



## **Information Services Policy**

The Guelph Public Library's Information Services link people with resources to fulfill their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

### **Purpose**

The Information Services policy guides the provision of Information Services at Guelph Public Library.

### **Policy Statement**

1. All users seeking information will be treated equally regardless of sex, age, ability and ethnicity. Library membership is not required for this service except when accessing licensed databases via the Library's website.
2. The staff will respect and protect the confidential and private nature of requests for information.
3. The staff will answer all reference questions efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible. Staff use their judgement to assess the most appropriate way to provide Information Services within the time constraints. All questions will be considered important and legitimate until it becomes clearly apparent that they are otherwise.
4. The staff will assist the user in finding information and will provide instruction on how to use the library resources based upon the user's needs. Where appropriate sources will be provided for answers given. The staff provide the following services:
  - a. Quick Reference – Questions that can be answered immediately using directories, almanacs and online resources.
  - b. General Reference – Questions that require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer.
  - c. Technology Assistance – One-on-one technology troubleshooting or assistance; by appointment only.

- d. Local History/Archival Research – Local history and archival record access; by appointment only. Requests for research or reproduction of records is available for a fee.
5. Staff will not provide personal opinions, analysis or interpretation of medical/legal/financial/religious information. Customers are encouraged to consult with a professional in the appropriate field.
6. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users needing to be served. The following priorities will apply:
  - i. 1st priority – requests in person
  - ii. 2nd priority – requests presented by telephone/voice mail/chat service
  - iii. 3rd priority – requests sent in by email/social media/mail
7. If a staff member cannot answer a request immediately, they will obtain contact information for the customer and see that the customer receives an answer as soon as possible. Unfinished questions at the end of a shift will be turned over to incoming staff. Staff members who lack expertise in a particular subject area are encouraged to consult with colleagues if they need assistance.
8. 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.

**Related documents:**

GPL Privacy Policy

GPL Email Acceptable Use Policy

[Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom](#) (Policy F-05)