

Privacy & Confidentiality of Library Records Policy

Policy Creation: 12/2014

Policy Reviewed: 9/2017, 9/2020, 4/2023

Policy Purpose

This policy explains how the Library serves as custodian of and protects confidential information, honors privacy, responds to requests for information about library users, and alerts patrons about confidentiality and privacy rights and potential risks.

The Board respects patrons' privacy and recognizes its responsibility to protect that privacy per the Code of Iowa and the American Library Association's Statement of Professional Ethics. Confidentiality of library records is central to intellectual freedom and directly related to the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. The custodian of the Library records is the Library Director or their designee.

Confidential Information

The Library recognizes Iowa Code, Sec 22.7, which states that the records of a library that would reveal the library patron's identity are confidential, including circulation history and material or information requests. The Library will store confidential personal registration information such as an address, phone number, and e-mail address, and personally identifiable uses of library resources, including but not limited to:

- Information sources consulted
- Information sought or received
- Reference interviews
- Materials used or borrowed
- Interlibrary loan records
- Internet and database search records

Exceptions

No individual other than Library staff shall have access to library records other than their own without the individual's consent, except as listed below:

- Library records may be subject to disclosure to officials according to a process subpoena or court order authorized under a federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, administrative, or legislative investigative power. The Library Director will seek legal counsel from the City Attorney in the event of such a request to release library records and will respond to the request according to the advice of counsel.
- The Library interprets possession of a patron number as consent to use it unless there is reason to believe that consent has not been given.

Administrative Policies

- Library records for overdue materials for which notice has been given may be revealed to parents of minor children, a collection agency, or law enforcement personnel.
- Illegal activity is not protected. The Library may review the information when a violation of law or Library Policy designed to protect facilities, networks, and equipment is suspected.
- The user provides contact information for displays and meeting room reservations and is considered public information.
- Persons attending library programs or public meetings may be recorded or photographed as audience members. These images may be used for library programming or promotion.
- Library records may be accessible by third-party support personnel while providing routine software maintenance or troubleshooting. The Library will consider third-party vendor privacy policies when selecting digital collections and resources. The Library cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information sought or received, or materials consulted or borrowed from third-party digital services to which we provide access.
- The Library Director may authorize specific uses of the data contained in library records by the Library to conduct Library business.