

Policy Statement

Information services at the Rochester Hills Public Library are some of the most vital and visible expressions of the library's purpose and are key to the library's mission to inform, entertain, and provide for the intellectual development and enrichment of the community.

Regulations

1. For the purpose of this policy, information services encompass reference and reader's advisory service to the public via direct personal assistance, instruction in the effective use of library resources and dissemination of information in anticipation of patron needs.
2. Professional and qualified personnel with appropriate training provide information services at the library.
3. Information services are available to all persons regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability, language proficiency, or social or economic status.
4. All requests will be given equal consideration, and each will be answered as accurately and completely as possible. In the instance of legal, medical, investment or tax questions, the staff cannot evaluate, interpret or act as surrogate professionals.
5. Information inquiries are received in multiple forms and are answered on a first come, first served basis. The time spent by librarians on a question may vary depending on the pace of activity in the reference area, the number of available staff and the resources readily available. Librarians will respond to information requests as soon as possible; patrons can expect an answer or response usually within one working day if not sooner.
6. Librarians will assist patrons in placing holds to request the transfer of materials from other libraries.
7. Technology Assistants will assist patrons with access to the library's computers, basic printing, scanning and faxing help, and consult on basic web browser and email assistance.
8. Librarians will assist patrons with their research needs by identifying and locating resources. As time permits, they will be a guide for a patron's original research but cannot conduct a research report, complete homework on behalf of a patron, or provide original documentation that the patron may request.
 - A. Assistance with online resources:

- i. Librarians shall assist patrons in the use of the library's online resources, digital apps, and databases.
 - ii. Technology Assistants and librarians may refer patrons to the Digital Services Librarian for additional support for more complex technical questions.
 - B. Provision of In-depth research services:
 - i. Assistance will be provided only as time permits.
 - ii. The library does not provide any fee-based research services.
- 9. The Digital Services staff may assist patrons with various tasks and issues using library computers and equipment or the patron's digital devices in scheduled appointments.
 - A. Staff members may not be held liable for any physical damage to patrons' personal devices or digital assets.
 - B. Staff members cannot repair patrons' personal devices.
- 10. Librarians respect and safeguard the patron's privacy and identity throughout the information request process.
 - A. Library staff are prohibited from assisting patrons with accessing and using sensitive information or sites (such as banking websites or social security numbers) or providing legal, medical, or financial advice. When appropriate, the staff member may refer patrons to professionals or point to the library's physical and digital resources for additional help.
- 11. The library attempts to collect materials on a wide range of subjects but may be unable to meet every need with on-site materials. For school assignments which cannot be satisfied with the library's collection, a librarian can provide a *School Assignment Letter* that indicates the reasons for the unfulfilled request.
- 12. The library participates in consortia and networks to obtain access to information sources and services it cannot provide on its own. As part of these services, patrons can borrow print materials from other libraries to fulfill their information needs. See *Interlibrary Loan* policy.
- 13. The library provides the opportunity for resident patrons to request materials not owned by the library through the *Patron Request for Purchase* form. The purchase of these requests is up to the discretion of the librarian. See *Materials Selection/Collection Development* policy.