

Hinsdale Public Library

Information Services Policy

Information Services

“Information services” refers to the provision of answers, information, instruction, direction, and suggestions (advisory services) to patrons of all ages, either upon request or in anticipation of need, using all available resources available to Hinsdale Public Library (HPL).

Goals of Reference Service

- To provide thorough, efficient, timely and accurate information service by applying the “reference interview” process
- To provide service most convenient to the user in-person (consultations, roving, or walk-ups) or remotely (chat, phone, email)
- To treat all requests for reference service with respect, impartiality, and confidentiality
- To offer well-trained, approachable, knowledgeable staff to assist patrons
- To select, acquire, and organize information and resources to meet the needs of the community
- To inform patrons about services and resources available from HPL, including the development of research guides, reading lists, and instructions
- To provide instruction in the use of HPL resources
- To empower patrons to navigate future information needs
- To explain how information systems are organized in order to find needed resources
- To provide patrons with thoughtful referrals to other agencies and libraries as necessary
- To provide easy access to accurate and up-to-date community information, including community newspapers
- To provide services and materials regardless of the age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, economic class, or range of abilities of the patron
- To provide technology training on hardware and software available through HPL and technologies used to access library resources
- To provide readers', listeners' and viewers' advisory services in support of patrons' informational and recreational needs

Availability of Service

HPL staff provide information services in response to community and individual need. Any staff member may provide this service and may also refer patrons to colleagues with subject- or departmental expertise. Staffed information services are available at all times HPL is open. In general, online resources are available 24 hours per day.

- Staff endeavor to respond to all questions, requests and recommendations during the initial interaction or within 24 hours of receipt.
- Staff will notify patrons if information services cannot be completed within 24 hours and will provide updates.

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- Staff may recommend that patrons schedule an appointment for requests that require in-depth one-on-one instruction.
- Staff may refer patrons whose questions exceed the HPL's scope and resources to an appropriate resource or organization.
- Certain questions may also require the patron's participation in the information search with staff providing guidance and advice on the search strategy and process. Staff may need to limit the amount of time and level of response provided to a patron.

Standards and Ethics

In order to maintain the trust of the patron and respect of the profession, in their provision of information services, HPL staff act in accordance with federal and state laws, the guidelines and standards of conduct as set forth by the American Library Association and HPL's [Confidentiality of Patron Library Records Policy](#). Accordingly, all staff will:

- 1) Keep information services interactions confidential and respect each patron's right to privacy with regard to information requested or materials sought or received, borrowed or loaned, as well as any resources consulted.
 - a) Provide answers to information requests only to the person with the original request, unless otherwise permitted by the patron.
 - b) Avoid retaining unnecessary or duplicate records.
- 2) Prevent personal beliefs from interfering with professional duties and make no judgments as to the legitimacy or value of any given request.

Special Circumstances

HPL librarians do not practice medicine, law, or act as investment or tax advisors. Patrons needing specific advice in these areas should consult a licensed practitioner. HPL staff can guide the patron to materials and information available on these topics. Other topics may require referrals to professionals as well.

Access to certain services or resources may be prioritized for HPL cardholders. HPL adheres to license agreements which require cardholder authentication for remote access to certain online resources.

Related Library Policies

[Confidentiality of Patron Library Records Policy](#)

See Also

[American Library Association's Code of Ethics](#)

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Policy Review and Revision

This document will be reviewed by the Board at least every two years.

Hinsdale Public Library Board of Trustees

Approved and Adopted by Library Board on December 12, 2000.

Revised 11/5/02, 10/28/08, 5/22/12, 06/23/15, 08/22/17, 11/19/19, 8/23/22,10/22/24.