

BETTENDORF PUBLIC LIBRARY INFORMATION CENTER REFERENCE & INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY

Purpose & Intent

The purpose of this policy is to inform the public and staff of the type and scope of information & reference services offered by the Bettendorf Public Library Information Center.

Scope of Services

All library staff has a role in assisting the public with general information questions. However, the responsibility for providing one-to-one reference information services to the public rests primarily with the staff of the Information Services division.

Definition

Reference and Information Services requests may include, but are not limited to assistance to patrons seeking to identify information and sources of information relating to a specific subject, interest, assignment or question. Each question will be given equal consideration and answered through appropriate citation as accurately and completely as possible, within a reasonable time-frame. Patron confidentiality will be maintained.

A professionally-trained Information Librarian will be available during library business hours to provide direct assistance to patrons seeking information, whether in-person, by telephone, mail, e-mail, or other media (as approved by the Adult/Information Services Manager).

Online & Print Reference Services

The Library provides free access to reference resources in-print (in-house use), online via the Internet, and through subscription-based proprietary research databases available for use by patrons and staff. Proprietary online databases are available to patrons via remote internet access as budget and licensing allows. Subscription-based databases supplement the Library's print collection by providing online access to reference resources. Note: Staff will provide assistance with Internet use within the guidelines outlined in the Library's *Computer and Electronic Access Policy*.

Information & reference requests that are not submitted in person will be answered by the Information Services staff as time allows. For requests submitted by remote access, Information Services staff may limit the number of reference requests to five per person, at one time. Complex questions may require patrons to visit the Library, to work directly with Information Services staff, at the librarian's discretion. Exceptions: Requests for detailed information may be facilitated via remote access for departments of the City of Bettendorf.

Bibliographies

Bibliographies, or reading lists, are compiled by members of the Information Services staff intended to assist patrons in identifying library materials in areas of high interest. The Library will not create bibliographies on request for individuals, but will consider suggestions from patrons and local organizations, if staff determines a bibliography will be of use to the *general* public. Decisions will be based on available staff time, potential public demand, and the extent to which library resources are available on the subject. Groups requesting bibliographies should submit requests to the Information Services staff at least two weeks in advance. Requests for bibliographies will be approved at the discretion of the Adult/Information Services Manager.

Circulation of Print Reference Materials

Print Reference materials generally circulate for a 24 hr period. High demand items such as, general encyclopedias, business directories, investment services, telephone books, and city directories do not circulate under any circumstances.

Exam Proctoring

Librarians will proctor exams according to the guidelines set forth in the *Examination Proctoring Policy*.

Notary Services

The Library provides notary services at the Information Services Desk during selected hours or appointment only. It is advised to call ahead to verify when the notary service is available. There is no charge for notary services.

FAX Services

A. INTERLIBRARY LOAN FAX GUIDELINES

The Bettendorf Public Library complies with existing Interlibrary Loan Copyright Guidelines-Compliance CONTU Guidelines (CCG) and Compliance Copyright Law (CCL)- and the National Interlibrary Loan Code.

B. PUBLIC USE FAX GUIDELINES

1. Fax equipment for local and long-distance use is available to the public at no charge.
2. Fax equipment is available for public use during the Library's regular hours of operation.
3. Operational instructions for the fax machine are available at the point of service.
4. The public is responsible for independent use of the fax machine; Library staff will not troubleshoot faxing issues.
5. Faxes can be received at the phone number posted on the fax machine. Library patrons must be at the machine to receive their incoming fax. Library staff assumes no responsibility for faxes that are received and not claimed upon arrival.

Library Orientation and Instruction Services

Informal library instruction takes place naturally as an integral part of general library service. In addition to this informal process, direct, one-to-one or group instruction in library skills, Internet & computer use may be provided in the form of library tours, drop-in instruction sessions, and classes.

- Adult Tours- Requests for library tours for adults should be made through the Adult/Information Services Manager, at least two weeks in advance of the desired date.
- Youth Tours- Requests for library tours for youth or school groups should be made through either the Youth Services Manager or the School Liaison Librarian, at least two weeks in advance of the desired date.

Reserve and Interlibrary Loan Services

If select titles requested by a patron are owned by the Bettendorf Public Library, but currently unavailable, library staff will offer to reserve the item(s). Bettendorf residents requesting recently published items, which are not available through the local consortium, will be offered a *Request for New Material* form. Items *out of print*, or otherwise unavailable, may be obtained through the interlibrary loan process. See *Circulation Policy* for details.

Confidentiality

Patron requests for Reference & Information Services are confidential, in accordance with the Bettendorf Public Library's *Confidentiality Policy*. Pertinent information related to the request may be shared among library staff, as necessary, to facilitate or complete the request.

Referrals to Other Sources

For inquiries which cannot be answered utilizing the Library's available resources, the librarian may suggest another agency, association, or individual for further consultation. Long distance telephone calls required within the research process will be made at the discretion of the librarian on duty.

Guidelines for Reference in Areas of Specialization

Medical, Legal, and Tax Advice

Library staff members are not professional practitioners in areas of specialization, such as medical, legal, and tax preparation. Therefore, some questions of a technical or specialized nature cannot be answered by library staff. No attempt can be made by the librarian to draw conclusions, state opinion, or give advice. Patrons with questions in some areas of specialization may be advised to consult a professional in that field.

Specific questions relating to tax forms and tax publications will not be answered by staff. If specialized assistance is required, patrons will be encouraged to examine the Library's tax manuals or be referred to the Iowa Department of Revenue or the Internal Revenue Service for further information.

Valuation of Books and Collectibles

Library staff will not provide or perform financial appraisals of collectibles, art, antiques, rare books, coins, stamps, etc. Patrons may be referred to published price guides or advised to seek appropriate professional services.

Translations

Librarians will provide basic translations of foreign words or phrases using dictionaries or other information sources. For more extensive translations, patrons will be advised to consult appropriate agencies and individuals providing translation services.

Mathematical Calculations

Library staff will not provide or perform mathematical calculations or equations for patrons. Information from reference resources will be provided to assist the patron in performing their own calculations.

School Assignments

A form called *Assignment Alert* is made available to local schools to allow teachers to keep library staff apprised of upcoming group assignments. When requested, staff may place material on assigned or selected topics on temporary reserve for student use. When the Library is unable to fill a student's request for material on a subject, a *Teacher Notification Form* will be provided to the student notifying their teacher of the reason the Library was not able to fulfill the request. When available, school reading lists and assignments may be posted on the Library's web site, at the discretion of the Youth Services Manager.

Non-local Requests

Questions from outside the local service area will be answered, based on level of complexity and time allowed.

Mailed request responses to residents within the City of Bettendorf are provided free of charge. Information requests from patrons requiring a mailed response to an address outside of the City of Bettendorf must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Genealogical Research

The Library maintains a basic collection of local history and general instructional genealogical guides, as well as online genealogy databases. Staff members will provide assistance within the limits of the Library's collection of materials and offer additional assistance via interlibrary loan of related materials. Patrons may be referred to other local genealogy agencies.

Time Limits on Use of Materials

City directories, business & investment directories, microfilm and other *high demand* resources may be limited to thirty minutes use per person.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
December, 1999
Revised, June 24, 2004
Revised, August, 2006
Reviewed, October, 2008
Revised, August, 2011
Revised June 2015
Revised July 2015