
Smiths Falls Public Library



Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP-20**

Policy Title: **Information Services**

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27, 2023

The Smiths Falls Public Library's information services connect people with resources to fulfil their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. Information services will be available during all open hours. This policy describes information services at the library and guides library staff when answering reference questions.

1. All users seeking information will be treated equitably and with respect to meet their individual needs, regardless of sex, age, ability, and ethnicity.
2. The staff will respect and protect the confidential and private nature of requests for information.
3. The staff will answer all reference questions efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible and will be guided by the board's policy on ***Intellectual Freedom FN-04***. All questions will be considered important and legitimate, unless it becomes unequivocally clear that requests are not being made in good faith.
4. The staff will assist the user in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources based upon the user's needs. The staff provide the following services:
 - a) **Quick reference:** These questions can usually be answered immediately using library and online resources.
 - b) **General reference:** These questions usually require a more in-depth process to arrive at a complete answer and may as a result require a mutually agreed upon timeframe to complete.
5. If it is not possible to find an answer using library or online resources, staff will refer users to the inter-library loan service, other libraries, agencies, and community resources.

6. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users needing to be served. The following priorities will apply:
 - 1st priority - requests presented in person.
 - 2nd priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail.
 - 3rd priority - requests sent in by mail/e-mail.
 - 4th priority - requests received via the interlibrary loan network.
7. Print and electronic reference collections are maintained by library staff with a focus on the currency and relevancy of the material, and in accordance with Smiths Falls Public Library's *Materials Selection (OP-12)* policy.
8. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, statistics on reference questions will be kept and analyzed.