



SER 5

REFERENCE SERVICE POLICY

1. Selection of Reference Materials

Materials selected for the reference department will reflect the diversity of interests and reading levels of the Antioch Public Library District. Timely sources will be purchased in new editions as the budget permits and according to the nature of the material. Every effort will be made to support the curriculum of the local schools in collecting reference materials. Medical and legal resources will be selected only if they can be read and understood by the general public.

2. Reference Service

- a. Reference services: Staff trained to provide reference service are available during all hours the library is open. Services provided by reference staff include informational and directional requests, bibliographic instruction and reader's advisory. Reference service is provided in response to all forms of inquiry including telephone, fax. Staff is to respond to patrons requesting information in person before handling phone or mail requests. Questions per phone call, including Criss-Cross, are to be limited to three when patrons are waiting in the library. Staff is to give out only the number of the person requested, not the numbers of those people living nearby that person. Library staff is happy to assist with questions but patrons must do the research themselves. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Library Director. Reference questions which cannot be answered on-site are referred to another agency (whether it is a community agency, another library). Such referrals are mediated by library staff.
Antioch Public Library District shall provide information and assistance in locating information using the best resources within the library, within the community, or available through information networks. All requests for information shall either be answered or redirected to appropriate sources to the satisfaction of the requester. All requests shall be received with equal attention and be treated with confidentiality without regard to the age or circumstances of the requester.
- b. Authority: In answering questions, reference staff must cite a source (whether written, personal or electronic). Sources will be selected based on the quality of their information; however library staff is not responsible for the content of these works. Reference staff is not able to interpret the information given to a patron, especially in the case of legal or medical questions. These questions should be directed to a more qualified source. The Library makes every effort to help students with assignments. This may include referral to a library better equipped to answer in-depth academic questions.

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- c. Computer Assistance: Computer assistance is part of reference service. However, reference staff does not give instruction on using either hardware or software for public computers (word processing and the Internet). The library assumes that patrons know how to use these computers. Users will be assisted in the use of magazine and newspaper indices; as they would be with any other reference source.

- d. Genealogy: Library Staff may do research in local history or on other subjects for the cost of any materials photocopied or acquired.

3. PHOTOCOPIERS

Photocopiers shall be provided for the convenience of the public. Fees shall be charged to recover costs.

4. TYPEWRITERS

Typewriters shall be provided for the convenience of the public.