

WINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

REFERENCE POLICY

I. PURPOSE OF A REFERENCE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to define the goals of reference service provided by the Winfield Public Library and to set guidelines for delivery of our service to the patron.

II. GOALS OF REFERENCE SERVICE

The goals of reference service at the Winfield Public Library are:

- A. To assist library patrons by providing information, materials or reader's advisory service.
- B. To assist patrons in the use of the library's resources and in the development of research strategies.
- C. To satisfy requests using materials available in the library, if possible.
- D. To provide quick referral and effective follow-through on questions which cannot be answered with on-site resources.

III. ETHICS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IMPARTIALITY IN THE REFERENCE TRANSACTION.

Library staff providing reference shall do so in the spirit of the *Freedom to Read* and *Freedom to View* statements and under the guidelines of the 1981 *Statement on Professional Ethics of the American Library Association*. (See Appendices for full texts).

IV. SCOPE OF REFERENCE SERVICE

A. AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE

Reference service and access to the reference collection are available to all library patrons regardless of age or purpose of inquiry.

Reference service will be provided in response to all forms of inquiry: in person, by telephone, by electronic means and through the mail.

On-site reference service is provided to non-residents. Non-resident patrons are referred back to their local library, or offered additional approaches which they may pursue on their own if requested information is not available in the Winfield collection.

B. STAFFING

It is our goal to provide reference service by qualified staff during all hours the library is open. Staff will record reference questions they cannot answer and forward them to Reference Staff.

C. PRIORITIES OF SERVICE

Whenever possible, answers to questions will be provided during the patron's visit or telephone call. Questions will be responded to within one day of receipt during the library's open hours. Patrons will be advised if their requests for information require longer response time.

D. SPECIAL CATEGORIES

1. MEDICAL, FINANCIAL AND LEGAL QUESTIONS

Definitions and descriptions are given from the library's collections on law, medicine, and finance, but the reference staff will not offer opinions or interpretations, nor attempt to abstract or condense information.

2. CONTEST / TRIVIA QUESTIONS

Contest and trivia questions are treated as any other information request.

3. HOMEWORK QUESTIONS

Homework questions are treated as any other information request. With the assumption that research is part of the learning process, we will assist students in the use of basic reference tools, indexes, and sources in the general collection.

4. GENEALOGICAL QUESTIONS

The library has basic genealogical materials, but the library does not undertake original research. Patrons will be offered the use of interlibrary loan services and/or referred to the appropriate libraries or agencies.

V. EVALUATION OF REFERENCE SERVICES

Evaluation of reference services is made annually by the director and reference department head based upon the guidelines set forth in *Serving Our Public*.

PROVISION FOR REVIEW

The Board of Trustees of the Winfield Public Library shall review and/or revise this policy annually.

Signed and adopted by the Winfield Library Board of Trustees this _____ day of _____, _____.

President of the
Library Board of Trustees

Secretary

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September 2009