

Reference Services Information Policy

All library staff have a role in providing information to patrons, but the primary responsibility rests with the Adult Services Reference–Librarians and Children’s Department Staff. As a general rule, patrons with information questions should be referred to such library staff. A professionally trained Librarian will be available during library business hours to provide direct personal assistance to patrons seeking information in person, by telephone, by mail, by fax, or by e-mail.

The goal of reference service is to provide unbiased information services to library patrons without regard to age, race, creed, sex, or disability. Each patron’s questions will be given equal consideration and every effort will be made to answer such questions as accurately and completely as possible within a reasonable time frame. Patrons will be treated with respect and courtesy. The confidentiality of patron questions will be maintained.

The policy describes the services and resources offered by the Moline Public Library to the community. It is intended to serve as a guide for library staff members responsible for providing information services and will be utilized in the orientation of new staff.

Information Desk Guidelines

- 1) Accurate statistics will be collected as required by the Illinois State Library Standards for Libraries.
- 2) If a staff member has a problem working with a patron, this patron may be referred to a Coordinator or any other supervisor. Staff members should also follow the Library’s Disruptive Behavior Policy procedures as needed.
- 3) If the requested information cannot be located within 24 hours, the patron should be notified of the status of the request and appropriate referrals to other resources should be made.
- 4) Patrons may be referred to another library after verification is made that the material is currently available at that library. An offer to place a hold on an item in the Quad-Linc catalog may be made to any Quad-Linc library card holder. An offer to *provide* interlibrary loan *service* may be made to any Moline Public Library card holder, according to established system protocol.

- 5) To provide the most accurate and authoritative answers possible, library staff should avoid personal opinions, philosophy, or evaluations. (The exception being Reader's Advisory services, which by nature, are personal suggestions.) Rather, staff should rely upon information obtained from reputable sources. The source of an answer should always be cited.
- 6) Informal library instruction takes place naturally as an integral part of answering most reference questions. In addition to this informal process, more formal library instruction ~~is~~ may be provided by library tours and classes in the use of the library's materials, including but not limited to, the use of the Internet and the Library's Integrated Library System (ILS). No formal instruction is provided in the use of the Library's word processing software. Requests for tours should be made to a Coordinator at least one week in advance of the requested tour date.
- 7) Exhaustive literature searches will not be undertaken for patrons by Library staff. Generally, up to 5 items on a topic will be pulled and held for a patron. Telephone service, by its nature, will be more limited than in person service. Exceptions will be made to the above for requests for detailed information from any City of Moline department, including the Library, and the Library Board; exceptions may also be made by any Library Coordinator.

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