



SUBJECT: INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY

Policy No: 2021-18

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PURPOSE

To provide guidelines to assist in the provision of *Information Services* to the customers of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library. *Information Services* are those services provided by the Library which link customers to resources in order to fulfill informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs.

POLICY

General

All information requests will be answered efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible in a professional manner free from judgment and personal biases. Staff will provide the highest quality of service possible consistent with available time and resources, and are expected to exercise their own judgment in assisting customers with their information needs.

Library Staff will be proactive in the provision of information services. The relationships Staff establish with customers are the foundation for outstanding service, and enable Staff to anticipate the needs of individuals and make tailored recommendations for reading materials and information resources.

Application

All those using the facilities and resources of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

Guidelines

Types of Service

Library Staff will facilitate access to different types of information and services using various resources, tools, and formats, in consultation with the requesting customer to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support:

- *Instruction* – training in use of the Library catalogue, online Library accounts, print and digital resources, various technology related skills, hacker/maker/digital media processes, etc.;
- *Library Orientation* – to services and resources available at the Library;
- *Quick Reference* - questions that can be answered immediately using readily available resources;
- *General Reference* - information requests that may require multiple resources to answer, and can be answered during a single interaction;
- *Complex Reference* - information requests which require in-depth research using numerous resources, and which may require multiple visits to the Library and/or repeated interactions;
- *Readers' Advisory* - the process of recommending reading materials tailored to the individual's interests, reading level, and format needs or preferences. This is frequently done proactively by Staff when they have an established relationship with a customer and already have an understanding of the person's needs;
- *Local History* – Staff will assist customers in using the Local History collection, including the historical databases, and the equipment required in accessing items in that collection.

Limitations on Service

Library Staff do not:

- Interpret information outside of the scope of this policy, including but not limited to medical, legal, financial, and statistical information;
- Conduct genealogical research on a customer's behalf, but will refer customers to resources and provide instruction in their use;
- Complete applications, registrations, or transactions on a customer's behalf, but will assist in accessing forms and websites, and provide instruction in the use of computers and interfaces necessary to complete a form.

Forms of Communication

Information requests may be made in person, by telephone, electronically, or by mail.

- *In-Person*;
- *Telephone* - Customers requiring extensive reference assistance may be asked to visit the Library in order to participate in the research process;
- *Electronic*–Staff will respond to information requests received through electronic communications channels (e.g., email) within 24 operating hours. When an answer cannot be provided within this timeframe, Staff will inform the customer that their request is being addressed and provide an estimated time for them to receive an answer. Customers requiring extensive reference assistance may be asked to visit the Library in order to participate in the research process.

Priorities of Service

The extent of assistance provided to each customer is dependent upon the number of customers requiring assistance at any given time. When necessary, requests will be prioritized in the following order:

1. In Person
2. Telephone
3. Electronic

Assistance may require referral to other community partners, service agencies, other libraries or partnering library organizations.

Customer Confidentiality

Library customers have the right to confidentiality regarding information requests. Any personal information collected as part of the reference process will be handled in accordance with the Innisfil Public Library Board's current Confidentiality Policy, which is subject to all applicable legislation including the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Accessibility

Staff will be trained to respond to customer service requests according to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its applicable service standards and regulations.

Statistics and Evaluation

A record of the type and quantity of reference transactions will be kept for evaluation purposes.

Customer Feedback

Customers who have comments or suggestions regarding services and collections covered by this policy will be promptly assisted at the time and, if further communication is required or desired, will be directed as to how to proceed.

Related Policies

Local History Policy

Resource Sharing Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Accessibility - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11(AODA 2005) Policy

Rules of Conduct

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, October 18, 2021

Motion Number: 2021.79

Supersedes Policy #2017-15, approved October 16, 2017, Motion #2017.74 &

Policy #2013-19, approved December 9, 2013, Motion #2013.108; &

Policy #2010-08, approved March 8, 2010, Motion # 2010.30; &

Policy #2006-16, approved May 8, 2006, Motion #2006.48; &

Policy #2005-10, approved December 12, 2005, Motion #2005.59.