

## **Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library**

### **INFORMATION SERVICES POLICY**

#### **INF - 1 Introduction**

Information services are those services which link people with resources to fulfil informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

#### **INF - 2 Purpose of this policy**

The policy is intended to provide library staff with a clear description of and guidance in providing reference service. The policy is in no way meant to limit initiative on the part of Library staff in serving the public. Library staff are encouraged to use good judgement to satisfy patron's needs.

#### **INF - 3 Objectives**

It is the policy of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library to answer all reference and information questions efficiently, accurately and as completely as possible, and to assist patrons in the use of all library and bibliographic tools.

If it is not possible to find an answer using the Library resources, patrons will be referred to other libraries, agencies and community resources.

#### **INF - 4 Courtesy and Interest**

All patrons seeking help at the Library will be greeted in a friendly manner and regardless of sex, age, ability and ethnic background be treated equally, with respect and courtesy.

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

## INF - 5      **Types of Service**

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library provides a variety of information services to patrons. These are described below:

- Quick Reference

These questions can usually be answered immediately using resources kept at the circulation desk for this purpose.

- General Reference

General reference usually requires a more lengthy search and/or use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer. The Library staff will guide and assist the patron in pursuing the answer while simultaneously providing, as required, informal instruction in how to search and use library resources to the best advantage.

- Readers' Advisory

Readers' advisory is the activity of recommending books to readers and helping readers identify their reading preferences. Staff assist patrons by making a judgement about the material, utilizing the criteria each patron and staff have established.

Staff will attempt, to the best of their abilities, to provide consultative assistance in defining more difficult questions and will show alternative methods of approach. The level of assistance will be based upon the patron's needs and staff constraints.

The interpretation of information which requires expertise beyond the scope of Library staff competence is not attempted. For example, the fields of law, medicine, and evaluation or authentication of rare items. A patron will be referred to the information in the Library and elsewhere but it will not be interpreted by Library staff.

- Location of material

The Library staff will check for a patron to see whether a specific item is in the

library's collection. If it is, but not immediately available, instruction will be given to the patron in placing a hold or a hold will be placed by staff. If the

Library does not own the item, then it may be ordered through Interlibrary Loan Services. Assistance may also be given by locating the information that will allow the patron to personally purchase the item elsewhere.

- Library Orientation, Instruction and Student Assistance

An important component of the duties of the Library staff is that of familiarizing the patron with all library services and giving instruction in the use of the public access catalogue, indexes, cd-rom products, databases, internet, microfilm reader, and other library materials and equipment. The level of assistance provided will depend on the resources and staff available.

- Referral

It is the policy of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library to maintain active liaison with other service agencies in the larger community. The policy is reflected in mutual referral of patrons and sharing of information whenever appropriate. If it has been established by the Library staff that a request for information cannot be answered or has been answered only in part with the resources of the Library, the patron will be referred, when appropriate, to another source, and assisted, where circumstances warrant, in contacting that source.

Every attempt is made to satisfy requests with materials available in the Library before referring patrons or inquiries to outside sources.

- Bibliographic Service

Library staff will instruct patrons on how to use the bibliography function on the Public Access Computers.

- Special Information Collections

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library maintains and gives service from the following special collections: (a) government documents (b) local history \* (c) genealogy (d) reference (e) community information.

Reference material may, under exceptional circumstances, be borrowed for one or two days. These loans will be made at the discretion of the Library staff in

consultation, if possible, with the CEO. The collections of the Lansdowne Historical Society and the Heritage Committee may not be borrowed without

permission of the respective contact people for these groups.

\*The Library's local history holdings are supplemented by collections of the Lansdowne Historical Society and the Heritage Committee. Please see Policy COL-10 Local History for procedures.

- Telephone Service

Patrons initiating enquiries by telephone will receive full staff attention. If the Library staff is unable to deal with the telephone request immediately arrangements will be made to return the call within an agreed upon time period. Library staff will endeavour to respond to voice mail messages as quickly as possible on the day they are received.

Patrons needing extended reference service will be requested to visit the Library to participate in the research process.

- Correspondence

In addition to answering requests presented in person and by telephone, the Library will also respond to requests received by mail, e-mail, and fax in a timely manner.

- Interlibrary Loan Service

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library is part of an information network within the community, within the southern Ontario Library System and in cooperation with other library systems across Ontario and Canada.

This service is automatically offered by the Library staff whenever the information requested cannot be filled by the resources of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library and is within the scope of regional and national interlibrary loan code.

In return, Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library shares its resources in accordance with the code, while always giving priority in the use of resources for its own patrons.

## **INF – 6      PRIORITIES OF SERVICE**

The extent of personal service to each individual is dependent on the number of

patrons to be served. The following priorities are applied:

- 1<sup>st</sup> priority - requests presented in person
- 2<sup>nd</sup> priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail
- 3<sup>rd</sup> priority - requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail
- 4<sup>th</sup> priority - requests received via the interlibrary loan network

Patron's questions may be referred to the CEO when Library staff feel the need for extra assistance with the requested subject.

### **INF – 7 STATISTICS**

Accurate statistics regarding information services to patrons will be recorded using the statistics form provided at the circulation desk.

### **INF – 8 PATRON CONFIDENTIALITY**

Patron's confidentiality is respected at all times, in compliance with government legislation.

Patrons are not asked to identify themselves in any way before reference service is provided.

### **INF – 9 PATRON FEEDBACK**

Patrons who have comments or suggestions regarding services and collections covered by this policy will be promptly assisted and informed as to how to communicate these to the CEO.

Board Motion Number	Date of review
<u>00-60, 00-61, 00-62, 00-63, 00-64, 00-65</u>	<u>April 17, 2000</u>
<u>00-66, 00-67, 00-68, 00-69, 00-71</u>	<u>April 17, 2000</u>
<u>2007-17</u>	<u>May 24, 2007</u>