



Title: Library Services - Praying in the Library

Category: Operating – Service Delivery
Key words: Library, praying
File number: L-33-62
Policy owner: Director of Corporate Services (Library Services)

Authorisation: Adopted March 2007 by the *Director of Corporate Services*
Review date: March 2010
Modification history: *This is a new policy*

Related legislation: New South Wales Library Act 1939
Related policies: Library Services Conditions of Use
Related procedures: None
Related forms: City of Canterbury Library Service Membership Application Form

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline City of Canterbury Library’s position on requests from members of the public to conduct prayers in library premises during opening hours.

1.1 Rationale

Practitioners of assorted faiths, including Islam are required to conduct prayers at very specific times. On some occasions this time may coincide with a visit to the library.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- state the library’s position on requests from members of the public to conduct prayers in library premises; and
- outline to what level the library is able to accommodate such requests.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the public visiting Campsie Library.

4. Definitions

“City of Canterbury Library” or “the library”

Refers to all branches of the library service (Campsie, Earlwood, Lakemba, Riverwood & the Home Library Service).

5. Principles

5.1 Respect and Equality for all Library Users

- The library recognizes and respects the rights of all individuals to religious expression.
- People choosing to pray in the library will be treated with the same respect as all other library users.
- Other library users will not be inconvenienced or asked to move to another area in order to accommodate someone who wishes to pray.

5.2 Requests to Pray in the Library

Library users wishing to pray in the library are requested to speak with library staff first to determine if a suitable location is available at that time.

5.3 Availability of Space for Praying

- The library will always try to accommodate those library users who wish to pray in the building, however due to space restrictions the availability of a suitable location for praying cannot be guaranteed.
- The library does not provide any locations specifically set aside for prayer purposes.

- Customers wishing to exercise their right to pray in the library will be directed to a quiet and out of the way area of the library if available.
- At Campsie Library, possible spaces which can be used for praying if available include:
 - The end of the youth area near the exit door.
 - Meeting Room One if not otherwise used.
- Facilities such as mats and cushions will not be provided.
- Unfortunately branch libraries have no suitable specific areas and will not be able to accommodate this activity in their current form.

5.4 Disclaimer

While the library will take a reasonable level of care to prevent someone who is praying from being disturbed, it cannot guarantee this.

The library takes no responsibility for the actions of other library users, or for any other disturbances or interruptions which may occur to an individual who is conducting a prayer in the library building.

6. Responsibilities

- All Library Services staff have the responsibility of implementing this policy.

7. Procedures

The *City of Canterbury Library Procedures Manual* is now due to be updated. Specific procedures for the implementation of this policy will be clearly outlined in the updated manual.

7.1 Complaints

- Any complaint / appeal will be dealt with in the first instance by the Shift Supervisor.
- Complaints / appeals that cannot be resolved at this level will be referred to the Manager, Library Services or an authorised delegate (Co-ordinator Client Services or Co-ordinator Support Services).
- If the customer remains unsatisfied, they may write to:

Mr. Jim Montague
General Manager
Canterbury City Council
PO Box 77 CAMPSIE NSW 2194