Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Adopted: 01/22
Revised: 10/26
Approved by: Library Board of Trustees

PURPOSE

The Fenton Free Library respects the privacy of everyone who uses the library and protects the privacy of its staff, donors, patrons, and other contacts. People must be confident that no one will learn what they read, the materials they use, the questions they ask, or any other personal information they share.

CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS

The following records are confidential:

a. Library card registration records, including name, address, phone number, email address, and library card number
b. Circulation and hold records, and any record linking a patron to specific materials or services
c. Computer use, database search, interlibrary loan, and reference records
d. Program and meeting room registration records that contain personal information
e. Payment records for fines, fees, or lost materials
f. Any other record that identifies a patron by name or other personal details

ACCESS AND DISCLOSURE

Access to confidential records is limited to the Library Director and designated staff who need it for legitimate library business. Records are released only:

a. With the explicit permission of the patron
b. As necessary for the proper operation of the library
c. To collect fines or recover overdue materials, and then only to the patron, the parent or guardian of a patron under 16, or an entity collecting on the library's behalf
d. Pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or search warrant, or as otherwise required by law

Phone numbers, mailing addresses, and email addresses in registration records are used only for library business, such as hold and overdue notices. They are never sold or shared for any other purpose.

REQUESTS FROM OTHERS

Staff do not release information about a patron to anyone, including family members, outside organizations, and law enforcement. Staff refer all such requests to the Library Director, who is the only person authorized to respond. Records are released to law enforcement only upon receipt of a valid subpoena, court order, or search warrant. Staff do not interpret legal documents.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION

Confidential records are kept only as long as needed, consistent with applicable law and local records retention practices. Documents containing patron information are destroyed (shredded or securely deleted) as soon as they are no longer needed. Any such documents that must be kept are stored in a locked filing cabinet.

TECHNOLOGY AND VENDORS

The library's computer systems and online services, including the catalog, public computers and Wi-Fi, and e-resource providers, may collect patron information. Access to systems that hold patron data is limited to authorized staff and protected by passwords. Vendors may have their own privacy policies, so patrons should not expect the library to control information collected through vendor systems. The library works only with vendors that protect patron privacy and shares only the patron information needed to provide library services.

Fenton Free LIBRARY

STAFF TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITY

Staff and volunteers are trained on this policy at orientation, and staff review and sign it each year, so that confidentiality is applied consistently. Staff and volunteers do not discuss patron information with anyone who does not need it for library business, including information shared privately or observed during programs and events. This applies both inside and outside of the library. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, and contractors.

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND REVIEW

This policy is based on recommendations of the American Library Association and complies with **New York Civil Practice Law and Rules (CPLR) §4509**, which makes library records that contain names or other personally identifying details of library users confidential. The Board of Trustees reviews this policy at least once every five years.

ATTESTATION

I have read and understand this policy and will abide by it. If I have any questions, comments, or concerns, I will address them with the Library Director.

Signature: _____

Date: _____