



Reference Service Policy

Policy No. 4A

1. Mission

To provide reference to any patron of any age at any time the library is open.

2. Goals of Service

1. To provide a current collection of informational and recreational material that meets the needs and interests of the community.
2. To provide qualified staff to assist patrons.
3. To provide accurate information efficiently and courteously to adults and children.

3. General Guidelines

1. Reference service is provided by qualified staff all hours the library is open.
2. Reference service is provided for all forms of requests: in-person, by telephone, through the mail, and by electronic means.
3. All requests for public information are accepted and treated with equal concern without regard to the purpose or use of the material. In order to give the most accurate information, staff members cite source of information as well as the answer.
4. Reference service is provided to any patron requesting it; however, access to the services of the Suburban Library System (interlibrary loan, SAVS materials, etc.) is provided only to Hodgkins Public Library cardholders.
5. If appropriate material is not found in the library, external sources are consulted or a referral is made.

4. Special Guidelines

Medical and Legal Requests

The information provided is factual and the sources of this information cited. The staff member providing the information informs the patron that this information is not intended as a professional opinion. Staff opinions or interpretations are not to be offered.

Income Tax Forms

Many income tax forms are available for photocopying at the library. Patrons are expected to make their own photocopies at the current rate charged by the library. The library staff does not answer tax questions or prepare tax forms; however appropriate reference materials available in the library are offered to patrons.



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Library Services

Homework

Homework is intended as a learning experience for the student. Every effort is made to answer the student's questions and provide the sources for information and instruction needed to use these sources. The student is expected to use that material to meet the requirements of the assignment. The staff cannot "do" the assignment or write the paper for the student. Quick answer questions are answered over the telephone. More extensive homework requests are answered only in person.

6. Fees

Reference requests are answered without charge unless photocopies are made or external sources are used. Fees may be charged for on-line database searching or other special services.

7. Ethics

Patrons' requests are kept confidential. All questions are treated with equal concern without regard to age, sex, or nationality. The Hodgkins Public Library District adheres to reference standards established by the Suburban Library System and to the American Library Association's Statement on Professional Ethics. A copy of this policy is available to the public.

8. Evaluation of this Policy

An annual evaluation is made by the Head Librarian to determine how effectively the library is fulfilling its reference service goals. The reference service policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the staff and Board of Trustees. Final approval of any revisions in the policy rests with the Board.

Approved: 01/16/1989

Reviewed: 01/21/1994

Reviewed: 04/21/1997