
SECTION 3: LIBRARY SERVICES

3.1. Reference and Information Services

The staff at the Austin County Libraries endeavors to provide accurate information and materials in response to requests from library users in an efficient, courteous, and timely manner. Questions are generally answered in the order received, with priority given to questions asked by patrons who are in the library.

Services available through the reference desk include:

- information services (answers to specific questions, call number and ownership of a specific book, recommendations on subject materials);
- instruction on the use of the library and library materials; bibliographic verification of items requested (title, author, publisher, ISBN, price);
- reader's advisory (suggestions on books to read, videos and DVDs to view);
- referral to community services; and assistance in locating materials.

When answering specific information questions, staff will always cite the source of the answer. Staff will accompany the patron to the location of the desired materials in the library and confirm that the information meets the patron's need.

Additional care and caution will be exercised when providing legal, medical, or consumer information. To avoid misunderstandings, it is preferred that patrons visit the library to review this type of information, rather than receiving the information over the telephone. Reference staff will provide definitions, quote material verbatim, and direct patrons to information sources. Staff will not offer advice or opinions, condense or abstract information, or suggest a course of action or diagnosis. Staff will provide the source and copyright date for legal and medical information.

3.2. Photocopying Services

The Austin County Library System libraries provide a photocopier service primarily to facilitate patron use of non-circulating materials such as reference books, magazines, newspapers, and local history materials. When providing services with the photocopier, staff will not knowingly violate copyright law. Patrons using the photocopier services must adhere to the U.S. Copyright Law. All copies for Governmental Organizations are free of charge.

Austin County Library System Policy Manual

January 2023 Revision of November 2009 Court Order# 09-535

Approved by: Austin County Commissioners' Court

The following policies govern how we use our library.

Photocopy Fees

Black and White Copies	\$0.15 per 8.5"x11" sheet
	\$0.25 per Legal size sheet
Color Copies	\$0.25 per 8.5"x11" sheet
	\$0.50 per Legal size sheet
Color Photos	\$1.00 per page

3.3. Fax Services

Fax service is provided by the Austin County Library System when the information requested is brief and readily available in printed form. Staff cannot conduct extensive research, compile information, or gather data from a variety of sources to be faxed. Fax service is provided as part of the reference services of the library and community service.

Staff will adhere to copyright restrictions when faxing materials.

Fax Service Fees:

Fax transmissions	\$1.00 per page. There is no charge for the cover page.
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3.4. Meetings at the Library Policy

A Library may be used as a meeting place for any local not-for-profit, non-commercial group of at least three individuals engaged in an educational, cultural, intellectual, or civic activity. The individual or group as a whole, is responsible for damages that result from the group's use of the library. Library should be left as was found. If the furniture is rearranged, it should be returned to the original arrangement at the end of the meeting.

3.5. Displays, Exhibits, Bulletin Boards Policy

The Austin County Library System libraries make attempts to provide the Austin County communities with limited, temporary space for displays, exhibits, and bulletin boards to further the Library's mission to provide information and services that promote lifelong learning, literacy, and love of reading and to enrich the quality of life in our community. Not all Library buildings can

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accommodate postings, displays, or exhibits. To make the most efficient use of the space that is available, the Library has established the following criteria for such material.

- Any individual or group requesting to post, display, or exhibit materials should bring the material(s) or, in the case of an exhibit, a representative sample of the materials, to the circulation desk.
- Because display space is very limited at the Austin County Library System branches, preference will be given to the Library, Library support groups, City, and City-related material. As space permits, announcements of events and activities of tax-supported or non-profit educational, cultural, and charitable organizations will be posted.
- The Library does not assume responsibility or liability for materials exhibited in Library facilities. The Library reserves the right to refuse to post, and the right to remove announcements, posters, displays, or exhibits which do not meet the above criteria or which have been posted for a reasonable length of time.



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