

VI. REFERENCE SERVICE

All persons served by the public library have a right to reference service provided by the local library, the regional library system, and the statewide network, ILLINET. The local library shall provide accurate information and skilled guidance in the use of its recorded information sources as well as its community resources, library system, and ILLINET. The local library's emphasis on reference service shall be determined in its choice of roles, but whenever a library is providing information it shall do so by utilizing the most effective, rapid means of communication, relying on both on-site and off-site communication sources.

1. All requests for information shall be answered or a referral initiated within one working day of receipt.

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

2. Within two working days of receipt of a reference question the local library shall report to the library user on the status of his or her question. (This is necessary when the status was not indicated upon receipt of the question.)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

3. On site and telephone reference shall be provided to all age groups all hours the library is open.

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Reference: Output Measures

The following output measures capture the perceptions of librarians and users and are therefore subjective assessments of the accuracy and thoroughness of the reference service given. When possible, librarians should participate in system or state supported evaluations of the quality of reference service through the use of sample reference questions. Whether administered obtrusively (with staff knowledge) or "unobtrusively" (without staff "knowledge") the anonymity of the performance of specific staff members should be protected. These reference quality measures should not be used as a means of evaluating specific staff members.

4. The Librarian's Perception of Reference Fill Rate

Every three years libraries shall determine the number of reference transactions successfully completed in proportion to the total number of reference transactions. The procedures outlined in the ALA/PLA Output Measures for Public Libraries (1987) should be followed when calculating this measure. The completion rate refers only to the percentage of time a library provides, from its own resources, the information patrons want within the same working day.

Minimum 60%

Percentile comparisons (Optional): _____ 50th _____ 75th _____ 90th

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

5. The User Perception of Reference Fill Rate

Libraries shall determine this during the same sampling periods as the "Librarians Perception of Reference Fill Rate." (Every 3 years.)

Minimum 50%

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

6. Reference Transactions Per Capita

Once a year Libraries shall determine the average number of reference questions asked by each member of the community during the year. The definitions and procedures outlined in the ALA/PLA Output Measures for Public Libraries (1987) should be followed when calculating this measure.

Minimum .5

Percentile comparisons (Optional): _____ 50th _____ 75th _____ 90th

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

REFERENCE SERVICE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Durrance, Joan C. Armed for Action: Library Response to Citizen Information Needs. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1983.

Reference Service for Children and Young Adults. New York, NY: Haworth Press, 1983.

Stevens, Rolland Elwell. Reference Work in the Public Library. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1983.

FOR FURTHER READING

Reference and Information Services: A Reader for Today. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1986.

Riechel, Rosemarie. Improving Telephone Information and Reference Service in Public Libraries. Hamden, CONN: Library Professional Publications, 1987.