

OP 14 LIBRARY SERVICES

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1.0 Overview

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library's information services link people with resources to fulfill their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs. This policy provides guidelines with respect to reference services, use regulations, rules of conduct and proctoring.

2.0 Reference Services

All patrons seeking information will be treated equally.

The staff will respect and protect the private nature of requests for information in compliance with the Board's policy on Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy.

Reference and Information Services shall be provided by trained library staff during hours operation, and may be requested at any service desk, over the phone, or through email.

Where staff are uncomfortable or unable to assist the customer, they will seek another staff member to assist. If the question still cannot be answered, the request shall be forwarded to the Manager.

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. All questions will be considered important and legitimate, unless it becomes clearly apparent that they are otherwise.

The Library provides additional services for people with disabilities and is guided by the Board's policy on Accessible Customer Service.

The staff will assist patrons in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources based upon the patron's needs. The staff provide the following services:

- Quick reference: these questions can usually be answered immediately using directories, almanacs and online resources; and
- General reference: these questions usually require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer.

If it is not possible to find an answer using the library's own resources, then staff will refer patrons to the inter-library loan service, other libraries, agencies and community resources.

The extent of individual service to each patron will depend on the number of patrons needing to be served. The following priorities will apply:

- first priority - requests presented in person;
- second priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail;
- third priority - requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail; and
- fourth priority - requests received via the interlibrary loan network.

To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the Annual Survey of Public Libraries, the CEO will maintain and analyze statistics on reference questions.

2.0 Use Regulations

The CEO shall establish and disseminate regulations with respect to the provision and use of library services, which shall, as a minimum, address the following matters:

- issue, renewal and replacement of library cards;
- borrowing and renewal of circulating materials;
- use of non-circulating materials;
- loss or damage of materials;

- reserving materials; and
- inter-library loans.

3.0 Rules of Conduct

The CEO shall establish and disseminate rules of conduct to guide patrons while using library services, with the goal of providing a safe, and comfortable library environment for all.

Rules of conduct shall, as a minimum, address the following matters:

- scent-free workplace
- food and beverages (including allergens);
- littering;
- attire;
- animals (excluding service animals);
- unattended children;
- noise; and
- harassment of staff or other patrons.

Patrons are expected to follow all library policies, including the rules of conduct. The Board reserves the right to deny library privileges to persons who do not comply.

4.0 Proctoring

The library values the concept of lifelong learning goals.

To support these goals, examination proctoring is available to residents of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Proctoring shall be subject to the availability of authorized staff and resources and shall be undertaken only if the conditions set by the examining institution can be met without undue disruption to the library's normal functions. Examinations must occur during the library's regular hours of operation.

All examinations must be sent to the library. A minimum of two weeks advance notice is required.

Persons taking the examination are responsible to ensure that all examination requirements have been met and all tests have been received by the library before the examination is taken.

The library shall incur no costs by administering an examination.

5.0 References

- FN04 Intellectual Freedom
- OP01 Confidentiality & Protection of Privacy
- OP03 Accessible Customer Service