

**KING COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Job Description**

Title: **Library Associate - Answerline**

Dept: **Public Services**

Job Code Number: **10415**

Reports to: **Managing Librarian**

Grade Number: **13, Represented**

Effective Date: **July 2001**

FLSA Status: **Non-Exempt**

General Position Summary:

Researches and provides accurate and timely answers to reference questions about any topic. Provides information on KCLS policies and procedures, materials, and programs to greater King County area residents. Communication is via telephone, Internet, fax, and TTY. Answers to reference questions are targeted for response within 1 day for e-mail, or 5 to 7 minutes by telephone. Internet searching and on-line database proficiency in addition to knowledge of print and other sources are required to fully develop responses to questions. Knowledge of computer applications is needed to establish and maintain specialized databases. The Answerline phone number is printed on all KCLS library cards and literature, making the position the first-line of communication with the public and results in a very wide range of inquiries from a diverse clientele.

Essential Duties/Major Responsibilities:

Any of the following duties may be performed. These examples are not necessarily performed by all incumbents, however, and do not include all specific tasks an incumbent may be expected to perform.

1. Respond to questions on the phone regarding KCLS services including quick reference questions, troubleshooting the on-line catalog and access to it, databases, and assisting patrons with holds and Circulation inquiries.
2. Respond to e-mail reference questions that originate from the Ask a Librarian service on the KCLS web-site.
3. Develop and maintain databases of frequently asked reference questions.
4. Develop and maintain several system-wide lists including the Special Collections list, Hotlines, Investment Newsletters and Hard Copy Newspaper lists.
5. Develop and maintain web-links on various topics on the KCLS homepage.
6. Provide information about KCLS programs, policies and procedures.

Secondary Duties:

1. Evaluate reference source material.
2. Serve on committees as needed.
3. Other related work as assigned.

Communication:

Contacts are normally made with KCLS employees, customers, patrons and members of the general public. Contacts are frequently initiated by a third party, occasionally made on the incumbent's own initiative and are occasionally made at the supervisor's request. The position has a requirement to interact with customers frequently and communications are occasionally about confidential/sensitive matters.

Initiative:

The position operates from established and well-known procedures (on a general basis) and it is responsible for problem solving at the department level. No formal responsibility exists for designing new programs/services or concepts. The job involves a moderate degree of complexity. The position operates independently with minimal supervision and recurring work situations occur with occasional variations for the norm. Decisions are made within specific organizational policy constraints/guidelines.

Accountability:

The position experiences regular interruptions and some flexibility is required. The incumbent considers own work and work of others in formulating plans and must be able to forecast for the near future. Operational planning is required at the department level. The position makes decisions that have impact across a limited number of work units and work is occasionally monitored or checked by the supervisor. Errors or delays in this position could result in misinformation being communicated to callers and result in further questions or time to clarify and/or correct the information provided.

Leadership:

The position does not include mentoring responsibility. It is responsible for role modeling and promoting organizational values within the work unit or department and as a representative of the organization to the public/patrons.

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent specializing in Liberal Arts, Library Science or a related field.
- Two to four years experience in library operations.
- Non-Bachelor degree candidates must have 4-6 years library experience.
- Preference given to candidates with some reference experience.

Necessary Knowledge, Ability and Skills:

- Working knowledge of online databases and the Internet.
- Working knowledge of computer software program operation with Microsoft Office products knowledge desirable.
- Knowledge of basic reference sources and search techniques.
- Knowledge and support of the principles of intellectual freedom.

Ability to:

- Read, write, speak and understand the English language.
- Communicate effectively via telephone or in writing.
- Research and respond to a wide variety of questions within a limited time frame.
- Effectively listen to callers to understand their needs and concerns.
- Use diplomacy and tact in communications with callers.
- Clearly and succinctly communicate both verbally and in writing.
- Listen and communicate effectively with a diverse population.
- Use the telephone, e-mail, fax and TTY.

Skill in:

- Assessing caller problems and concerns and logically finding solutions.
- Developing and maintaining a customer service professional approach in all contacts.
- Working within pre-established time deadlines/targets.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

None

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit and talk or hear, and to use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is occasionally required to walk. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is performed in a normal office environment. The position requires constant sitting, extensive close work (eyestrain), and extensive PC monitor work. Work varied hours including weekends and evenings. There may be some exposure to angry or hostile individuals.

King County Library System  
Job Description: Library Associate - Answerline  
July 2001  
Page 4

Advancement Possibilities:  
Librarian Series, with additional education

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.

The job description does not constitute an employment agreement between KCLS and the employee, and is subject to change as the needs of KCLS and the requirements of the job change.

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_  
HR Manager

Final: 7/31/01