



Legal Reference Service Policy

BOARD POLICY

The Legal Reference Service of Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD) provides access to legal materials, training, education, and services in a welcoming and positive environment. The Law Collection is a non-circulating collection located in Penrose Library and is available during regular library hours. This collection offers access to current legal and law-related information for federal, state, and local legal materials, in both print and electronic form, and serves patrons doing personal research, paralegal students, and legal professionals.

PPLD strives to provide and maintain collections that serve the diverse needs of the community.

I. DISTRICT PROCEDURES

- A. PPLD staff may assist patrons to locate legal materials and may show patrons how to use the legal books and databases. However, according to Colorado State Statutes, only attorneys licensed to practice by the Colorado Supreme Court may interpret the law (statutes, regulations, or cases) or offer opinions as to how someone's specific legal problem should be handled. Library staff may not interpret the law or offer opinions about a patron's legal problem. To do so would constitute the unauthorized practice of law and could subject the staff member and Pikes Peak Library District to prosecution.

II. GUIDELINES

- A. PPLD staff may offer the following services:
 - Demonstrate how to effectively use the legal books and databases by explaining how to use the indices and tables of contents.
 - Help to find the broad definition of legal words and phrases.
 - Perform an online search when the patron has a specific citation.
 - Suggest search terms when using indices, tables of content, or other finding tools.
 - Teach legal research techniques such as the use of digests, codes, statutes, and KeyCite.
 - Locate biographical information about attorneys and judges.

- Refer patrons to Nolo Press, Bradford, or similar publications or databases to show the patron sample forms in the resources that deal with the patron's legal questions. The patron will decide whether or not to use the forms.

B. PPLD staff may not:

- Select, draft, or complete legal documents or agreements such as wills, contracts, court pleadings, etc.
- Recommend a specific legal form or explain how to fill in the form.
- Give advice or counsel to patrons as to their legal rights or responsibilities.
- Interpret a legal document from a court or an attorney.
- Make specific recommendations as to which statutes, regulations, or cases will answer the patron's legal questions.
- Recommend a specific attorney.