

"Foster lifelong learning and connect the community through our materials, space, events, and expertise."

The Library's Mission Statement

Information and Readers' Advisory Policy

Revision Control

- *Adopted by the LPLD Board September 16, 2010*
- *Revision Approved by LPLD Board February 24, 2020; September 23, 2024*

Information and readers' advisory services are one of the most important functions of the Lincolnwood Public Library District, and covers a wide range of services including research assistance, homework help, computer assistance, information validity, inter-library loan assistance, and referral services.

The following policy is designed to ensure that all patrons receive the highest possible level of this service.

Goals

The goal of information and readers' advisory service is to provide accurate answers to library patrons' questions by trained staff members during all hours of operation of the Library. This is accomplished by:

- Providing materials and services to meet users' needs for timely, accurate, and useful information.
- Providing trained staff to assist patrons and to facilitate access to the Library's collections and cooperative resources.
- Assisting patrons in the use of information resources, library materials, and in the development of research strategies.
- Providing readers' advisory service to assist patrons in finding materials based on their interests, reading level, and other factors
- Providing referral services including interlibrary loan, resource sharing, and supplementary information services.
- Keeping the community informed about the services and resources available and encouraging their use.

Ethics and Standards

The informational needs of every library patron will be taken seriously and facilitated with objectivity, respect, and confidentiality. Staff does not discriminate based on age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, or appearance in providing information and readers' advisory services.

Providing advice and suggestions for any reading material (fiction or nonfiction) is an essential service in a public library. Each patron's reading requests will be taken seriously and without judgement. However, when performing readers' advisory services, personal recommendations and subjective opinions are unavoidable.

Service is to be provided in a manner consistent with the Library Bill of Rights, the American Library Association Code of Ethics, and copyright law.

Availability of Service

The Lincolnwood Public Library District provides information and readers' advisory services to any patron requesting it, regardless of residency. Information and readers' advisory services are provided by staff during all hours that the Library is open. Inquiries for information and readers' advisory services are accepted in person, by

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telephone, through the mail, and digitally. Priority is given to in-person requests. When assigned to work at a service desk, answering inquiries has priority over other staff assignments. If information appropriate to the patron's need is not available in the Library, a referral will be made to local or regional resources, inter-library loan, and/or other libraries.

Whenever possible, answers to questions will be provided during the patron's visit or telephone call. When other patrons are waiting, staff may have to limit the initial amount of time spent serving an individual patron but follow-up attention will be given. A longer response time will be coordinated with the patron when staff needs additional time to locate the needed information.

Providing Service

Library staff will use available sources of information to answer questions. This includes, but is not limited to books, periodicals, electronic databases, internet resources, and government agencies. Citations to sources of information will be given when requested.

A staff member's personal opinion will never be given as fact. While staff will provide sources of information, information will not be interpreted and library staff will not offer legal, medical, or tax advice. If it is not possible to answer a question by the above means, questions will be referred to another agency as appropriate.

Staff will assist in guiding patrons doing extensive research or compiling large amounts of information to appropriate sources. Reading and interpretation of materials is solely the responsibility of the patron.

Limitations

The following limitations apply to information and readers' advisory services:

- Information, particularly in the subject areas of law, medicine, consumer information, religion, politics, and persons finance/tax information, is presented without interpretation, advice, analysis, or personal recommendation.
- Staff will not engage in conversation or debate of a personal nature, including (but not limited to) religious beliefs, political positions, or personal lives.
- Patrons may not request to work exclusively with a particular staff member.
- Staff set reasonable limits on the amount of time and level of response given to patron requests for information in order to ensure equal and fair access to library services for all patrons.
- Patrons must comply with other Lincolnwood Public Library District policies when engaging in information and readers' advisory services.
- Staff does not provide editorial, typing, tutoring, translation services.
- Non-residents may be referred to their home library depending on the complexity of the information required.

Service to Non Lincolnwood Public Library District Cardholders

The following services are restricted to Lincolnwood Public Library District cardholders only:

- Remote access to online resources and to those resources requiring a Lincolnwood Public Library District card.
- Museum Pass program.
- Circulating Electronic Devices including Library of Things.
- Hot Picks collection.
- Inter-Library Loan.