

## **Reference Service Policy**

### **Goal of Reference Service**

The goal of reference service at Flossmoor Public Library is:

- to assist library patrons in using the resources of the Library
- to correctly answer informational questions submitted by Library patrons

### **Scope of Reference Service**

Reference assistance is provided by qualified staff during all hours the Library is open. All requests are treated impartially and confidentially. Reference service and access to the entire collection will be provided without regard to age or residency of the patron.

Adult Services and Youth Services staff members will utilize both print and electronic resources in filling information requests for Library users and they will use their judgment in determining which type of resource is most appropriate and reliable. Adult Services and Youth Services staff members will make every effort to provide equitable and timely access to information.

The Library responds to all reference requests regardless of how they are submitted. The source of the information will always be given along with the answer in response to a telephone or mail inquiry. No personal opinions, advice, or recommendations will be offered except in the provision of readers' advisory service.

Reference service will be provided free of charge. Only costs incurred by the use of other agencies will be passed on to the patron. Examples of such charges include photocopying, ordering genealogy microfilm, ordering interlibrary loan materials from out of state, and some database searches.

Reference questions are treated equally; no value is established as to the reason for the question or the intended use of the information. However, in an instance in which the question is based on a class assignment and the intent of the assignment is to have the student conduct his/her own research, interpret data, and draw conclusions, the librarian will provide basic guidance in the use of library resources and orientation for establishing the search which will lead the student to the answer.

If questions occur simultaneously, priority will be given to patrons who come into the Library over those who telephone. If a telephone question cannot be answered within a few minutes and other patrons are waiting for assistance, the

caller may be asked if he or she can be called back when there is sufficient time to complete the reference interview and search.

Every attempt is made to satisfy requests with materials available in this Library. However, it is recognized that a single library collection is not sufficient to successfully meet every information request. Therefore, it may be necessary to extend a search beyond Flossmoor Public Library. The Adult Services and Youth Services staff keep themselves well informed and up to date regarding holdings of other libraries in the metropolitan area and may refer patrons to more sophisticated or specialized collections which will provide the materials or information requested.

#### Evaluation and Review of Reference Service

Reference service will be evaluated on a regular basis using standard measurements established in the Illinois Library Association's Standards for Illinois Public Libraries.

The Reference Service Policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the library's staff to ensure that it is appropriate and relevant to the information needs of this community. A copy of this policy is included in the binder entitled Flossmoor Public Library Policies which is shelved in the reference collection and available to the public. It will also be posted to the Library's website.

Revised by the Board of Trustees: April 14, 2015

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