

Policy: Operational - Information Services

Department: Library

Effective Date: March 2014

Revision Date: October 2022

Next Year of Review: 2024

The Bruce County Public Library's information services link people with resources to fulfil their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. This policy describes information services at the library and guides library staff when answering reference questions.

1. All users seeking information will be treated equally regardless of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability, language, income, or ethnicity.
2. Library staff will respect and protect the confidential and private nature of requests for information.
3. Library staff will answer all information questions efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible and will be guided by the Ontario Library Association's Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual. All questions will be considered important and legitimate, unless it becomes clearly apparent that they are otherwise.
4. Library staff will assist the user in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources based upon the user's needs. Staff provide the following services:
 - a. Quick reference: These questions can usually be answered immediately using directories, almanacs, and online resources.
 - b. General reference: These questions usually require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer.
 - c. Readers' Advisory: Readers' Advisory is a patron-oriented library service that supports an individual's reading interests. Non-judgmental and knowledgeable library staff recommend books and other library materials to patrons based on preferences provided by the patron.
5. If an answer is not found using library resources, patrons may be referred to other libraries, agencies, or community resources. Staff will be familiar with local resources to facilitate information sharing.
6. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users in need of service. The following priorities will apply.
 - 1st priority - requests presented in person
 - 2nd priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail
 - 3rd priority - requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail

7. Library staff evaluate, select, and purchase information resources in print and digital formats to meet the needs of Bruce County residents and in accordance with the Collection Development Policy.
8. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the Annual Survey of Public Libraries, statistics on reference questions will be kept and analyzed.

Related Documents

Bruce County Public Library -Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy

Bruce County Public Library - Collection Development Policy

Ontario Library Association Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual