

NEW ULM PUBLIC LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICE POLICY

The primary role of the New Ulm Public Library is to provide and facilitate access to accurate, timely, and useful information for its users. To this end, the library supports a professional reference staff, maintains a reference collection, funds electronic information retrieval, and participates in cooperative networks with other agencies to enable resource sharing. The library also provides educational materials and training on information access.

Reference service may involve directly supplying the answer to a question or helping users identify and utilize materials for independent inquiry. The nature of any given reference question and the need of the information seeker will dictate the process and the extent of information that can be provided, as well as the response time. Reference service will be commensurate with available resources and staffing.

Reference service and materials are available to all persons regardless of their age, race, gender, social or economic status. Reference services and materials 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, and contacts by telephone or e-mail. The reference questions of patrons visiting the library are given first priority. All requests for information receive a response or status report within one working day.

Questions which cannot be answered with on-site resources are referred to another agency if the patron requests. Such referrals are verified and/or mediated by library staff. In instances of legal, medical, investment or tax reference questions, the staff only guides the patron to the materials available on the topic of interest. The staff does not evaluate or interpret the information provided nor may the staff define the meaning 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 in the library are beyond the understanding of the patron, the patron will be advised to consult with a professional from the above listed fields for additional information or advice.

Reference materials regardless of format may not be removed from the library.

Approved January 3, 2001