

Patron Privacy Policy

Pickaway County District Public Library

The Board of Trustees of the Pickaway County District Public Library (the "Library") recognizes that patron information and library records are confidential. It is the policy of the Library to protect the privacy of those who use the library. Library staff and volunteers shall protect information from and about Library patrons; this includes requests for information and materials, online sites and resources accessed, and any borrowing transactions, including credit card information. Access to patron records and information must be strictly limited to the conduct of legitimate library business.

Patron Information and Library Records

Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 149.432 defines patron information as personally identifiable information about an individual who has used any library service or borrowed any library materials. A library record is defined as a record in any form that is maintained by the library and that contains any of the following types of information:

- Information an individual is required to provide in order to be eligible to use library services or borrow materials.
- Information that identifies an individual as having requested or obtained specific materials or materials on a specific subject.
- Information that is provided by an individual to assist a library staff member to answer a specific question or provide information on a particular subject.

Use of Data from Library Records for Statistical Purposes

Information that does not identify an individual and that is retained for studying or evaluating the use of the library is not considered confidential and is not subject to this policy.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

Under Ohio law, a patron's library records or information shall not be made available to any agency of federal, state, or local government, or to any spouse or individual other than the individual who is the subject of the record or information, except as follows:

- For records or patron information pertaining to minor children when requested by parents, guardians, or custodians. The statute does not limit this right to parents who actually live with the child. Parents who do not have custody, who are separated, or who are divorced have the right to access their minor children's records.
- In accordance with a subpoena, search warrant, or other court order, or to a law enforcement officer who is investigating a matter involving public safety in exigent circumstances. Upon receipt of such process, court order, or subpoena, the Library will consult with legal counsel to determine if such process, court order or subpoena is in proper form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance in a court of competent jurisdiction. If the process, court order, or subpoena is not in proper form, or if good cause has not been shown, the Library will insist that any such defects be cured before the request is complied with. Proper identification of any law enforcement officer will be made before any information is released. All such requests for information must be referred to the Library Director or in his/her absence, supervisor or senior staff member.

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- At the written request or with the written consent of the individual who is the subject of the record or information. The Library recognizes and honors opt-in confidentiality waiver agreements. Each patron registering for a library card can designate specific individuals to whom they grant access to their library records. Access to patron information is permitted only upon verification that the cardholder has granted access permission to the individual.
- For library administrative purposes as defined by Ohio Revised Code 149.432, including establishment or maintenance of a system to manage the library records or to assist in the transfer of library records from one records management system to another, compilation of statistical data on library use, and collection of fines, fees, and non-returned library materials.

Releasing Patron Information

- Library staff will provide access to patron account information at a service desk to a patron who has the library card in hand for that account or who can provide verification related to the account in question. Staff may choose to ask for additional information and/or identification.
- Library staff will release library information or library records pertaining to a minor child to that child's parent, guardian, or custodian upon presentation of the child's library card, card number, or sufficient information that both identifies the child's library record and provides library staff with a reasonable assurance that the person requesting the information is indeed the child's parent, guardian, or custodian.
- Library staff may release patron account information over the telephone to a caller who can provide the patron's library card number and date of birth; or the address, phone number, and date of birth associated with that account.
- When a lost card is reported, the patron account associated with that card will be blocked until either a replacement card is issued or the lost card is found and patron information is verified by the patron.

Consequences for Fraudulent Access

Sanctions for patrons fraudulently accessing someone's account may result in expulsion from the library, suspension of library privileges, and/or criminal prosecution or other legal actions, as appropriate.