

EMMAUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS POLICY

1. The Board of Directors of Emmaus Public Library (EPL) specifically recognizes the confidentiality of records related to circulation of library materials that contain names or other personally identifying information regarding the users of the library in accordance with Pennsylvania law Title 24 PA C.S. § 9375.
2. EPL supports the concept of intellectual freedom and the right of each citizen, regardless of age, to free access to information without fear of intimidation or recrimination. The library's confidentiality policy safeguards the first amendment and privacy rights of library users. The library advises employees, volunteers, patrons, and third-party vendors with whom the library has contracted that all library records containing names or other personally identifying information regarding the users of the library are confidential and will not be shared.
3. EPL further subscribes to the American Library Association Library Code of Ethics, Section III, which states, "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted."
4. In most instances, EPL safeguards access to patron library records and restricts access to that information to only the patron who owns the library card and provides that card or to the parent/legal guardian of a minor child with the stipulations and exceptions specified below in item #7.

Exceptions are granted for the following circumstances:

- When the library is experiencing problems with its public access computers, library automation software, or any other technology services it may be necessary to contact third-party vendors with whom the library has contracted for assistance. The library has insured in its contracts with these vendors that patron privacy and confidentiality will be respected.

5. No patron records will be made available to federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies except by a court order as required by law.

- Court orders from law enforcement officers will be referred to the Library Director who will consult legal counsel.
- The library will take such action as is necessary to determine that any court order or process issued by any court or pursuant to any court rule or any agency of government requires that such records be made available.

6. When library employees or volunteers speak either in person, online via email, or by telephone to anyone other than the patron, or to persons who cannot produce their library card or identification, information regarding items checked out, items overdue, fines, and items on hold will be restricted to information that does not reveal the

content, such as number of items or figures for fines owed. Addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal information from patron records will not be given out under the above circumstances. When a patron is unable to confirm his or her identity as required, a print-out of the requested information or an email containing the information can be sent to the patron using the postal/email addresses provided in the registration records.

7. The Library record of a child has the same confidentiality protection under library policy as that of any other patron with the following exception:

- Parents or legal guardians are permitted access to the records of their minor children through the age of 17 (seventeen). The parent/legal guardian must appear in person, accompanied by the child whose records are sought, provide the child's library card, and/or provide other acceptable identification for both parent/guardian and child.
- Emmaus Public Library recognizes that parents or legal guardians who have signed their minor children's registration cards have assumed the financial responsibility for materials checked out to their children's cards; therefore, parents or legal guardians will be provided with information about their minor children's library records when materials are overdue or lost.

8. Adult patrons may waive their rights to the confidentiality of their library records and grant them to another adult cardholder by initiating a waiver via the library's automated system, or by giving their library card to an authorized person to use on their behalf.

9. This policy is not a license to steal library materials. In the event of theft, the library will release to the appropriate law enforcement officers the relevant patron records, including the name and address of the person committing the theft and a list of materials stolen with the replacement costs.

10. Patrons are encouraged to inform themselves of all library policies before signing their own or a minor child's library card registration.

11. Complaints

- Complaints of violations of this policy must be received in writing within 10 days of the violation.
- The Director shall respond to a complaint in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the complaint, detailing any corrective action taken.
- All reasonable efforts will be made to resolve the complaint.

12. Violations of the terms of this policy by employees and volunteers will result in disciplinary procedures.

Adopted January 21, 2020