

WESTCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

REFERENCE POLICIES

REFERENCE AND COLLECTION ASSISTANCE

It is the responsibility of all staff members in all departments to assist patrons in using the library's information resources. Reference service may be requested and provided in person, by telephone, by mail, or by e-mail.

REFERENCE EFFORT

The library staff will do their best to fill all requests for information. In person requests will take precedence over telephone, mail or e-mail requests.

The library reserves the right to limit the amount of time spent researching a single request and to limit the amount of time provided to serve a single patron.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials normally do not circulate and may not be borrowed from the library.

LEGAL AND MEDICAL INQUIRIES

The Library staff are neither doctors or lawyers and are not permitted to practice law or medicine, giving either legal or medical diagnoses or advice. Reference staff can, however, help patrons find much legal and medical information in many print and online legal and medical resources.

CRISS-CROSS AND CITY DIRECTORIES

The library's Criss-Cross and City Directories are held behind the circulation desk and may only be used in-house. A driver's license or other form of valuable identification must be deposited to use the directories. The library does not accept telephone requests for information in the directories.

MUSEUM AND LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

The Westchester Township History Museum, an educational service of Westchester Public Library, is the primary location for the library's local history reference services and archival collections. The Thomas Library maintains a small collection of Chesterton High School yearbooks, recent local city directories, and a few basic local history resources. The museum is open for tours and research in the Brown Mansion, 700 W. Porter Ave., Chesterton, IN, Wednesday - Sunday, 1 - 5 p.m. or by appointment, (219) 983-9715.

HOLDS

Patrons in good standing may ask that a hold be placed on circulating books in either print or audio format that may currently be checked out by another patron or are on order for the library or are being processed. Patrons can have up to (3) items on hold at a time. A hold will cause the item to be kept at a desk for up to a week after it has been received or returned

by the current borrower. Patrons will be notified by telephone when items are being held for then.

Items not picked up after a week will be held for the next patron on the list or returned to the collection if there are no additional hold requests. Patrons who habitually fail to pickup held items will not be allowed to place additional holds.

Holds can be placed by visiting the reference desk, by calling on the telephone, or at the library's online catalog either in the library or at home. A patron needs to enter their library card bar code number and password (available at the Circulation Desk) to place their own hold in the catalog.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

The library will request up to (3) three items the library does not own from other libraries in the state and the nation through the state interlibrary loan service.

There is no base charge for resident patrons borrowing materials from within Indiana. There may be a charge assessed by lending libraries outside of the state. There is a base charge of \$2 for each request for non-resident cardholders; this fee must be paid before a search is made and is not refundable even if no results are available. If a lending library does charge fees, the out-of-state fees must be paid by the requesting resident or nonresident patron.

Interlibrary loan requests may take 2-3 weeks. Patrons will be notified by phone when the requests are filled. Overdue interlibrary loan fees are \$1 per day.

Interlibrary loan requests will not be made for patrons having overdue materials. Patrons with first violations of overdue interlibrary loan materials will be limited to request two (2) items, provided overdue materials have been returned and all fines have been paid. A second violation will result in a permanent suspension of interlibrary loan privileges.

GOOD STANDING

Patrons who want to place holds and request interlibrary loans have a valid WPL library card in good standing. That is their library cards must be current and may not be blocked for outstanding fines and fees.

REQUESTS FOR PURCHASE

Reference staff members spend a great deal of time selecting materials for the collection that all patrons will enjoy. We would appreciate your suggestions for purchase. The library does not however, guarantee it will fill all requests. Requests and recommendations will be considered and evaluated in accordance with the library's regular collection development policy.