

Reference Services Policy

Statement of Purpose

In Keeping with its mission: “To provide materials, programs and services to meet the informational [and] educational...needs of Center Harbor, the surrounding community and its guests and visitors”, the James E. Nichols Memorial Library offers reference services to assist patrons and the public in the pursuit of information. The purpose of this policy is to define those services, as the Nichols Memorial Library is a small library without designated reference staff.

Policy

As an information resource center, the James E. Nichols Memorial Library shall assist its patrons and the public in locating accurate answers to their questions through its own resources or appropriate referrals.

The Library Collection shall include standard reference materials, as determined by the Librarian and in accordance with the Library’s *Collection Development & Maintenance Policy*. The Collection shall also include reference materials related to local history, such as Center Harbor Town Reports, information about the town’s historic resources, copies of available cemetery records pre-21st Century, and relevant published and unpublished historical and genealogical research.

The Library shall provide access to web-based information resources, such as online databases provided through EBSCOhost and websites like Ancestry.com.

Reference services also include staff assistance to patrons learning to use basic Library resources, including public computers, the online catalog, periodical indexes, and online resources. Staff may also provide help to patrons and visitors seeking to access the Library’s free wireless network with their personal mobile devices.

Requests for information may be submitted by phone, email or in-person. Staff will respond within two (2) business days to basic requests, such as facts or brief information that is readily available. Staff will pursue requests that do not yield an immediate answer in a timely manner and as other duties allow. Staff may also make appropriate referrals when an answer cannot be found.

Questions involving research are the responsibility of the patron. The Library staff do not conduct research but are available to offer guidance, such as identifying useful sources, including interlibrary loan or *The Librarian Online Reference* service of the NH State Library (*Ask A Librarian*), or other libraries and various organizations.

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