

Confidentiality of Library Records Policy for Elizabeth B Pert Library – Hector

Policy Statement

The Elizabeth B Pert Library is committed to protecting the confidentiality of library records in accordance with privacy laws and ethical standards. We recognize that library records, including personal information of patrons and circulation data, must be kept confidential to protect users' privacy and uphold the library's trust within the community.

Regulation

1. Confidentiality of Patron Information:

All personally identifiable information related to library users, including but not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and library activity (e.g., circulation records), shall be kept confidential and not disclosed except as required by law.

2. Conditions for Disclosure:

The library will only release library records when required by a legal subpoena, court order, or other legal process. Staff will cooperate with law enforcement only under such circumstances and in accordance with applicable legal guidelines.

3. Staff Access:

Access to library records is restricted to library staff members who need the information to perform their job duties. All staff must be trained on the library's confidentiality policies and handle patron information with care and respect.

4. Retention and Disposal of Records:

Library records must be retained for the minimum time required by law and library procedures. After this time, records containing personal information must be securely disposed of to ensure confidentiality.

Procedure

1. Handling Patron Information:

- (1) Library staff will ensure that personal information is only accessed or disclosed in accordance with the library's policy.
- (2) When a patron requests personal information or records, the staff member must verify the identity of the patron before providing any data.
- (3) If the request for records is made by an external party, library staff will inform the patron of the request, unless prohibited by law.

2. Training Library Staff:

- (1) All new staff members must undergo training on the confidentiality policy during their onboarding process.

- (2) Staff will receive annual refresher training on privacy standards and procedures to ensure the protection of patron information.
- (3) The library director or designated supervisor will conduct the training and provide staff with resources to handle confidential information.

3. **Requesting Disclosure of Records:**
 - (1) If a request for library records is made by law enforcement or other authorized individuals, the staff member must immediately contact the library director or president of the Board.
 - (2) The director or president of the Board will review the request to ensure that it is legally valid and then process the request, following all appropriate protocols.
 - (3) If required by law, the library will inform the patron that their records have been disclosed.
4. **Disposal of Records:**
 - (1) When patron records or documents containing personal information are no longer required, they must be securely shredded or electronically destroyed.
 - (2) The library will maintain a secure process for disposing of records, ensuring that confidential information is not compromised.

Guideline

1. Staff should always err on the side of caution when handling confidential information, seeking guidance from a supervisor or the library director if they are unsure about the appropriate course of action.
2. Patrons should be informed, through signage and library communications, that their library records are confidential and will not be disclosed unless required by law.
3. The library should maintain a secure environment for all patron information, including locked file cabinets for paper records and password-protected systems for digital data.

This policy ensures that Elizabeth B Pert Library respects and protects the privacy of its patrons and complies with all relevant laws regarding the confidentiality of library records.