



## **REFERENCE SERVICES POLICY**

### **General**

The goal of reference services at the Glencoe Public Library (Library) is to provide patrons with accurate, timely and objective information in response to their inquiries, and to provide assistance in their use of library resources.

### **Scope**

Reference services are provided by qualified staff during all hours of operation. After hours and specialized reference services are available to library cardholders through the Library's subscription to reference databases and eResource platforms.

All requests are treated impartially, confidentially and professionally. The Library responds to all reference requests whether submitted in-person, via phone, fax, chat, email or mail. Reference services and access to the entire collection of print, audio, video, and digital resources are provided without regard to age or residency, except as limited by vendor licensing requirements or internal policies established by the Library.

Patrons are assisted in the location and selection of sources and in their use as staffing and time allows. Reference questions are treated equally; no value is given as to the reason for the question or the intended use of the information. No personal opinions, advice or recommendations will be offered with the exception of readers'/listeners'/viewers' advisory services. The source of the information will always be cited along with the answer.

Library staff reserve the right to decline all conversation of a personal nature.

### **Priority**

When reference inquiries occur simultaneously, priority will be given to in-person inquiries with second priority to telephone inquiries. If a telephone inquiry cannot be answered within a few minutes and patrons are waiting for help, the caller will be asked for contact information so a follow-up call can be made when time allows. If, in the judgment of the reference librarian, the answer requires reading, evaluating, and/or comparing an extensive amount of information, the caller will be asked to come into the Library to review the materials. This is particularly relevant to consumer information, medical and legal questions, and literature searches.

### **Research**

Reference staffing is not adequate to prepare extensive compilations, such as comprehensive bibliographies or lists of statistics for individual patrons. Staff may compile bibliographies of library holdings on a subject for Glencoe District 35 faculty for educational use or on other subjects of general interest to the community.

Every attempt is made to satisfy requests with the resources available in this Library, however, it may be necessary to provide referrals to more specialized libraries or reference networks.

Supplementary reference service, interlibrary loan from CCS member libraries, and reciprocal library access will be made available to all patrons when appropriate. Interlibrary loans via OCLC are available to library cardholders only. Costs incurred by requesting materials or information from these sources will be passed on to the patron, with prior notification of the possible costs.

In the instance of questions for a class assignment where the intent is for the student to conduct research, interpret data and draw conclusions, the reference staff provides basic guidance in using library resources and research strategies. Interpretations of the assignment and the specific style to be used for the bibliography must be clarified between the student and the teacher.

### **Technology Instruction**

Library staff provides patrons with basic orientation to library hardware, digital resources available through the Library, and devices through which library content platforms can be accessed. Staff is available to assist users with basic hardware problems and answer simple questions regarding library hardware and digital resources. Depending on staffing, reference librarians may be available to work individually with patrons and library-supplied technology. However, in general, library staff cannot provide individual in-depth computer or device training, technical assistance, or solve compatibility problems with patron-owned equipment. When further information is needed staff will refer patrons to other resources.

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Reviewed	
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