



Customer Service Policy

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The Scott County Public Library strives to offer excellent library services to all citizens in its service area. In addition to the quality of the facility and the collection, it is equally important that the library staff provides accurate, efficient and friendly service at all times to all people. The patron, as taxpayer, is the customer to whom the staff is ultimately responsible.

The customer service policy of the Scott County Public Library is the foundation for all staff interactions with the general public. All other library policies should be interpreted in light of the principles outlined below.

- The library offers the same quality of services to all patrons regardless of age, race, sex, nationality, educational background, physical limitations, religious affiliation or any other criteria, which may be the source of discrimination.
- Library staff will treat every patron with equal respect and every request with equal importance. Patrons are the reason the library exists.
- Judgment calls are to be made in the patron's favor. Staff members will not be penalized for errors made in good faith in pursuit of this policy.
- If a staff member is unable to comply with a request, the patron will be offered an alternative, such as an interlibrary loan, referral to another agency, etc.
- Staff members should be familiar with library policies and should be able to articulate them as well as explain the rationale behind them or direct them to someone who can.

DEMEANOR

The impression made on our patrons profoundly affects the library's image and ongoing support. Each staff member, while at work, is a representative of the library, and is therefore expected to conduct oneself in a manner that is consistent with the library's mission and policies. Staff members should remember while not at work, the general public would still view them as a library staff member.

It is imperative that every staff/patron interaction be a positive one for the patron. A friendly helpful demeanor usually ensures a positive experience, even when the message conveyed is not a pleasant one. Thus, it is essential to remember that the manner in which a person looks, speaks, and acts conveys an attitude, just as the tone of voice and choice of words affect a message.

ETHICS

The needs and requests of the library patrons must always be taken seriously and treated with respect. Equal consideration and treatment will be given to users within established guidelines and a non-judgmental environment.

All interactions and transactions between a library patron or group of patrons and the library will be considered confidential and will be discussed only in a professional context. (Such matters include, but are not limited to: registration information, materials selection, loan transaction records, reference questions, patron card status, etc.) Staff should remember that discussion of confidential patron issues should be limited to non-public areas.

STAFF OPERATING PROCEDURES AND INSTRUCTIONS

- Be punctual. Service commences at the advertised hour we open and full service is available until the hour we close.
- Wear your nametag at all times.

- Answer the phone in a timely manner, using a greeting, identifying the library and yourself, and offering help.
- Smile!
- Greet all patrons. Acknowledge a patron's presence by looking up and making eye contact or greeting them verbally. If you are busy with another patron, acknowledge the patron who is waiting and explain that you will help them as soon as you can.
- Use good listening skills when helping a customer. Ask questions; repeat to make sure you understand what the customer wants.
- Communicate in a positive, friendly, and courteous manner. Avoid library jargon. When using library terms, explain what they mean. Be knowledgeable and confident about library services. Leave customers with a positive, professional image.
- Maintain friendly contact with library users without engaging in lengthy conversations. If it is hard to break away, explain that you enjoy talking but you need to get back to work.
- Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, keep your voice low so it doesn't disturb library users.
- Keep conversations with other staff to a minimum while in public areas. If the library business must be discussed at length, do so away from the public areas.
- Avoid accepting all communications from any mobile device, including but not limited to, cell phones, PDAs, Blackberries, and texting while you are on the desk. Place personal calls when you are on personal time.
- Look up and around periodically. When appropriate, walk around and notice if there are people in the stacks or at the terminals who might need help. Being helpful to patrons takes precedence over deskwork. People aren't an interruption of our business – they are our business.
- Try to avoid merely pointing. Whenever possible, escort the patron to the appropriate area.
- When referring a patron to another staff member, ask the staff member to help the patron (Will you help Mrs. Brown with some *Consumer Reports* information?) instead of leaving the patron to fend for himself.
- Make accurate referrals. Call ahead if you are not sure, rather than making blind referrals and misdirecting a customer.
- Conduct transactions in a helpful, pleasant tone of voice. Keep any impatience, annoyance, or implication of ignorance from your voice. It's always better to presume that the patron is unfamiliar with the library, the Dewey Decimal system, the on-line catalog, etc.
- When there is a problem, document it by filling out an incident report form.
- If there will be a lapse of time before you can obtain information for a patron, tell the patron you will call them. Don't tell the patron to call you.
- Use your best judgment in a particular situation and be flexible. Give alternative solutions instead of saying no. Tell customers what you can do, not what you can't do.