

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Brown County Library and Wisconsin State Statute 43.30 protect the privacy of library users. Protecting library user privacy and keeping confidential information that identifies individuals or that associates individuals with their use of library books, materials, equipment, online resources, programs, facilities, and/or staff assistance is an integral principle of the Library.

The Library will keep confidential all such information that it purposefully or inadvertently collects or maintains to the fullest extent permitted by federal, state, and local law. Protection of confidentiality extends to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, and received. Protection of confidentiality includes safeguarding database search records, circulation records, interlibrary loan records, and information regarding other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities or services.

The Library does not collect personal information about a library user when a user visits the Library's website, registers for a program, or registers for a library card unless the user authorizes the Library to have that information. Any information the library user chooses to provide, such as information gathered through voluntary library user surveys, will be used only to provide or improve library services.

The relevant Wisconsin laws concerning the confidentiality of library records are Wisconsin Statutes Section 43.30 and the Wisconsin Personal Information Practices Act, Sections 19.62 to 19.80.

The Library Board and Administration affirm their adherence to the Wisconsin State Statute §43.30:

43.30 Public Library Circulation Records. Records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of the public library system, indicating which of its documents or other library materials have been loaned to or used by an identifiable individual may not be disclosed except to persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library or library system or persons authorized by the individual to inspect such records, or by order of a court of law.

Wisconsin's Personal Information Practices Act (Sections 19.62 to 19.80) requires all state and local government organizations (including public libraries) to develop procedures to protect the privacy of personal information kept by the organization. Libraries (and all other government organizations) are required to develop rules of conduct for employees involved in collecting, maintaining, using, and providing access to personally identifiable information. Libraries are also required to ensure that employees handling such records "know their duties and responsibilities relating to protecting personal privacy, including applicable state and federal laws."

Library Cards and Circulation Records

To receive a library card, library users are required to provide identifying information such as name, birth date and mailing address. This identifying information is retained as long as the library user continues to use the library card.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY – page 2

A library user's library record includes current identifying information, items currently checked out or on hold, as well as overdue materials and fines. The Library does not maintain a history of what a library user has previously checked out once books and materials have been returned on time.

When fines accrue on a user's account, the Library does maintain records of items that have been borrowed but returned after the due date, or are still outstanding on the user's record.

RFID

Information stored on the RFID chip/tag is limited to the item barcode or an encrypted number and a security bit that indicates if the item is in or out of the library. RFID technology is not used for library cards.

Public Computer Use and the Library's Online System

The Library uses an online computer reservation program that allows the public to reserve a computer in order to access the Library's catalog, the Internet and other resources. The Library uses a combination of session management and security software to log off patrons, erase patron data, and reset changes to computer settings before allowing the next patron to log on.

The Library's online system offers library user self-activated features including My Account, an email notification option and saved lists. Information gathered and stored using this feature is only accessible to the library user.

Patrons may only check on their own transaction accounts. Employees may permit an individual to view or know his or her child's transaction record only upon presentation of the individual's library borrower's card or identification. Corroborating identification may be required at the discretion of the employee. Information as to transaction activity (titles, number of items checked out, existence of overdue fees or bills) will be given by telephone only if the caller can verify their account information. Library staff will not knowingly give one patron's transaction information to another patron.

Email, Web Forms, and Reference Questions

Information provided by a library user via email or Web forms will be used only for purposes described at the point of collection (for example on a Web form), such as to send information or provide library services to the library user, update information on the library user's record, or respond to a library user's questions or comments.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY – page 3

If contact information is provided, the Library may contact the library user to clarify a comment or question, or to learn about the level of customer satisfaction with library services.

The Library treats reference questions, regardless of format of transmission (in person, via telephone, fax, email or online) confidentially. Identifying information related to these questions is purged on a minimum of two weeks.

Email is not necessarily secure against interception and may be subject to disclosure requirements of the Public Records Act or other legal disclosure requirements.

Information Automatically Collected and Stored

As library users browse through the Library's website, read pages, or download information, certain information will be automatically gathered and stored about the visit, but not about the library user. The information gathered is for statistical purposes only to insure that the Library is providing appropriate services and does not personally identify any individual. The data that is collected is not connected to any identifying information.

The Library does not collect information about who library users are, but other organizations might. The Library encourages library users to become familiar with the privacy policies of their ISP (Internet Service Provider) and the websites that they visit to learn what information might be collected elsewhere online.

Links to Other Sites

The Library's website contains links to other sites. The Brown County Library is not responsible for the privacy practices of other sites, including providers of online database services for which the Library subscribes, which may be different from the privacy practices described in this policy. The Library encourages library users to become familiar with privacy policies of other sites visited, including linked sites.

See [Internet and Public Computer Acceptable Use Policy](#) for additional information on Responsible Use and Wireless Connections.

Working with Law Enforcement

The Brown County Library recognizes that law enforcement agencies and officers may occasionally believe that library records indicating the identity of library users include a library users name, library card number, telephone number, street address, email addresses, post-office box number or 9-digit

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY – page 4

extended zip code would be helpful to the investigation of criminal activity. The issuance of a court order, following a showing of good cause, is required for release of such information.

Information and documents (interpreted by the Library Board as all transactions associated with the use of library materials including interlibrary loan forms, records of reference questions, records of computer use, and other documents or electronic records which would link the individual with particular materials or services) will not be released without the authorization of the individual or by court order except as needed by the library for the legitimate recovery or protection of library materials.

Requests for transaction information by law enforcement officials should be referred to the Director, or a senior Administrative Staff member.

In the case of failure to return materials, the library may disclose checkout information and correspondence to appropriate legal authorities involved in securing return of, or payment for, these materials.

Staff is authorized to request identification from library users as necessary and appropriate for safety and security or when library rules have been violated. Refusal to identify oneself under these circumstances may be grounds for denial of service.

If the library has cause to believe that a criminal act has been committed on library property or with library resources, Administration will cooperate with law enforcement authorities to obtain proper court orders for release of such privileged library records as may be necessary for criminal investigation and prosecution.

Library staff are allowed to share information about use of library resources and services by identified library patrons as necessary for the performance of their job duties and in accordance with procedures approved by the Library Director and/or Library Board.