



Genealogy Research Policy

Approved February 12, 2018

Updated October 13, 2025

PURPOSE:

Harlan Community Library maintains a collection of local history and genealogy materials to benefit the community.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to staff and patrons who use our local historical materials.

POLICY:

- Local Historical Materials
 - Materials that are deemed “local” and of a historical value are maintained in the “Iowa Room” located at the front of the library. These items are available for the public to use in the library and cannot be checked out.
- Digital Newspapers
 - Digital Newspapers are accessible via the library’s website and may be utilized both in the library and at home.
- Microfilm
 - The library retains local papers on microfilm. The microfilm collection is maintained due to its longevity.
 - Microfilm can be viewed on the microfilm machine in the library. Staff are available to assist patrons with using the machine. The machine is available on a first come first serve basis.
- Bound Newspapers
 - Bound issues of local newspapers are archived in the lower level of the library and are only accessible to library staff. Access to the public is only allowed on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the research and the condition of the newspaper. Library staff will evaluate the request for research and make that determination. All viewing of bound newspapers will be done on the main level of the library under direct supervision of library staff.
- Research Services
 - Patrons can request to have a “search” conducted for them. The search can be in the newspapers or in any of the in-library-use-only historical materials.

- Library staff will conduct searches at the staff's convenience.
- Library staff will only accept 3 requests at a time.
- Searches need to be requested in writing and contain the name, address, phone number and email of the person requesting the search.
- Specific information about the search needs to be given to narrow down the search period.
- \$20.00 per hour, with a minimum charge of one hour, regardless of whether any actual information is located.
- Copy fees apply at \$.10 for black and white/\$.50 for colored copies.
- Results from the search:
 - Can be picked up at the library by the person who requested the search.
 - Can be emailed, however, scanning fees apply at \$1.00 per page.
 - Can be mailed via US Postal Service at the expense of the person requesting the search.
- Payment for services must be received prior to sending out any information and must be in cash, check or by credit card (convenience fees apply).