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 Department 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."

A research request asks Reference staff to conduct a more in-depth investigation into a particular topic on behalf of a patron.

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 two hours per individual request, or three 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 Department 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

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: March 27, 2019
Amended by the Board of Trustees: 01/29/2020, 11/18/2020, 11/17/2021, 11/30/2022, 9/27/2023, 9/25/2024, 11/19/2025, 9/30/2026
Reviewed by the Policy Review Committee: 11/13/2025, 9/9/2026

Appendix A

Research Request Form

(example)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Library Card Number: _____
(if an OWWL card holder)

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¢.**
☐ **I understand that if I request prints sent by mail, I will be charged printing and postage costs.**

Mailing Address *(if send by mail)* _____

STAFF USE ONLY
- Date Intake Form: _____ Employee: _____
- Date Contacted for Pick Up: _____ How Contacted?_____ Employee: _____
- Date Picked Up Results: _____ Employee: _____

Inform the patron that:
- The head of the Reference Department will review the request and make a determination on whether or not we can conduct the research.
- Delivery times of any results may vary.
- Research is capped at 2 hours, or 3 hours for genealogy.

- Once initially filled out, put this form in the labeled blue file holder in the Ref. Office.
- When searching, use a yellow Research Request flash drive to save all files/documents you find.
- For newspaper results, save a close-up of any articles AND a view of the entire page.
- Give all documents unique, identifying file names (e.g. "JohnSmith_1932_FLTimesObit")

- When COMPLETE, leave this form, the flashdrive, and any printouts in the blue file holder in the Ref. Office.
- When patron picks up results, they must pay for any printouts they keep, then this form is returned to the blue file holder in the Ref. Office for record keeping.

Employee: _____ **COMPLETE**
Date Searched: _____
Time Spent: _____ **NEEDS A SECOND LOOK**

Where you researched and what you found, or didn't find: _____
_____
_____
_____

Employee: _____ **COMPLETE**
Date Searched: _____
Time Spent: _____ **NEEDS A THIRD LOOK**

Where you researched and what you found, or didn't find: _____
_____
_____
_____

Employee: _____ **COMPLETE**
Date Searched: _____
Time Spent: _____ **COULD NOT FIND**

Where you researched and what you found, or didn't find: _____
_____
_____