

**PIONEERLAND LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD POLICY**

Policy: Confidentiality of Patron Records	Policy number: TBD
Policy Date: May 17, 2007	Revision Date: November 15, 2012
Approved By Policy Committee: November 15, 2012	Approved by the Board: January 17, 2013
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Purpose: The Library has the responsibility to protect each individual library user's right to confidentiality and privacy relating to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.

Policy: All patron records are confidential. No library employee shall reveal the identity of a borrower to any requestor or make known in any manner any information contained in patron records.

With the exception of library personnel performing their required library duties, patron records may only be disclosed to:

- The patron himself/herself upon verification of identity
- If a library cardholder is under the age of 18, the parent or guardian who signed for the child's card may be given specific information regarding that child's record.
- If the parent or guardian is in possession of the child's card, they may be given any information in the child's record.
- Under court order or subpoena, in which case library staff are to refer all requests for the above information to library management.

The records referred to in this policy, whether print or electronic, include but are not limited to:

- Circulation records from any library
- Interlibrary loan requests
- Patron book requests
- Computer booking records
- Reference requests received in person, via email, telephone, or virtual reference
- All other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities or services including computer usage

The library will reasonably cooperate with law enforcement personnel or emergency personnel in identifying individuals using library facilities or space:

- In the event of clear and present danger to public health or safety;
- In situations involving "hot pursuit" by law enforcement;
- In other emergency or exigent situations determined at the discretion of designated staff on site.

The confidential information in these records includes, but is not limited to:

- Subjects researched
- Materials consulted
- Individual titles borrowed
- All information on the patron record
- The presence of a patron in library facilities or space

Procedures: Librarians must protect each user's rights to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired.

This means that you should not talk about patron's requests outside of the library environment. You can't, for example, tell your spouse about who dropped into the library to ask how to file his own divorce. You should not discuss any questions (with anyone!) that would violate a patron's privacy.

In discussing questions with your fellow employees, make sure that other patrons can't overhear, and that you are doing so for professional and not personal reasons.

You must not give out information on what books a patron has checked out without a court order. (Minnesota law protects this right to privacy. See next page for Minnesota Law on Confidentiality of Library Records.) If you have such a request from a law enforcement agency, refer it to your supervisor.

Whenever you are asking the public for their personal information on an application or survey, you must include a "Tennessee warning." This warning includes information on why the data is being collected and what will be done with it.

References:

- A. Minnesota Statutes Section 13-40. Library and historical data.
- B. Paragraph III of the American Library Association's STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS dealing with patrons' privacy: