

RAINY RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY		
Category: SERVICES		Number: SE14
<i>MANDATORY</i>	Topic: Reference and Information Services	Page: 1 of 1
Date: February 16, 2017	Authorized by:	

This policy governs the library's provision of reference and information services.

1. The library's information services link people with resources to fulfil their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs.
2. All users (including both adults and children) seeking information will be treated equally.
3. Requests for information are governed by the library's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy policy, and will be treated as confidential.
4. Staff will answer 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 CEO may decline any reference inquiry for any legitimate reason at any time.
5. Inquiries using inappropriate or abusive language will be treated as a contravention of the Staff and Patron Safety Policy.
6. The staff will assist the user in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources based upon the user's needs. Staff provide the following services:
 - a) **Quick reference:** These questions can usually be answered immediately using directories, almanacs and online resources.
 - b) **General reference:** These questions usually require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer.
7. Staff do not undertake original research, including complex genealogical research. The library's financial and staffing resources do not support in-depth inquiries of this nature.
8. The staff will refer users to the inter-library loan service, other libraries, agencies and community resources, if it is not possible to find an answer using the library's own resources. Library staff do not co-ordinate responses from referrals.
9. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users needing to be served. The following priorities will apply.
 - 1st priority – reference requests presented in person
 - 2nd priority – reference requests presented by telephone/voice mail
 - 3rd priority – reference requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail
 - 4th priority – reference requests received via the interlibrary loan network
10. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the Annual Survey of Public Libraries, statistics on reference questions will be kept and analyzed.