

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library  
LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

Policy Type: Operational	Policy Number: OP-20
Policy Title: Information Services	Policy Approval Date: 05/16/23
Chairperson: V. Duke	Policy Review Date: 05/27

**Intent:**

The information services provided by Muskoka Lakes Public Library (herein after referred to as the Library) link 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.

**Regulations:**

The Library provides information services in accordance with the Policy on Intellectual Freedom (GF-04), which is based on the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom. This statement recognizes and values the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and supports and promotes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Procedures:**

1. All users seeking information will be treated equally regardless of sex, age, ability and ethnicity in accordance with the Diversity and Inclusion Policy (GF-07).
2. The Library will provide welcoming spaces and Library services to Indigenous peoples and share elements of First Nations culture with non-Indigenous persons in accordance with the Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration Policy (GF-05) and Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation Policy (GF-06).
3. The staff will respect and protect the confidential and private nature of requests for information.
4. The staff will answer all reference questions efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible and will be guided by the Intellectual Freedom Policy (GF-04).
5. All questions will be considered important and legitimate, unless restricted by Federal and/or Provincial law or it becomes clearly apparent that the questions are not legitimate.
6. 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, including the following services:
  - a) Quick reference: These questions can usually be answered immediately using directories, almanacs and online resources.
  - b) General reference: These questions usually require a lengthier search and/or the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer.

7. 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/or community resources.
8. The extent of individual service to each person will depend on the number of users needing to be served. The following priorities will apply.
  - 1st priority - requests presented in person
  - 2nd priority - requests presented by telephone/voice mail
  - 3rd priority - requests sent in by mail/fax/e-mail
  - 4th priority - requests received via the inter-library loan network
9. To assess and evaluate information services, and to comply with the requirements of the ***Annual Survey of Public Libraries***, statistics on questions from a typical week will be kept and analyzed.
10. The Library strives to maintain an up-to-date, relevant and readily accessible working collection of reference materials, (electronic and print) relating primarily to community needs and interests, guided by the Library's Collection Development Policy (OP-24).

**Related Documents:**

- MLPL GF-04 – Intellectual Freedom
- MLPL GF-05 – Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration
- MLPL GF-06 – Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation
- MLPL GF-07 – Diversity and Inclusion
- MLPL OP-03 – Protection of Privacy, Access to Information & Messages under CASL
- MLPL OP-24 – Collection Development