



Reference Services Policy

The Frank L. Weyenberg Library Board of Trustees considers the Library a vital resource for meeting educational and informational needs within the community. Therefore, the Library:

- Assists all individuals, regardless of age, need or background in obtaining the information they request for personal or professional use.
- Selects and maintains a reference collection suitable to the evolving needs of the community in appropriate formats.
- Assists patrons in using the online catalog and instructs users in simple research strategies that can be employed independent of library staff.
- Gathers, creates, and familiarizes patrons with local history resources.
- Increases awareness within the community of the reference resources and services available through the library.
- Facilitates information requests that cannot be answered within the scope of our resources through referrals to appropriate agencies or libraries.
- Requests items not found in our collection for patrons through the interlibrary loan process.

Service Goals

- To treat patrons of any age or circumstance and their questions with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity to their particular needs.
- To provide accurate and authoritative information in a timely fashion.
- To cite the source of the information given.
- To promote physical and intellectual ease and comfort in utilizing library resources.
- To offer reference service by trained staff all hours the library is open.
- To offer instruction in using reference resources.

Standards

- No fees are charged for reference services with the exception of miscellaneous printing or photocopy costs, nor is a library card required
- Because many patrons are reluctant to request aid, it is the responsibility of staff to offer service when it appears needed.
- Questions are generally handled in the order received. However, return calls may be necessary or staff may need to help several patrons concurrently. Depending upon the type of question and skills of the patron, ten to fifteen minutes is a reasonable time for staff to spend per question.
- Specific ready reference questions with easily cited objective answers can be handled quickly by phone or for patrons who are in the building. Topical questions may require more extensive searches, and the patron may need to personally review the resources recommended by reference staff. Research questions require the gathering and synthesis of extensive information from

varied sources; staff will guide the patron in search strategies and information tools but will not perform the research. Recommendation on title selection is available through the Reference Desk.

- Reference staff will not provide opinions, analyses or interpretations. In some fields such as legal, medical, or financial, patrons may be best served by consulting a professional in the appropriate field.
- The decision of what information sources to check and the length of time spent on a question rests on the professional expertise of the staff.
- While all efforts are made to provide authoritative collections and information, the Library does not take responsibility for the accuracy of information as found in its resources or presented by its staff.