 **Dryden Public Library Board** **POLICY**

| SECTION:  OPERATIONAL | NO: OP-09 |
|---|---|
| TITLE: Reference Services | Date:  January 2025 |
|  | Next Review Date:  January 2029 |

**1.0 Policy Statement**

1.1 The Dryden Public Library provides reference services to link patrons with the resources required to fulfill their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.  This policy outlines the scope of reference services at the Dryden Public Library and guides library staff in responding to reference requests.

**2.0 Scope of the Policy**

2.1 The services outlined in this policy are intended to meet the needs of patrons of all ages. As per the Ontario Human Rights Code (R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19), all users seeking information will be treated equally regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.

**3.0 Reference Services**

3.1 Patrons with reference requests requiring intensive research or the consultation of advanced resources may be asked to leave contact information, as staff may not be able to complete their request immediately. Library staff will notify any patron requesting enhanced reference assistance of any possible timelines for a full response, as directed by the CEO.

3.2 If the Library is unable to complete a reference request for any reason the patron will be notified in a timely manner.

3.3 Staff will assist patrons in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use library resources based upon the users' needs.

3.4 Staff will be guided by the Library Board's *Statement on Intellectual Freedom (FN-03)* in providing reference service to patrons of all ages.

3.5 Reference services at the Library will include, but are not limited to:

3.5.1 Quick Reference:  Questions that can be answered immediately using directories, almanacs or online tools.

3.5.2    General Reference: Questions that require a lengthier search and/or the use of multiple sources to arrive at a complete answer.

3.5.3    Readers' Advisory Service:  Questions relating to reading material and recommendations.

3.5.4    Library Instruction: Questions regarding the use of the Library and/or Library resources, including eResources.

3.5.5    Library Lookups: Library staff will look up information for patrons who are unable to access the Library. Timelines for the completion of this research will be communicated to the patron. If the patron is unable to supple sufficient information to complete the request (e.g., name, date ranges, etc.) then staff may have to decline the reference request.

3.6 When it is not possible to answer a questions using the Library's own resources staff will refer patrons to other libraries, community organizations and/or other agencies.

3.7 In accordance with the *Children's Service Policy (OP-07)* and the *Young Adult Services Policy (OP-08)* Dryden Public Library staff will assist students in finding appropriate resources for school-related projects but will not complete research on behalf of students.

3.8 Library staff will provide patrons instruction on proper use of the microfilm reader.

3.9 Library staff will look up information on microfilm or through one of our online databases for patrons who are unable to access the Library.  Timelines for the completion of this research will be communicated to the patron. If the patron is unable to supply sufficient information to complete the request (i.e., names, date ranges etc.) then staff may have to decline the reference request.

3.10 Library staff will respond to reference requests received in person, over the telephone, via e-mail, and mail.

3.11 In order to assess and evaluate reference services, and in compliance with the requirements of the Annual Survey of Public Libraries, staff will keep statistics on all reference requests.

| History | | | |
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| **Approval Date:** | November 2017 | **Approved by:** | L. Ayers |
| **Amendment Date:** | February 2021 | **Approved by:** | M Benson |
| **Amendment Date:** | January 2025 | **Approved by:** | DPL Board 2022-2025 |
| **Amendment Date:** | | **Approved by:** | |