



SUBJECT: INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY

Policy No: 2017-15

Date: October 16, 2017

Review Date: October 2021

Number of Pages: 3

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines to assist in the provision of *Information Services* to the customers of the Innisfil Public Library. *Information Services* are those services provided by the Library which link customers to resources in order to fulfill informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

POLICY

General

All information requests will be answered efficiently, accurately and as completely as possible. All inquiries will be considered important and legitimate, unless it becomes apparent that they are otherwise. Staff Members are encouraged to provide the highest quality of service possible consistent with available time and resources, and are expected to exercise their own judgment in assisting customers with their information needs.

Application

All those using the facilities and resources of the Innisfil Public Library.

Definitions

General Reference – *Questions that require a lengthier search process and involve the use of multiple resources to arrive at an appropriate outcome. Staff will assist customers in locating additional information, and may provide informal instruction on the use of library resources and search tools.*

Interlibrary Loan Service - *Innisfil Public Library is part of an information network within the community, within the Southern Ontario Library System and in cooperation with other library systems throughout Ontario and Canada. This service will be offered to customers when the information request cannot be fulfilled by the resources of the Innisfil Public Library system. Staff can access the Interlibrary Loan system via the INFO service provided by SOLS in order to place or track requests on behalf of customers. Staff can also train customers on how to place their own ILLO requests.*

In return, Innisfil Public Library will share its resources with other library systems, while always giving priority in the use of its resources to its own customers.

Proactive Customer Service – Staff Members seek to anticipate the customer service needs of all entering the facilities before a request is made. This is partly accomplished through the practice of 'roving' to where the customers are within the applicable branch.

Quick Reference – Questions that can be answered immediately using resources readily available in the library.

Readers Advisory – The activity of recommending books and other library material to customers and helping them to identify their reading, listening and viewing preferences.

Guidelines

Types of Service

Library Staff will facilitate access to different types of information and services using various resources, tools and formats, after consultation with the requesting customer to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support:

- *Library Instruction* – training in use of the Library catalogue, database searching, ILLO, various computer skills, hacker/maker/digital media processes, etc.;
- *Library Orientation* – to services and resources available at the Library;
- *Location of Material* – If Staff is unable to locate a specific item within the Innisfil Public Library system, then *Interlibrary Loan Service* may be offered;
- *Readers' Advisory*;
- *Local History* – Staff will assist customers in using the Local History collection, including the historical databases, and the equipment required in accessing items in that collection.

Requests may be made in person, by telephone, electronically via *Ask-A-Librarian* or email, by fax, or by correspondence.

- *Telephone Service* – Requests made by telephone will receive the same service response as other information requests. If Staff is unable to respond to a telephone request immediately, arrangements will be made to return the call within a time frame established with the customer. Staff will respond to voice mail messages as quickly as possible upon receipt of the message. Customers requiring extensive reference assistance may be asked to visit the Library in order to participate in the research process.
- *Correspondence Service* – As with other requests, those received by mail or through electronic formats, will be dealt with in a timely and thorough manner. Customers requiring extensive reference assistance may be asked to visit the Library in order to participate in the research process.

Priorities of Service

The extent of assistance provided to each customer is dependent upon the number of customers requiring assistance at any given time. When necessary, requests will be prioritized in the following order:

1. In Person;
2. Telephone;
3. Correspondence (Mail & Electronic Formats);
4. ILLO.

Assistance may require referral to other community partners, service agencies, other libraries or partnering library organizations.

Personnel

Trained Library Staff will be available during all normal operating hours. All Staff Members are encouraged to assist customers by using the “Proactive Customer Service” roving techniques.

Customer Confidentiality

Library customers have the right to confidentiality regarding information requests. Any personal information collected as part of the reference process will be handled in accordance with the Innisfil Public Library Board’s current Confidentiality Policy, which is subject to all applicable legislation including the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Customer Conduct

The Library is a public building and a service paid for by the residents of Innisfil. Abuse of customers, Staff or library property is not tolerated. Disruptive or abusive customers will be asked to desist from such behavior or leave the premises, as per the Library Rules of Conduct.

AODA

Staff will be trained to respond to customer service requests according to AODA legislation and its applicable service standards and regulations.

Statistics and Evaluation

A record of the type and quantity of reference transactions will be kept for evaluation purposes.

Customer Feedback

Customers who have comments or suggestions regarding services and collections covered by this policy will be promptly assisted at the time and, if further communication is required or desired, will be directed as to how to proceed.

Related Policies

Local History Policy

Resource Sharing Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Accessibility - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11(AODA 2005) Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, October 16, 2017

Motion Number: 2017.74

Supersedes Policy #2013-19, approved December 9, 2013, Motion #2013.108; & Policy #2010-08, approved March 8, 2010, Motion # 2010.30; & Policy #2006-16, approved May 8, 2006, Motion #2006.48; & Policy #2005-10, approved December 12, 2005, Motion #2005.59.