

# **Lyons Public Library**

## **Reference Service Policy**

Reviewed Triennially

The goals of reference service at the Lyons Public Library are to:

1. To acquire materials that meet the educational and recreational needs of the Lyons community.
2. To provide qualified staff to assist patrons in an efficient and courteous manner.
3. To provide accurate information. Staff will avoid personal recommendations, evaluations and interpretations except for readers' advisory work or questions related to the field of library science.
4. To facilitate access to the Library's resources and outside collections and facilities.

### Eligibility for Reference Service

Staff will provide reference service to all patrons requesting information; responses are provided to inquiries made in person, by telephone, mail or electronically.

All patrons have equal access to reference services. Staff will provide service on a first come, first served basis. When designated adult and/or youth reference staff are unavailable, other staff will handle reference inquiries in the same matter as all other service requests.

### Scope of Reference Service

Staff will assist patrons with all types of questions without regard to the purpose of the inquiry or the use of the information. Reference services include, but are not limited to, professional knowledge and experience, in-house text resources, interlibrary loan, photocopy service, instructional services, compilation of reference files, indexes, bibliographies, databases and online database searching.

### Confidentiality of Reference Service

Staff will handle all questions in confidence and without regard to age, sex, ethnicity, or purpose of inquiry. Requests for information and resulting patron records are confidential and are made available to others only when specifically required by court order. Staff will refrain from asking personal questions and comments not related to the reference interview.

### Special Circumstances

**School Questions:** It is the responsibility of the Library to introduce reference tools to students and teach them to search independently. The level of assistance provided depends on the

difficulty of the search and the age and sophistication of the student. For simple inquiries, staff may provide the answer by telephone. For more complex inquiries, staff will encourage the patron to visit the Library for assistance; however, the student must use the materials to meet the requirements of the assignment. Staff will not write the paper or organize the information into the configuration required to fulfill the assignment. The role of the staff is to lead the student to the appropriate body of knowledge and instruct the student on extraction of appropriate information.

**Tax Questions:** Although the Library provides income tax forms for patrons, staff is prohibited from answering inquiries regarding taxes and providing tax advice.

**Genealogy Questions & Materials:** Genealogy questions, which can be answered through use of the reference and/or circulating collections will be answered for residents and non-residents alike.

**Local History Questions & Material:** Local History questions, which can be answered through use of the reference and/or circulating collections will be answered for residents and non-residents alike.

Exceptions to these special circumstance rules may be made at the discretion of the Library Director.

*Policy approved on June 10, 2014*