



BRACEBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CATEGORY: Information Services #1

POLICY REPLACING: Reference
Policy, July 2002

SUBJECT: BPL Information Services

BOARD APPROVAL DATE: September 8, 2015

PAGE: 1 OF 3

RATIONALE:

All Information Services staff are professionally trained librarians who will link users with appropriate resources to fulfill their informational, educational, cultural, technical and recreational needs in keeping with the Purpose and Principles of the Library. This policy describes information services at the Library and guides Library staff when providing this service.

DEFINITIONS:

Information Services Staff:

Professionally trained librarians with a Master of Library (& Information) Science Degree or Library & Information Technician Diploma with an undergraduate degree and closely related experience.

POLICY STATEMENT:

All users seeking information will be treated equally regardless of gender, age, ability, ethnicity or place of residence.

Staff will follow the Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom.

Type of Service Offered:

1. Quick Reference
These questions can usually be answered immediately using resources that are easily accessed within the Library or online.
2. General Reference
General reference usually requires a more extensive search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at an answer. Library staff will attempt to answer questions as fully as possible while balancing the needs of all patrons using the library. The inquiring library patron may have to be contacted at a later time with an answer. An approximate time-frame for answering the question should be given to the patron in this instance. When unable to answer a question, Information Services staff may refer patrons to other agencies and/or related websites.
3. Readers' Advisory
Readers' Advisory is the activity of suggesting books and other library material to patrons and helping them to identify their reading, listening, and viewing preferences. Staff will also introduce patrons to Readers' Advisory materials and helpful websites.
4. Locating Material
The Information Services staff will check, for a patron, to see whether a specific desired item is in the library's collection. If it is, but is not immediately available, instruction will be given to the patron in placing a hold or a hold will be placed by staff if requested. If the Library does not own the item, assistance will be given to the patron through Inter-Library Loan. If the patron wishes, staff will provide bibliographic data for purchase from a retailer. Staff may assist the patron to make a purchase suggestion to the Library per Collection Development Policy #1.



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PAGE: 2 OF 3

5. Library Orientation
Information Services staff will provide orientation services to individuals or groups. Group orientation is subject to availability of staff and must be booked in advance. Orientation includes introducing customers to library collections, resources and services.
6. Technical Assistance
Information Services staff may give instruction in the use of library equipment and software. This includes accessing ebooks, searching online databases, setting up and using email accounts, using the coin-operated printer and the microfilm reader/printer. In addition, staff assist patrons with their personal devices, equipment and software. Assistance provided will depend on the resources, staff expertise and staff time available at the time of the request.
7. Genealogical/Local History Research
Information Services staff will assist library users with accessing the Muskoka Collection, the genealogical reference collection, the microfilm reader/printer and Ancestry Library Edition online database. Group instruction in basic genealogy may be offered by Information Services staff.

Priority of Service:

Requests received by telephone, email, fax or in writing will receive the same level of service as requests made in person. However, if the library is busy and priorities must be determined, the staff member on duty will give priority as follows:

1. In person
2. Telephone
3. Email, mail, and Beaver Creek Institution - Medium Library requests

Confidentiality:

The library welcomes questions from patrons and will attempt to answer any question without passing judgment on the nature of the question. As with each interaction between staff and the public, the patron's right to privacy will be safeguarded as much as possible, taking into account the public venue in which information requests take place.

Library staff are prepared to provide information from medical or legal sources but cannot offer any interpretation of the information provided.

Development of the Information Services:

An Information Services Committee, consisting of the Library CEO/Chief Librarian, Information Services Librarians and the Children's Librarian, will meet, at a minimum, monthly to assess the collection and service issues of the department, as well as to initiate new programs and services, and to suggest customer service improvements.

Questions which library staff have been unable to answer will be recorded and may be used as an aid in identifying needs that may assist in material selection or professional development.



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PAGE: 3 OF 3

Access to Reference Material:

Some material will be designated for use in the library only and does not circulate. In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Information Services Librarian on duty, a special one or two day loan may be granted.

Statistics:

Information Services staff will collect and report statistics relevant to the daily operation of that department as well as online database usage. Statistics will be forwarded to the Library CEO/Chief Librarian as requested or scheduled.

Beaver Creek Institution – Medium Library:

Information Services staff will also provide services to the Beaver Creek Institution - Medium Library as per Information Services Policy #2.

Website and Social Media:

Information Services staff are responsible for maintaining the Library's website and social media sites according to Public Relations Policy #1 – Social Media.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION:

Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom
Information Services #2 - Beaver Creek Institution - Medium Library
Public Relations Policy #1 – Social Media

PREVIOUS REVISIONS:

Reference Policy July 2002

AMENDED FROM: Barrie Public Library, Brantford Public Library, Huntsville Public Library