



DENTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

REFERENCE OPERATING POLICY

Approved by the Library Board, October 4, 2001
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Philosophy of Reference Service

Reference and information service is a part of the Denton Public Library System's commitment to meeting the information needs, both educational and recreational, of its library users. Library staff endeavors to provide accurate information and materials in response to user requests, and to offer this service in an efficient, courteous, impartial and timely manner.

Definition of Reference

Reference (as defined by the American Library Association/Reference and User Services Association) is providing assistance by using expertise in response to an information need. Reference work themes include providing informational expertise, recommending and interpreting resources, promoting services, and managing service point. Denton Public Library also includes provision of direct assistance with common software applications or Internet navigation as reference work. Reference is in response to a current information need and initiated by an individual or group of people working together. Reference work aims to ensure that library users can find the resources they need when they want them. Reference is not formal instruction. Workshops or programming designed by library staff are not considered reference. Reference transactions do not include exchanges that provide assistance with locations, schedules, basic use of library equipment, supplies, or policy statements.

Definition of Directional Transactions

Directional transactions help customers locate places in the library or take advantage of the library's services. Questions about administrative directives, scheduling, programming and equipment are directional and are not considered reference transactions. Directional transactions can be performed in person, by telephone, by mail, by fax or through e-mail.

Limitations

1. Staff does not do homework for students.
2. Staff will not assist illegal activity.
3. Staff does not give legal, medical, tax or consumer advice.
4. Staff responds to requests for specific genealogy information, using indexed sources, but does not do in-depth genealogy research.

5. Large groups or classes needing reference assistance need to make arrangements with a reference staff member prior to the visit.
6. Staff are able to provide technology assistance and support for library provided technology and equipment only.

Some reference assistance requiring time intensive one-on-one help may be requested as a Book a Librarian appointment.