

SHEPHERDSTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Library Confidentiality and Privacy

The Shepherdstown Public Library is committed to patron confidentiality and privacy as guaranteed by the West Virginia Code, Chapter 10 (§10-1-22.) The Library will generally refuse requests for available lists of registered library patrons or for the records of patron transactions by any federal, state, or local law enforcement officer except pursuant to a court order entered by a court of competent jurisdiction. Costs incurred by the Library due to compliance with such court orders will be charged to the agency seeking the information.

Exceptions

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

- The patron himself/herself upon verification of identity;
- Parents of minor children under specific circumstances (See "Minor Patrons" below); Anyone with written consent of the patron involved;
- Law enforcement officers, when staff members have knowledge of the name and description of a person who has committed, is committing, or threatens to commit a crime affecting Library staff, patrons, trustees, or Library property;
- Law enforcement officers, when an officer believes there is imminent danger or physical harm of a patron. Information such as materials borrowed, resources reviewed, or services used at the library may only be disclosed upon court order;
- Law enforcement officers, upon court order or subpoena, in which case library staff are to refer requests to the Library Director or person in-charge.
- **Minor Patrons Exception** If a library cardholder is under the age of 16, 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. If the child's card is not in the parent's or guardian's possession, the information provided will be limited to materials that are overdue, lost, or damaged and fines owed.

Confidentiality and privacy extend to any transaction with any patron of the library. In our small setting, care must be taken not to expose any information in any form to anyone who is not entitled to it. This includes:

- Patron personal record information
- Circulation records
- Items on hold shelf
- Overdue materials records

- Interlibrary loan requests
- Database search records
- Requests for photocopy duplication
- Copies left in copier
- Faxes left in fax machine
- User profiles for selective dissemination of information (SDI) services (Special Services)
- Records of Web pages visited on public terminals
- E-mail messages sent and received on public terminals
- Records of individual consultations with patrons
- Copies of messages generated through e-mail or chat reference services
- Sign-up sheets for use of computer terminals or other library resources
- Any other instance in which patron information is present

Names must not be spoken aloud when associated with an item or a transaction while within hearing of other patrons and volunteers.

Phone messages informing patrons of arrival of requested books may not include the item title.

All unnecessary paper with patron information on it must be shredded.