



Meaford Public Library
Information Services
Policy-9
November 2024

The Meaford Public Library's information services link people with resources to fulfill their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. This policy describes information services at the library and guides Library staff when addressing requests for information.

1. All users seeking information will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their age, ability, ethnicity or race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and religious or spiritual beliefs.
2. Library staff will respect and protect the confidential and private nature of requests for information. Patron confidentiality will be respected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and protection of Privacy Act, any other relevant legislation and library policies.
3. Library staff will address all requests for information efficiently, accurately and as completely as possible and will be guided by the Meaford Public Library Board's Policy 1 - Intellectual Freedom. All questions will be considered important and legitimate unless they contravene the Ontario Human Rights Code, or federal or provincial laws.
4. Library staff will assist the user in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources and technologies based upon the user's needs. Library staff are available to assist patrons with computer and Internet questions. While staff do not provide in-depth instruction on specific applications, they will help patrons find and navigate online help options, user forums, and tutorials.
5. Library staff will not complete online or print applications or make financial transactions on behalf of patrons.
6. Patrons may request information in person, by telephone, by mail or electronic mail. Although all requests are given equal consideration some require patrons to visit the Library.

Library staff provide the following services:

- a) **Quick reference:** These questions can usually be answered immediately using online or other resources.
 - b) **General reference:** These questions usually require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of resources to arrive at a complete answer.
7. Library staff will refer users to other sources or help retrieve material or information from another location if a request cannot be answered using the Library's resources.

8. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users who require service. Staff will offer instruction and assistance using library technologies and search techniques to encourage and support patrons to take an active role in fulfilling their needs. The following priorities will apply:

1st priority - requests presented in person
2nd priority - requests presented by telephone
3rd priority - requests sent in by voicemail/e-mail/social media/fax/mail
4th priority - requests received via the interlibrary loan network
9. Print and electronic reference collections are maintained by library staff with a focus on the currency and relevancy of the material, and in accordance with Meaford Public Library Policy 26 – Collection Development.
10. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the governing Ministry of Ontario Public Libraries, statistics on reference questions will be kept and analyzed.
11. The Library is committed to meeting the needs of patrons with disabilities and will provide alternate formats and communication supports upon request.

Related Documents:

Meaford Public Library, ***Policy 1A Privacy, Access to Information and Electronic Messages Under CASL***

Meaford Public Library, ***Policy 1 Intellectual Freedom***

Meaford Public Library, ***Policy 2 Internet Services***

Meaford Public Library, ***Policy 26 Collection Development***

Approved: January 2003

Revised: May 2015

Revised: September 2019

Revised: November 2024