

**MOUNTAIN VIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY**

**POLICY:**

The City of Mountain View Public Library offers reference and information services to its customers with the intent of providing general information and supporting lifelong learning. Library staff provides assistance through the use of print, nonprint, and electronic resources when the Library is open to the public, via telephone, online or in-person and also online when the Library is closed.

Reference services are available to all customers regardless of age, sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic status and every customer has a “right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use.” (ALA Library Bill of Rights)

The Library provides reference services in accordance with the principles set forth in the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement.

**Guidelines**

Library staff will:

- Provide accurate, objective information in a timely, consistent manner without judgment.
- Identify relevant and credible sources that relate to the customer’s questions.
- Assist customers in locating any reading materials in their areas of interest.
- Provide information directly or through the use of instruction in the use of Library resources to each person.

**Conditions**

- Only general information can be provided by staff for medical, legal, and tax questions. Staff will refrain from offering advice or answering interpretive questions that are more appropriate for field-specific professionals. These are fields that require special training that public librarians do not have. Referrals may be made to other local resources, such as the Santa Clara County Law Library.

- Technology questions must focus on the use of Library-related technology, including public computers, printers, scanners, Library Wi-Fi, Library apps and Library electronic resources.
- To ensure equal access and effective service, staff may use discretion in assessing reference needs. Customers who require resources beyond the scope of reference services will be referred to other resources or local agencies.

Customers are expected to follow the rules of the Library's **Behavior Policy** when utilizing the reference services of the Library.

LIABILITY STATEMENT:

The Library is not liable for any damages resulting from the use of information provided by the Library or the Library staff. The Library is not responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the sources it owns, or provides online links to, or of information it provides from any other sources.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read Statement](#)

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees: November 21, 2005

Revised: December 12, 2016



**CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY**

POLICY:

The City of Mountain View Public Library ~~provides~~offers reference and information services to its customers ~~as part of its service responses to meet community needs;~~ with the intent of

- ~~The Library~~ provid~~ing~~es general information ~~and supporting~~
- ~~The Library~~ provides lifelong learning ~~and learning support.~~

~~The~~ Library staff provides ~~reference and information services~~ assistance through the use of staff, print, nonprint, and electronic resources when the Library is open to the public, via telephone, online or in-person and also online when the Library is closed.

Reference services are available to all customers regardless of age, sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic status and every customer has a "right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use." (ALA Library Bill of Rights)

The Library provides reference services in accordance with the principles set forth in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights ~~(see Appendix)~~ and Freedom to Read Statement.

REGULATIONS: GUIDELINES AND CONDITIONS:

Reference Service Standards ~~Guidelines and Limits~~

~~Successful reference service involves identifying a customer's information need and proceeding to fulfill it accurately, efficiently, and pleasantly using the resources available in the Library and outside resources that are available to the staff and customer. The Library staff will:~~

- Provide accurate, objective information in a timely, consistent manner without ~~discrimination~~ judgment.
- Identify relevant and credible sources that relate to the customer's questions.

- ~~Provide information directly or through the use of instruction in the use of Library resources to each person.~~
- ~~Provide customers training in skills that will assist them in fully utilizing Library resources.~~ Assist customers in locating any reading materials in their areas of interest.
  - ~~Provide information directly or through the use of instruction in the use of Library resources to each person.~~
- ~~Cooperate with other community agencies and organizations in efforts to serve our community.~~

### Conditions

~~Lifelong learning can be supported by providing reference service that instructs the customer rather than simply providing them with an answer. Therefore, instruction in the use of Library resources and tools is considered an important role in providing good reference service.~~

~~Interpretative questions that require analysis or drawing of a conclusion from facts are beyond the scope of reference service since they require opinions and are not founded in fact.~~

- ~~Only general information can be provided by staff for medical, legal, and tax questions. Staff will refrain from offering advice or answering interpretive questions that are more appropriate for field-specific professionals. These are fields that require special training that public librarians do not have. Referrals may be made to other local resources, such as the Santa Clara County Law Library. ~~These are fields that require special training that public librarians do not have. Referrals may be made to other local resources such as the Santa Clara County Law Library.~~~~
- ~~Technology questions must focus on the use of Library-related technology, including public computers, printers, scanners, Library Wi-Fi, Library apps and Library electronic resources.~~

~~To ensure equal access and effective service, staff may use discretion in assessing reference needs. Customers who require resources beyond the scope of reference services will be referred to other resources or local agencies.~~

~~Exhaustive or lengthy research is not considered a role of the public reference librarian.~~

~~The Library offers computers for internet use by the public. Staff can only assist with brief questions concerning the use of the internet. If more in depth assistance is needed, staff may refer the customer to local classes. Staff members are not technology specialists and cannot assist with software or hardware issues concerning a customer's laptop or mobile device nor their ability to connect to the internet.~~

~~Reference and Information Desk staff are the link between resources and the community. Service to the public has priority over all other tasks when staff is at public service desks.~~

~~The Reference and Information Desks are staffed all hours that the Library is open to the public. Staff at these service desks are knowledgeable about Library materials, services, and policies and they are approachable and professional.~~

~~Discretion when handling questions that might be confidential and sensitive is of the utmost importance. If information is available, it is provided to customers without making a judgment on its moral or aesthetic value.~~

~~Library users are all people seeking information whether in person, by telephone, or by email. In-person requests receive the highest priority.~~

~~Reference service is available to all Library users regardless of age, sex, religion, race, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status.~~

~~Customers Library users~~ are expected to ~~follow~~ abide by the rules of the Library's **Behavior Policy** when utilizing the reference services of the Library~~working with Reference and Information Desk staff.~~

#### LIABILITY STATEMENT:

The Library is not liable for any damages resulting from the use of information ~~used in the Library~~ ~~or~~ provided by the Library or the Library staff. The Library is not responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the sources it owns, or provides online links to, or of information it provides from any other sources.

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