

Schuylkill Valley Community Library Reference Policy

- I. Ethical Considerations
 - A. Reference service shall be provided to all users on an equal, nondiscriminatory, and nonjudgmental basis without regard to race, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, background, appearance, or personal view of the patron making the inquiry.
 - B. Transactions with patrons will be treated as equally important.
 - C. The Library adopts and adheres to the American Library Association's Code of Ethics.
- II. Reference Collection Development
 - A. The Schuylkill Valley Community Library maintains a reference collection containing print and electronic materials that is available to all patrons.
 - B. It shall be reviewed annually.
 - C. Out-dated or inappropriate materials shall be removed and needed resources considered for purchase.
- III. Responses to Requests for Assistance
 - A. Requests will generally be handled in the order in which they are received. Requests submitted by patrons in the library are given priority over telephone or email requests that are received at the same time.
 - B. Generally, reference services are limited to such services as can be provided in five or ten minutes. More complex and time intensive requests will be handled on an individual basis, at the discretion of the library director.
 - C. In answering reference inquiries, the source of the answer shall always be cited and, when relevant, the date of publication of the source. Library staff will strive to find the most scholarly sites available. The producers of that resource, not the library itself, are responsible for the accuracy of the information.
 - D. Staff will provide their professional opinion when recommending the best source to answer a question or when providing reader's advisory service. Staff members will not give opinions, advice, or interpretation of information beyond the scope of their training and expertise.
 1. When a query is beyond the scope or expertise of the Schuylkill Valley Community Library staff, the patron will be referred to the reference desk at our District Center, the Reading Public Library.
 2. Alternately, the patron may be advised of other library resources or referred to other appropriate agencies.
 - E. Whenever feasible, promoting information literacy by showing users how to search for information on their own is encouraged.
 - F. Staff will assist as they are able in helping patrons with computer applications or electronic devices and may refer patrons to appropriate books, online tutorials, or

classes for further assistance. When assisting patrons with computer resources, staff will not enter personal information for patrons.

G. Staff will not provide the following kinds of assistance, which are deemed beyond the scope of the library's service responsibilities:

1. Interpretation, advice, or personal recommendations in any area other than the use of library resources. This includes, but is not limited to, legal, medical, or tax advice.
2. Critiquing or editing patron documents, including resumes.
3. Completing (including online forms) for patrons or assisting patrons in completing such forms.
4. Solving or troubleshooting problems with patron's personal computers or other electronic devices.
5. Translations will not be provided.

IV. One-on-One Assistance

A. Library staff may be available to work one-on-one with patrons to assist with using databases or training on specific devices. One-on-one sessions are generally scheduled for 30 minutes and are by appointment only, as time permits.