

Section	Services	Section#:	4
Sub-section	Lending of Materials	Sub-section #:	4.2
Topic	Reference & Information Policy	Policy #:	4.2.2

Policy

The Selwyn Public Library welcomes reference questions from all patrons regardless of their age, gender, or religion and will strive to assist in locating answers to these questions, in a timely and accurate manner, either using the library collection or through an outside source.

Staff shall guide and assist patrons in finding information for in-depth reference questions by providing informal instruction on how to search and use library resources to the best advantage.

The delivery of reference services shall be done at the highest level that staffing and library resources permit.

Procedures

Branch Librarians, in conjunction with the CEO/Chief Librarian, are responsible for developing and maintaining a basic reference collection appropriate to the needs of the community. This may be in electronic or print format.

Certain areas of the collection may be designated as “unavailable to circulate”. In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of a librarian on duty, a special short-term loan may be granted.

All staff and volunteers working the circulation desk will receive training in basic reference resources during their orientation and may attempt to answer quick reference questions. If a volunteer does not feel adequately knowledgeable about a particular question or does not have the time, he/she is encouraged to consult with other volunteer staff on duty or refer the question to a librarian.

Questions requiring more in-depth research may be referred to a Librarian immediately. Branch Librarians not present at the time of referral will respond to the patron at their earliest convenience.

Types of Service

The Library provides a variety of information services to patrons that are described below:

- **Quick Reference:** These questions can usually be answered immediately using public library resources.
- **Readers’ Advisory:** Readers’ advisory is the activity of recommending books to readers and helping readers identify their reading preferences. Volunteers are encouraged to provide reader’s advisory for recreational

reading and offer suggestions to assist patrons in their selection of material and the location of books.

- **Location of Material:** Volunteers and/or staff will check for a patron to see whether a specific desired item is in the Library's collection. If it is but is not immediately available, instruction will be given to the patron in how to request the material. If the Library does not own the item, assistance will be given to the patron in requesting it through interlibrary loan.
- **Excluded Questions:** Staff is prohibited from providing interpretative and/or consultative advice on medical, legal, or tax issues. The Selwyn Public Library accepts no responsibility or liability for any damages sustained through the use of information sources available in the Library.

Interlibrary Loan Service

The Selwyn Public Library is part of an information network with Ontario Library Service and in cooperation with other Library systems across Ontario and Canada.

If the material required by the patron is not available in the Selwyn Public Library's collection, Library staff will attempt to acquire it from other libraries or government agencies through interlibrary loan. Fees may apply for some academic libraries and borrowing is subject to the rules of the lending institution.

Volunteers are encouraged to refer questions for which no answer or material has been found in the Selwyn Public Library collection, to the interlibrary loan service, or to other libraries, agencies, or community resources (if known) that might provide the required information.

Volunteers should inform the Branch Librarian of areas in the collection that may be in demand and need additional resources.

Patron Confidentiality

A patron's confidentiality shall be respected at all times, in compliance with government legislation. Patrons are not asked to identify themselves in any way before reference service is provided.

History:		
Date of Original Board Motion:	Dec 8, 2009	09.085
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