

Rideau Lakes Public Library

Reference Service Policy

Responsibility for reference service

All public service staff of the Rideau Lakes Public Library will have received training in offering subject assistance to Library patrons. All staff may endeavour to answer questions and requests for information from any library patron.

Type of service offered

Library staff will endeavour to answer questions as fully as possible keeping in mind the needs of all patrons using the Library. If a question proves to be very time-consuming (requiring more than 15 minutes to answer), the Library patron may have to be called back later with the answer. A possible time frame for answering the question should be provided to the patron.

The Rideau Lakes Public Library welcomes all questions from all patrons and, except for the circumstances noted below, will endeavour to answer any question, and will do so without passing judgement on the nature of the question.

Excluded questions

School-related questions will be answered in the same manner as all reference questions.

Only simple answers can be provided for prize contest questions.

In the course of reference duty, a staff member may be asked to provide information from medical, legal, census or tax sources. Library staff will do so readily, but must not offer any interpretation of the information provided.

Telephone and fax requests

Requests received by telephone, fax, email or in writing are treated as all other requests, but if the Library is busy, priority will be given to the needs of patrons who have come into the Library. Telephone questions will then be answered when time permits. The patron that needs to be called back on the principle of first come, first served, will be given a realistic expectation of how long it might take to address the question.

Development of the reference collection

The CEO is responsible for developing and maintaining the reference collection appropriate to the needs of the community and may delegate tasks to other staff members, as appropriate.

Unanswered questions

Questions for which no answer or material has been found in the Library collection will be referred to the appropriate agency by the Library staff (if such an agency is known) or will become an interlibrary loan request.

The name of the organization, as well as information allowing patrons to directly contact the agency, will be supplied if possible.

Questions which the Library staff was unable to answer will be noted. The CEO will peruse these questions from time to time, to assist in selecting materials for the Library.