

CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS/PATRON INFORMATION POLICY

The Elyria Public Library System protects the privacy of the individual in accordance with Ohio law. Library staff understand that access to patron, transaction, and collection files is strictly limited to Library business.

The Library will not release any information about patrons or patrons' use of Library services or materials to anyone or any group except:

In case of a subpoena, search warrant or a court order. If a court order, search warrant or subpoena is issued, before complying, the Library will consult legal counsel to assure the document is in proper form.

In an emergency situation. Emergencies involving public health/safety, may require an immediate decision. In such cases, the Director, Associate Director or other designated staff member will be contacted, and legal counsel will be consulted when possible.

When a parent/guardian/custodian requests information. The Library will provide information about a minor child to his/her parent, guardian or custodian with the presence of the child, the child's Library card, or identification of the parent, guardian or custodian.

The 2001 USA Patriot Act expands federal law enforcement's surveillance, seizure and investigative powers. Within the Library, this could mean that a search warrant might be used to obtain information. A search warrant can be executed immediately whereas a subpoena allows the Library a period of time to respond to and possibly contest the court's request.

Should Library records be requested under the USA Patriot Act, the law states that in certain circumstances, Library staff can not inform the person whose information is being requested, and can not speak to co-workers, the media or other government officials about the inquiry. Such requests, should they occur, may only be reported to the appropriate higher authority within the Library.

All information supplied to the Library, whether in person in one of the Library buildings or online, would be covered by these guidelines. This might include items such as:

- Name, address, city, state, zip code and e-mail address;
- Home and/or work phone number;
- Library card number;
- Date of birth, gender;
- Special notes and/or comments, including choice of username and password for account access;
- Records of the patron Library account, including materials borrowed or requested in the past;
- Other communications between the patron and the Library.

Patron Library circulation records will be retained only as long as there is an Administrative need.

Children under 7th grade require a parent's or guardian's signature, as well as verification of parent's/guardian's name and residency in order to obtain a Library card. However, parents/guardians need to be aware that children in seventh grade or higher may obtain a Library card with an Ohio Department of Public Safety identification card or photo identification.

The Library does not sell information collected on its Web site.

The Library has put in place appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures in an effort to safeguard and secure the information collected to prevent unauthorized access, to maintain data security and to ensure the correct use of information. The Library cannot, however, guarantee that information collected would never be accessed by unauthorized users.

This statement of privacy does not apply to e-mail and other electronic communications that a patron sends and receives outside the Library via the Internet. On the Internet, there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The Library's Web site includes links to outside sites. Library patrons should be aware that they are subject to the privacy policies of any other Web sites and organizations visited and used. Those sites may have different privacy statements and the Library's privacy statement does not apply. The Elyria Public Library is not responsible for protecting personal information gathered by outside Web sites.

Protecting the privacy of the very young is especially important to the Library. Parents are urged to supervise their children's use of the Internet, especially when a child wishes to give out personal information online. Parents may wish to refer to the pamphlet, "Child Safety on the Information Highway", which is produced by the National Center for Missing and Exploited children, as a further guide.

Adopted by the Board: December 12, 2005