

GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING SPECIAL-NEEDS SERVICES

It is the policy of the City of Saratoga Springs Public Library to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. As part of that policy, the Library Director is required to “establish procedures to facilitate the provision of library services to citizens with disabilities in accordance with the principle of reasonable accommodation and within the scope of the Library’s mission, goals, and resources.”

The following guidelines and procedures are established in fulfillment of this requirement. They are intended to be applied by all staff members, or volunteers, in carrying out the public service functions of the Library. Staff members or volunteers uncertain about how to apply the guidelines in a particular situation should, if feasible, consult the Library Director, or the City Manager.

General Services

Individual patrons may require assistance in order to utilize the services of the Library. Cases in which such assistance may be required include, but are not limited to:

1. Sight-impaired patrons requiring assistance in reading terminal screens or reading reference materials.
2. Patrons in wheelchairs requiring assistance in retrieving books from high shelves.
3. Patrons with arthritis requiring assistance in using a keyboard.

In these and similar cases, the staff member or volunteer will:

- A. Evaluate the type of assistance needed and provide it with as much thoroughness as immediate demands for services from other patrons make possible. The same standard for allotting time to assist a patron with a reference or reader’s advisory question under similar circumstances should be applied. Most requests for assistance will require no more time than many reference or reader’s advisory questions, and will be treated accordingly.
- B. In cases in which a significant amount of staff or volunteer time is required to meet the request for assistance, and neither the Library Director nor another staff member or volunteer is able to commit the time to provide the service under the circumstances, the Library Director will attempt to arrange a designated time when the service can be rendered. Extensive reading from reference materials may be such a case. In situations in which it is possible, patrons requiring extensive assistance can be encouraged to contact the staff to make arrangements before coming to the Library. If a patron will need extensive assistance on a routine basis, the staff may try to arrive at less time-intensive methods for providing service. For example, the solution may require the Library to purchase an assistive device, or to

refer the patron to another agency, such as the Library for the Blind at the Utah State Library.

- C. The staff or volunteer is not required to provide special services beyond those dictated by the patron's special need and the limits of normal **on site** library services. Staff members and volunteers **are not** required or authorized to alter policies to accommodate a patron's special needs.

- D. The staff or volunteer should not provide **special-needs** assistance to patrons that could result in physical injury to the patron or the staff member/volunteer. Such assistance could include, but not be limited to, helping a patron move from a wheelchair to a car or supporting a patron on stairs. **This provision does not preclude staff members or volunteers from providing assistance in emergency situations; similar to the assistance they would provide other patrons under like conditions. For example, staff members or volunteers may assist patrons who fall to regain their feet or seat when in their judgment they can do so without risk of injury to themselves or the patron.**

Programs

Individuals may require certain accommodations in order to participate in a library-sponsored program. Cases in which such accommodations may be desired include, but are not limited to:

- 1. A sign language interpreter for the hearing impaired.

- 2. Magnifying devices to make overhead projections clear for the visually impaired.

- 3. Special assistance for a physically impaired child to participate in a hands-on program activity.

Within the context of reasonable accommodation, the Library will attempt to meet the special needs of patrons to permit them to participate in Library sponsored programs. When the Library sponsors a program its advertisement will include notice that special accommodations may be made if an interested patron notifies the Library before a given date. Upon receiving a request to make an accommodation, the Library Director will investigate feasibility and cost. The Library will notify the patron of its findings, and will make appropriate arrangements if the accommodation is judged to be feasible and reasonable.

Appeals

A patron who believes that a reasonable accommodation was not, or is not being made for their special service needs should contact the Library Director. The final decision regarding service accommodations rests with the Library Director. A patron wishing to receive a formal reply following denial of a service accommodation must submit a written request for the accommodation to the Library Director, who will respond in writing within five workdays.

Adopted: 2/28/2011
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