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## PUBLIC SERVICE

### (3.6) Reference

Reference service provides information directly to individual inquirers on a one-to-one basis. The public library reference desk is the basic point of access for all citizens to information from both within and beyond the local library facility.

The reference transaction will be managed as a practical, private conversation between the librarian and the individual seeking information. Respect for the inquirer and his/her right to privacy will be maintained during the interview. The goal of the interview is to find out exactly what is needed and to locate sources which answer that need. If a reference inquiry cannot be answered within a single shift, the staff person on duty may share the inquiry with other reference staff who will continue to work on the question.

**Service priorities** during any shift are set by the reference staff member on duty, who will use professional judgment regarding urgency and extent of assistance required. In-person service normally has priority over telephone service. Branch telephone requests for reference backup normally have priority over individual telephone requests. Return calls on pending telephone questions are made as soon as possible, normally within the same day, and the caller is advised when callback may be expected.

**Referrals** may be made by reference staff to other libraries, government agencies, and other appropriate sources of information when resources within the local facility are exhausted.

**Interlibrary Loan** is an integral part of reference service. Its use is encouraged items the user wants are not held by CCL Libraries. Nominal fees may be charged for special handling of mail or for copying of materials by the providing library. Further details are available in *Policy 3.7 Interlibrary Loan*.

**Readers' Advisory** service is also an integral part of reference service in the public library. Staff members welcome the opportunity to find out what topics/genres interest the reader and to locate books and other materials that fit those interests.

**Children's reference questions** are handled with the same attention as adult questions; however, students doing assigned school projects or research papers, may be asked to come into the library in order to see materials to help define their project. Helping students learn to find information independently is assumed to be as important as providing specific information.

**Medical, legal, and IRS/tax questions** will be answered only by stating author, title, publisher and date of source, followed by exact reading of relevant passages. No summaries or opinions or advice other than referrals to other sources can be given on medical, legal or IRS/tax questions.

**For contests and puzzles**, staff discretion will be used in limiting time given to patrons.

**For genealogical research**, patrons need to be aware of practical limitations in resources, staff time, and expertise available.

**Information Databases** on a wide variety of topics are offered at all the libraries. Many are also available outside of the library when users login with their library card number. Reference staff will show patrons how to use these resources on an individual basis and are also available to present structured instruction for groups. Call the library at 586-0442 for more information. A complete listing of all current database offerings is on the library's web page at [www.juneau.org/library](http://www.juneau.org/library) under the E-Research tab.

**Internet for Patron Use.** The internet is an integral part of reference service for accessing information sources provided by the library, through library cooperative networks, and from worldwide sources. Time limits on networked internet stations are controlled by automatic timer software. Details on use of the internet in the libraries are detailed in *Policy 2.2 (a) User Agreement for Networked Connections* and *Policy 2.2 (b) User Agreement for Wireless Connections*

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**Reference Internet Workstations.** Each branch maintains a reference workstation that may be used by staff with patrons in conducting a reference transaction. Staff may also allow patrons to use the reference workstation if the patron is doing research that will take longer than a 30 minute session. The reference workstation may also be used for online proctored exams. No chat or email is permitted at the reference workstation. Reference staff should not allow patrons to use the staff reference computer.

**Word Processing Workstations** are available at all libraries. Each is equipped with a media card reader that accepts a variety of storage cards and USB drives. Word processors may be able to access a limited number of web sites, such as job search sites, but they are not available for general web searching. There is a one hour time limit on word processors if others are waiting.

**Printing and Copying** Patrons may print from all computer stations for 15 cents per page for black and white prints and \$1 per page for color prints. Downloading to patron's own storage media is permitted. Black and white photocopiers are available at all libraries. Patrons copying from non-circulating library materials may make up to 5 free copies per day; after that, copies cost \$0.15 per page. If the reference librarian prints online materials for a patron when answering a reference question, the first 5 copies are also free, and subsequent prints are \$0.15 each.

**Exam proctoring** will be done by library staff for correspondence study or other distance education programs. Please see *Policy 3.18 Exam Proctoring* for more detail.

If **Lemon Creek Correctional Center (LCCC) inmates** call the library for service, staff will handle inquiries by telephone only. If callback is needed because of the press of other business, the callback is inmate's responsibility (an outside caller cannot reach an inmate by phone). If an inmate makes a request which would involve sending materials, staff will advise the caller that such requests must be initiated with the LCCC staff member in charge of library service.