

REFERENCE AND INTERLIBRARY LOAN POLICY

REFERENCE SERVICES

The purpose of Reference Services at the St. Charles Public Library (Library) is to meet the information needs of patrons accurately and efficiently. The Library serves a diverse public with unique individual needs and levels of ability to conduct searches independently. This Policy exists to fully inform the Library staff and the public of services available to them, and to clarify the nature and extent of the services provided.

All requests are treated confidentially, courteously, and impartially. Names of users and the transactions which occur between users and the staff are confidential and not discussed outside a professional context.

Reference staff are required to pursue continuing education opportunities which enable them to better meet the needs of the Library's patrons in addition to thorough department level training.

Assistance is given to patrons in the identification, location, and use of desired information through local and Library resources, online searches, outside sources, and referrals. Information requests are taken in person, by telephone, and online, during all hours the Library is open to the public. All requests for information should receive an answer or status report within one working day. Questions which cannot be answered with onsite resources are referred to another agency when appropriate.

Staff cannot endorse specific businesses or products, nor can they offer business, financial, legal, tax or medical advice. Staff are prohibited from entering personal or identifying information on behalf of patrons into online portals, websites, etc. This includes usernames, passwords, pin numbers, and other personal information.

When necessary, staff may need to limit the time spent with an individual patron. Patrons with reference questions requiring significant periods of research or instruction time will be encouraged to utilize the book-a-librarian service.

READER SERVICES

The Library provides services to promote recreational enjoyment of books and authors of all genres and formats by providing patrons with personalized consultation, suggestions, and assistance in locating and choosing materials. Adult and Youth desk staff also promote reading and encourage use of Library resources.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN SERVICES

It is the policy of the Library to make every effort to meet the information and reading needs of its community. Given the wide range of individual user requests, local needs cannot be met by the St. Charles Public Library collection alone. Therefore, the Library engages in resource sharing with other libraries when the need arises. Transactions in which library materials are made available from one library to another that reside outside our shared consortium are called interlibrary loans (ILL). The Library is an ILLINET Library and adheres to the ILLINET Interlibrary Loan Code, a copy of which is available online. Interlibrary loan services are extended to SCPL cardholders in good standing.

Lending Policy

The Library undertakes to meet ILL requests in a timely fashion, within the limits of staffing and scheduling. The Library reserves the right to limit lending of certain types of materials based on their value, acquisition date, levels of scarcity, or for other reasons.

Borrowing Policy

The Library's collection is shaped by the guidelines in the Collection Management Policy. When a Library patron requests material(s) that the Library does not own or is not able to provide immediately from its collection or within the Consortium, Interlibrary Loan service is offered. The Library will attempt to borrow any items that lenders agree to loan in accordance with reciprocal agreements. ILL service is not intended to supply textbooks or materials required for coursework or other long-term exclusive use. Lending libraries determine the cost of lost or damaged items. The Library may refuse to borrow items that are rare or valuable, and whose replacement value would exceed a reasonable amount.

Loan periods are determined by the lending library. ILL items are eligible for one renewal as allowed by the lending library. For security, items must be returned directly to the Library building. In instances when availability is limited, items may be requested again three months after the initial loan period. We reserve the right to limit requests due to staffing and workload.

Loan periods must be observed and failure to return items when due may result in suspension of ILL borrowing privileges, as well as fees incurred with the lending library.

Photocopies

The Library will obtain photocopies needed by individual patrons. The Library adheres to the copyright laws which limit the number of copies allowed annually from recent years' issues of an individual title. For this reason, patrons may be referred to a neighboring library where the title is owned.

Fees

Fees charged by lending libraries for microform borrowing, photocopying, and/or other fees are paid by the Library. The Library, in turn, is allowed to charge other libraries for ILL services when lending our materials. There may be certain instances where fees are passed onto patrons, with their prior approval.

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