

ALPHA PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT POLICIES

Reference Policy

Introduction

Staff trained to provide reference service is available during all hours the library is open. The Alpha Park Public Library staff will respond to all reference and information questions efficiently, accurately, completely, and in a timely manner. If it is not possible to find an answer using Alpha Park Public Library's resources, other libraries, agencies, and community resources will be utilized. Reference includes providing help with the catalog and library computers, reader's advisory service, database and online assistance, interlibrary loan assistance, and individual and group instruction.

Access

The library will provide reference service to all patrons on an equal, nondiscriminatory, and nonjudgmental basis without regard to the race, national origin, age, gender, economic status, or personal view of the patron making the inquiry. Patrons do not need to be registered Alpha Park Public Library cardholders to use library facilities, reference materials, or services. Service is provided on-site, by telephone, e-mail, mail, fax, or other forms of technology as they emerge. Staff will stay informed about developing technologies and the application of new technologies to reference services.

Confidentiality

The needs of library patrons are treated with respect. Names of patrons and the transactions which occur between patrons and the reference staff are confidential and not discussed outside a professional context. The library adopts and adheres to the ALA Statement of Professional Ethics.

Services

Insofar as it is possible, reference service shall not only meet but also anticipate user needs. The Library shall provide instruction in the effective use of its resources. Such instruction can include individual explanation of information resources, the creation of guides and instruction sheets, formal assistance through tours and group presentations, video presentations, or other forms of technology as they emerge.

Limits of Services

In the instance of legal, medical, investment, or tax reference questions, the staff may only guide the patron to the material available on the topic of interest. The staff may not evaluate or interpret the information provided nor, under ordinary circumstances, define the meaning of terms. The staff may not offer investment advice, select income tax forms, or serve as a surrogate for a professional in any of the fields listed above. If all materials within the library are beyond the understanding of the patron, the patron will be advised to consult with a professional from the above listed fields for additional information or advice.

Evaluation

The Library shall regularly (*i.e.*, at least twice a year, at times established by administration and staff, and conforming to State Library reporting requirements) evaluate its service to assure that the service furthers the institution's goals, and that the goals reflect the needs and interests of the communities served. Results of evaluation shall be used to determine the optimum allocation of resources to provide quality service.

Adopted by the Alpha Park Public Library District Board of Trustees, August 17, 2009.

Revised and adopted by the Alpha Park Public Library District Board of Trustees, August 20, 2012.

Revised and adopted by the Alpha Park Public Library District Board of Trustees, May 18, 2015.