



## Information Services Policy [PUB1]

Date:

Revised Date:

SECTION: Public service

### Statement of Policy

The Information Services Policy represents the Library's standards for the delivery of information services to the public. These guidelines exist to ensure that the public will receive consistently high levels of service. The policy is made available to the public so that our customers have a written standard of service they can expect while using the Library's services.

### Range of Services

All customers of the Brantford Public Library can expect to receive a level of information service consistent with the Mission Statement of the Library:

"The Brantford Public Library will foster a culture of reading and thought by serving Brantford's need for information, life-long learning and leisure pursuits."

This service includes:

- help using the library's catalogue, databases and equipment
- help conducting research for personal, educational or professional purposes
- help locating material and placing holds
- accessing material from other institutions
- access to the Internet
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It is our goal to bring the library's resources and potential users together. This service is performed at all times the library is open and includes a variety of services.

## **Types of Research**

### ***Quick Reference***

Short factual answers will be provided for specific requests. Answers are provided using ready reference information or by use of electronic resources.

### ***General Reference***

For requests requiring more extensive research, customers will be guided to relevant materials in either print or electronic format. General reference requests may include any of the following:

### ***Genealogical/Local History Research***

Genealogical research involves specialized resources and equipment. Researchers will receive instruction in the following areas:

- searching the library's Birth/Marriage/Death database
- locating genealogical reference material
- using the microfilm reader/printer
- ordering interlibrary loan material from the federal and provincial archives
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### ***Government Documents Research***

Library staff will assist customers searching for federal, provincial and municipal government information, including:

- locating appropriate statutes, regulations, bill and reports in the library
- locating government material available on the Internet
- referral to the appropriate municipal, provincial or federal government agency

### ***Health/Medical/Legal/Consumer Research***

The Brantford Public Library contains a wide variety of resources for patrons seeking information on matters of health, law and consumer products. The library staff will provide the following service:

- locating information using print and electronic resources
- referral to other agencies in the community

### ***Readers' Advisory***

Readers' advisory service is the act of identifying reader preferences and recommending books to readers based on current and past preferences. Staff will assist customers in choosing the most appropriate print or other resources based on the

individual needs of the customer. Customers may also consult extensive lists of suggestions of fiction genres for both adults and children.

### ***School Assignment Assistance (Elementary and Secondary)***

The Brantford Public Library serves a vital role as an information provider to the students of Brantford and Brant County. The library will provide the following services for students:

- instruction on using the library's catalogue and databases
- locating material and placing holds

### ***Career Planning and Employment Search***

Library staff will help customers identify the necessary print and electronic resources to attain specific career or employment goals. This service includes:

- locating school calendars and career oriented print material
- locating web sites featuring employment listings
- instruction on conducting market research
- referral to other agencies in the community

### ***Interlibrary Loan***

If material required by the customer is not available in the Brantford Public Library's collection, library staff will attempt to acquire it from other libraries or government agencies through interlibrary loan. Fees may apply for some academic libraries and borrowing is subject to the rules of the lending institution.

### ***Orientation***

Brantford Public Library staff will provide orientation services to individuals or groups. Group orientation is subject to availability of staff and must be booked in advance. Orientation service includes familiarizing customers with library services and providing instruction in the use of public access catalogues, indexes, databases, Internet and equipment. Library staff will also aid customers in locating resources housed in various collections.

### ***Community Information***

The Brantford Public Library serves as a focal point for the collection and referral of community information. Library staff will aid customers in identifying and contacting the appropriate community agency in Brantford or Brant County.

## **Special Services**

Some specific groups of customers or types of research may require additional aid. The Brantford Public Library will provide the following services:

### ***Laurier Students***

Brantford Public Library serves as a resource centre for the Brantford campus of Wilfrid Laurier University. Library staff will provide orientation, instruction and assistance for the following resources:

- TRELIS and BPL catalogue
- Laurier collection
- database searching
- document delivery service

### ***Out of Town Customers***

Customers not residing in Brantford can expect to receive the same level of service as those living in the area, including:

- Internet access
- instruction on using the library catalogue and databases
- locating material
- help using equipment (microfilm readers, photocopier)
- in-library access to all materials
- out of town customers may not borrow material from the Brantford Public Library

### ***Shut-In Service***

Residents of Brantford who are unable to visit the Main or St. Paul branch library can have library material delivered to their residence. Library staff will provide the following services:

- selecting appropriate material for customers
- delivery and pick-up of material from the customer's residence
- reference material and videos cannot be delivered to the customer

## **Service Priorities**

Service to the public has priority over all other duties.

Staff will serve customers in the following order:

1. Requests in person
2. Requests by telephone
3. Requests by email
4. Requests by mail

If a staff member cannot answer a request immediately, he or she will obtain contact information for the customer and see that the customer receives an answer as soon as possible. Unfinished questions at the end of a shift will be turned over to incoming staff.

Staff members who lack expertise in a particular subject area are encouraged to consult with colleagues if they need assistance.

## **Service Standards**

All reference requests are referred to the reference/information desks. The library offers reference service by trained staff whenever the library is open.

Staff will always use the most up-to-date information from accurate printed or online sources or learned from a reliable authority. Where appropriate sources will be provided for answers given. Staff will not provide personal opinions, analysis or interpretation of medical/legal/financial/religious information. Customers will be encouraged to consult a professional in the appropriate field.

The decision of what information sources to check and the length of time spent on a question is at the discretion of the reference staff. Staff will guide to customer in search strategies and information tools but will not perform the research for them.

Reference staff will be:

1. Knowledgeable about library materials and services
2. Courteous and approachable
3. Able to communicate effectively with people
4. Discreet in the handling of questions which might be confidential or sensitive

Staff must take customers to the appropriate area unless the customers indicate that they know how to locate materials on their own. If they indicate a willingness to locate materials on their own staff may provide verbal directions and/or point out the location.

Telephone Service:

- Short, factual questions which do not require extensive research can be answered by telephone. Some customers may be asked to come to the library if they have in-depth questions that require the customer to participate in the research process.
- If callers must wait they should be given the option to remain on hold or to have their calls returned. If the customer prefers to be called back the staff member should take the customer's telephone number and call the customer back as soon as possible. For long distance calls the caller should be asked to phone back at a prearranged time. The library does not accept collect calls.
- Short answers may also be provided by fax or email if the customer requests it.