

CHAPTER 3
SECTION D
CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS

POLICY STATEMENT

Records identifying the names of library users with specific materials are confidential in nature. It is the policy of the Ellensburg Public Library to safeguard access to patron library records and restrict access to that information only to the authorized patron who owns the library card or to the parent / legal guardian of a minor.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Confidentiality of Library Records Policy is to protect patron rights of their information. The confidentiality of circulation and registration records are protected by law (RCW 42.56.310). In addition, the Ellensburg Public Library follows the American Library Association (ALA) Code of Ethics (Article III) and the library's administrative policies with regards to the confidentiality and protection of information concerning library records from inquiries by local, state and federal authorities.

APPLICATION

- Patron records shall not be made available to any requestor except upon receipt of an order or subpoena authorized by law.
- The library record of a child has the same confidentiality protection under Library policy as that of any other patron. However, the Ellensburg Public Library requires parental responsibility for materials checked out by children for whom they have given signed permission for a library card. These include young children and youth without their own identification. Therefore, instances arise when it is necessary for a parent or legal guardian to be provided with information about their child's library record (for example, when a child has a fine, or when a child has misplaced library materials). The same procedures that will enable parents to obtain information about their own personal cards apply to a minor child's records.
- The library may need to disclose information regarding the records of delinquent patrons with overdue materials or fines to the city's collection agency. Information for collection purposes to be provided as necessary.
- For picking up items on hold, a patron may indicate which party or parties can act on his or her behalf by sending his or her library card or notice with another party.
- Any problems or conditions relating to the privacy of circulation records which are not provided for in this policy statement shall be referred to the Library Director, who upon proper study of the issues, and as necessary upon the advice and counsel of the City Attorney, shall render a written decision as to whether to heed the request.

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