

## HELEN PLUM LIBRARY

### **U-6 Reference Services**

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees on July 19, 2022.

#### **Purpose**

The Helen Plum Library is committed to providing the highest quality reference service for the entire community. The purpose of the Policy is to assure the quality and consistency of reference service by providing guidelines.

#### **Guidelines**

Reference Service is provided to all patrons on an equal, nondiscriminatory, and nonjudgmental basis regardless of residency, age, race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, background, socioeconomic status, religion, appearance, ability, or personal view of the patron making the inquiry. Staff who meet training and/or experience requirements work at the Adult Services and Youth Services reference desks during all hours that the Library is open. Reference staff will conduct reference interviews to determine the needs of the Library user. All requests are handled with impartiality and confidentiality with no distinction made about the purpose of the inquiry.

Staff respond to all queries regardless of the communication method. In-person requests take priority over telephone, email, and other electronic sources. The reference staff will determine when all reasonable sources have been exhausted and if the number of queries is excessive. There is no set time limit for answering queries, and staff will respond to requests in a timely manner. Patrons with in-depth questions are encouraged to schedule an appointment.

Staff assist patrons until questions are answered to the best of their ability, or until patrons are referred to another agency for completion. Reference staff search all available resources which includes print, online, and other authoritative materials. Every attempt is made to provide accurate information.

Our goal is to empower patrons to become active learners. Patrons have the right to be informed of the sources used to answer inquiries. Patrons are responsible for evaluating and synthesizing information. The Library is not liable for how patrons choose to use the information acquired.

Staff help patrons with basic computer operations and applications. Patrons who need more in-depth help will be referred to appropriate training resources and/or encouraged to schedule an appointment.

Staff assist patrons with Reader's Advisory based questions and make appropriate suggestions and recommendations.

Limitations may be placed on specific inquiries that may include but are not limited to the following: Advice in the areas of medicine, law, and taxes; interpretations of legal information appraisals; tutorial services; or the entering of personal information.

Staff are not required to give personal opinions on any topic. To protect the privacy of library staff, work schedules are not released.

The Helen Plum Library adheres to the *ALA Code of Ethics*.