

CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATRON RECORDS AND PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

Purpose:

Library professional ethics require that personally identifiable information about library customers be kept confidential and it is the purpose of this policy to provide staff with the information they need to effectively handle requests for information from law enforcement agencies.

Policy:

The confidentiality of library records is a basic principle of librarianship. Confidentiality ensures free access to information, a right guaranteed under the First Amendment of the Constitution. The State of California protects Library registration and circulation records. They cannot be released to anyone but the library customer. The follow exception does apply:

In accord with the Public Records Act, California Government Code Section 6267:

All registration and circulation records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed to any person, local agency, or state agency except as follows:

- (a) By a person acting within the scope of his or her duties within the administration of the library.
- (b) By a person authorized, in writing, by the individual to whom the records pertain, to inspect the records.
- (c) By order of the appropriate superior court.

The Library will not disclose any circulation record linking a patron with specific materials "unless the public interest requires disclosure in the particular instance" and such public interest is clearly documented, as with a subpoena.

Other personally identifiable information is sometimes collected in the course of our work in the library. This information is also confidential. The Library tries to minimize these records, to maintain our library patrons' privacy. Records on all but the Library's catalog automation system will be regularly cleared and no attempt will be made to track personally identifiable information on other computers or computer systems, except as is necessary for security and system maintenance.