

## **SINKING SPRING PUBLIC LIBRARY'S REFERENCE SERVICES POLICY**

### The Reference Collection

*Scope.* The Sinking Spring Public Library maintains a reference collection at a basic level, appropriate for research by the general public and introductory academic research. The reference collection is augmented by current circulating materials, but the collection is not intended to support in-depth academic research at the junior-high-school level or above. The library can support such research through inter-library loans.

*Maintenance.* The reference collection and records of reference questions are reviewed annually; outdated and unused materials are removed as necessary.

### Reference Services

*Availability.* Reference service is available to all library patrons. Trained staff members will be available during library hours for assistance with reference questions.

Reference and other direct public services take precedence over other duties. In-person requests take priority over telephone requests; all requests will be handled in the order received.

*Confidentiality.* In compliance with the Pennsylvania Library Records Confidentiality Act (Act 90), library staff or volunteers will not reveal the names of patrons or the nature of materials used by them to anyone, except by court order in a criminal proceeding, or under the terms of the Patriot Act.

*Consumer Information.* Library staff will help patrons determine if a product has been covered in one of the library's consumer resources.

*Internet.* Library staff will assist patrons in logging on to the Internet and will explain search strategies and recommend sites if possible. Patrons are responsible for conducting searches beyond this support. Because the library has no control over the content of web sites, we cannot vouch for the accuracy of the material obtained in on-line searches.

*Legal Information.* Library staff will assist patrons in finding the appropriate sources for conducting research. Staff members are not qualified or authorized to dispense legal advice.

*Medical Information.* Library staff will assist patrons in finding appropriate sources for conducting research. Staff members are not qualified or authorized to dispense medical advice.

*Puzzle, Contest, or Quiz Questions.* Questions of a "ready reference" nature will be answered; however, the library will not guarantee that an answer provided is what the contest requires.

*Referrals.* Patrons with reference questions that cannot be answered at Sinking Spring Public Library will be referred to the district library center or other appropriate agencies.

*School Assignments.* Students with homework assignments will be assisted in finding the materials required to complete assignments, with an emphasis on teaching the student library skills.

*Telephone Requests.* Telephone reference questions will be limited to the “ready reference” type. When it is not possible to respond quickly to a question, patrons will be asked to leave a name and phone number, so that the staffer can return the call.

Reviewed 2022