

## **Houston Courts Library Access Policy**

The primary mission of the Houston Courts Library is to provide a full range of research and reference services to court personnel throughout the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Southern District of Texas. Library visitors such as government attorneys, members of government agencies, members of the bar, and other members of the public are allowed to use the library to do legal research. These non-court member visitors will be provided library services within the following guidelines and standards.

### **Library Use**

1. Visitors may use books and related print materials during posted business hours. No access will be permitted after posted hours, on federal holidays, or when the library is otherwise closed.
2. Staff will provide limited reference assistance such as locating materials on the shelves or directing users to reference materials. No other research services will be provided.
3. Visitors may use library materials only within the library. Visitors do not have borrowing privileges.
4. Seeking legal advice from librarians, judges, law clerks, attorneys, or other library users is not permitted.
5. Public access computers may be used by visitors based on availability and subject to time limits. This use is at the discretion of librarians and may be revoked at any time. Librarians will offer assistance with computer use as time allows. Librarians will not do internet searches or assist with preparation of documents. Inappropriate use of the computers may result in a loss of this privilege.
6. Visitors may bring their own personal electronic devices into the library and use them as long as the use does not create noise or interfere with other library patrons.
7. Speaking on cell phones or other devices is not permitted within the library.
8. Visitors may use areas of the library designated for public use. Areas designated for staff or court use may only be entered with specific permission of library staff.

### **Acceptable Conduct**

All library users must conduct themselves in a manner that allows staff and other users to work free from interruptions or distractions, harassment or abuse, or fear for personal privacy or safety. All users must refrain from behavior that could result in injury to themselves or others, or that could result in damage to library resources.

All library users are expected to comply with requests from the library staff to engage in acceptable conduct. Failure to comply with these requests will result in being asked to leave the library and may result in a loss of future use privileges. Court security officers and U.S. Marshals may be employed to assist the library staff in maintaining acceptable conduct or to escort non-compliant visitors from the library.

The standards set forth in this policy are in addition to, and do not supersede, the requirements and prohibitions applying to every person on federal property under state and federal law.