

# EUREKA PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

## REFERENCE POLICY

The Eureka Public Library District serves a diverse public with unique individual needs and levels of ability to conduct research independently. At times of peak activity within the library, it is mandatory that rules for providing reference assistance be established. The most recent standards document, *Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries*, provides the standards for this reference policy.

The Board of Trustees and Library Director of Eureka Public Library District encourage staff on all levels to pursue continuing education opportunities which will enable them to better meet the needs of the library's patrons. All staff members receive in-house training regarding the appropriate responses to patron questions, including reference questions. This training includes reference interviewing techniques, reader's advisory service, and bibliographic instruction. All staff members are taught to treat each question asked with respect. Names of users and the transactions which occur between users and staff are confidential and not discussed outside a professional context.

Reference services and materials are available to all people who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the library, regardless of the age, sex, race, social, or economic status of the patron. Reference materials and services are available during all hours the library is open and are provided in response to all forms of inquiry, including but not limited to patrons in the library, the telephone, and other means available for contacting the library. The reference questions of patrons visiting the library are given the highest priority. All requests for information receive an answer or status report within one working day. Questions which cannot be answered by library staff may be referred to another agency, with the referral verified and/or mediated by library staff.

In the instance of legal, medical, investment, or tax reference questions, the staff may only guide the patron to the material available on the topic of interest. The staff may not interpret or evaluate the information provided nor may the staff define the meanings of terms, offer investment advice, select income tax forms, or serve as a surrogate for a professional in any of the fields listed above. If all materials within the library are beyond the understanding of the patron, the patron will be advised to consult with his or her professional from the above listed fields for additional information or advice.

Approved by EPLD Board of Trustees on November 26, 2018

Board review, no changes 2/22/21

Board review, no changes 2/27/23

