



## **Antlers Public Library**

### **Reference Policy**

Reference and information service is an integral part of the library's commitment to serve the needs of the community. The Library staff will give polite, reasonable explanations to all inquiries.

Oklahoma law protects the confidentiality of library user records. Reference service is also confidential. Staff shall not discuss patrons, their borrowing habits or their information requests except as required in seeking assistance from other library staff to find the desired information.

All reference and information questions shall be handled with equal effort, regardless of the originating source. We believe that in-person requests should be handled first, telephone requests second, and mailed or emailed requests last.

The library's ability to provide reference service will be limited by the following factors:

- 📖 Customer's time limit
- 📖 Complexity of materials to be used
- 📖 Number of customers needing assistance
- 📖 Number of staff available to help customers

Students at all age levels will receive the same services as anyone else according to the general guidelines for service. The librarian may allow a student to search the Internet for a suitable source of information for school related projects. This is subject to the availability of a librarian to oversee Internet usage which is normally prohibited (see Internet Policy).

The Library staff does not give appraisals or look up the value of art works, antiques, rare books, coins, stamps, currency, or any other collectible.

The Library staff should not give personal critical analyses, interpretations, or judgments of the merits of literary or other works. Simple referral to popular authors or works is available upon request and is given to the best abilities of the librarian.

The Library staff does not interpret material of any type related to medical, legal, statistical, or technical information, including tables, charts, equations, conversions, laws, taxation, and regulatory information.

The Library staff does not do genealogy or newspaper searches.

### **Can I call in with my reference questions?**

Telephone reference service is limited to information that is readily available, does not require extensive searching and may be imparted over the telephone. If questions cannot be answered within 2 minutes, the person will be invited to the library to use the necessary resources. If visiting the library is not an option, the request will be taken as a call-back or referred to another agency. All answers are to be read from an appropriate source, with title of the source given.

Four ready reference questions or four titles to check against the catalog is a recommended limit as circumstances allow. When searching the Internet, Library staff will search one search engine under one subject heading.

### **Can I mail, fax, or email questions?**

Mail reference service is limited to information that is readily available and does not require extensive searching. Questions that are better suited to another agency will be passed on to that agency. The person requesting the information will be informed of the transfer. Standard fees apply to items copied or faxed. The source of the information will be provided with each reply.

Four ready reference questions or four titles to check against the catalog is a recommended limit as circumstances allow. When searching the Internet, Library staff will search one search engine under one subject heading.