



## Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands Public Library

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Policy Type: Operational

Policy Number: OP-14

Policy Title: Information Services

Policy Approval Date: June 18, 2024

Next Review Date: 2028

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The Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands Public Library's information services connect people with resources to fulfil their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. This policy describes information services at the library and guides library staff when answering reference questions.

1. All users seeking information will be treated equitably and with respect to meet their individual needs, regardless of sex, age, ability, and ethnicity. The Library will provide welcoming spaces and library services to Indigenous peoples and share elements of First Nations culture with non-Indigenous persons. See Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands Public Library ***FN-05 Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration Policy and FN-03 Statement of Values***.
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 and will be guided by the board's policy on ***Intellectual Freedom FN-04***. All questions will be considered important and legitimate, unless 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 library resources based upon the user's needs. The staff provide the following services:
  - a) **Quick reference:** These questions can usually be answered immediately using library and online resources.
  - b) **General reference:** These questions usually require a more in-depth process to arrive at a complete answer and may as a result require a mutually agreed upon timeframe to complete.
5. If it is not possible to find an answer using library or online resources, staff will refer users to the inter-library loan service, other libraries, agencies, and community resources.
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:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> priority - requests presented in person
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> priority - requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail
  - 4<sup>th</sup> priority - requests received via the interlibrary loan network
7. Print and electronic reference collections are maintained by library staff with a focus on the currency and relevancy of the material, and in accordance with Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands Public Library ***OP-06 Collection Development Policy***.
8. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the ***Annual Survey of Public Libraries***, statistics on reference questions may be kept and analyzed.

**Related Documents:**

***OP-03 Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy***

***OP-06 Collection Development Policy***

***FN-03 Statement of Values***

***FN-04 Intellectual Freedom Policy***

***FN-05 Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration Policy***