will be provided as outlined in the priority list below.

1. Requests in person
2. Requests by telephone/voicemail
3. Requests by e-mail
4. Requests by mail or fax
5. Requests by the interlibrary loan system

The extent of service provided to each customer is dependent on the number of customers to be served, time, staff and resources available.

### **Customer Confidentiality**

Library customers have the right to expect that their information requests are confidential. Personal information collected as part of the reference process is done so under the authority of the Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990 Chapter P. 44. Questions about this collection of personal data should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer, Brampton Library, 65 Queen St. E., Brampton, ON, L6W 3L6, Tel. 905-793-4636, ext. 4311.

### **Customer Feedback**

Customers who have comments and suggestions regarding this policy will be assisted and informed as to how to relay their concerns to the appropriate managing body. If staff cannot assist customers satisfactorily, they are invited to complete a "Customer Feedback Form" or they may contact a manager directly.

### **Statistical Measures**

Statistics related to information services are gathered in accordance with "Procedure 70-00-60 Quarterly Activity Report". This procedure provides definitions and identifies responsibility for each statistical measure that is included in the Quarterly Activity Report that is received by the Brampton Public Library Board.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Brampton Public Library Board.**

**This policy is available in alternative format upon request.**