



Reference Research Policy

1. Research Requests

The Geneva Public Library (“the Library”) carries out research requests for patrons needing assistance to find specific information. The Library, at the discretion of the Reference Librarian or Executive Director, reserves the right to refuse research requests that the Library is not well-equipped to fulfill, based on the Library’s resources.

1.1 Definition of “Research Request.”

Research requests can include:

1. Compiling library resources related to a given topic.
2. Recommendations of free web resources for quality information about a given topic.
3. Assistance with genealogy or local history research.

1.2 Genealogy Research Resources

Genealogy research requests are informational inquiries related to local history or genealogical records. Our genealogy resources are limited to sources on the free web, physical items in the library’s collection, or digital resources licensed by the Library.

1.3 Priority of Requests

Research requests are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Research is capped at one hour per individual request, or two hours for genealogy research.

2. Interpretation of Information

Although trained library staff strive to provide a balanced response to any individual research request and will provide information from as varied and reputable sources as possible, the Library does not interpret information or recommend actions. It is the patron’s responsibility to assess and interpret the information provided by the Library in any Research Request.

3. Copyright Disclaimer

The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

The Library reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

4. Extended Research

If a patron needs more research completed than staff can complete within the timeframes stipulated in section 1.3, they can request a one-on-one appointment to learn how to conduct their own research on the Internet, use the microfilm, and/or use library databases.

The Library, at the discretion of the Reference Librarian or Executive Director, reserves the right to place further limits on research conducted based on the nature of the research or frequency of requests.

5. Delivery of Research

Depending on a variety of factors, such as the nature of the request and the availability of resources, delivery time for requests may vary.

Documents found during the research process can be delivered via the following methods:

Delivery Method	Cost
Scanned and emailed	Free
Printed for in-person pickup	20¢ per page
Mailed via U.S. Postal Service	20¢ per page + postage

Payment must be received before documents will be delivered to the patron.

The Library accepts the following as payment:

- Checks (made payable to Geneva Public Library)
- Credit card (processed in person or by phone)
- Cash (must be submitted in person at the library)

6. Contact Information

To submit a request, first fill out the Research Request form (Appendix A), or use the online form at gplny.org.

For further information, or to send a form or payment:

Email: genevaref@owwl.org
Phone: 315-789-5303 ext 200
Mail: Geneva Public Library
Attn: Reference Department
244 Main St.
Geneva, NY 14456
United States

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Reviewed by the Policy Review Committee: 11/13/2025

Appendix A

Research Request Form

(example)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Library Card Number: _____

Category of Research (circle one):

General Information

Genealogy

Local History

Obituary

What information are you looking for? Please be as specific as possible.

If this is a genealogy request, please list all known information about the person(s) involved (Ex: birth/death/marriage dates and/or locations, all known spellings of names).

What format of information would you prefer? Circle all that apply.

Library Books

Printed Articles

Digital Resources (emailed to me)

I understand that if I request printed articles, each page will cost 20¢.

INTAKE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Tell the patron that this form is submitted to the Reference Librarian who will determine if the research is within our scope.
2. Leave this form in the blue file holder on the wall in the office for the Reference Librarian.
3. Do NOT start the research.

Staff Initials: _____

Date: _____

STAFF USE ONLY:

Date: _____
Staff Member: _____

***Needs Second Look
Completed***

Describe what you did and found, and circle the appropriate condition above:

Date: _____
Staff Member: _____

***Needs Third Look
Completed***

Describe what you did and found, and circle the appropriate condition above:

Date: _____
Staff Member: _____

***Could Not Find
Completed***

Describe what you did and found, and circle the appropriate condition above:
