

POLICY ON PRIVACY, SUBPOENAS AND SEARCH WARRANTS

The Flint Public Library strives to protect the privacy of the library patrons to the fullest extent of the law. No confidential information on library patrons will be revealed to anyone, including authorities, without presentation of a subpoena or search warrant.

Only public information such as that found in a phone book or street listing can be used to answer questions. Information from the library database should not be shared or given out. The library database is confidential information. Information about town residents that is not listed in publically available resources should not be discussed or shared with others.

As always, whenever the situation is awkward, please ask a supervisor or the director for assistance.

INFORMATION ACCESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

Library staff will retain only as much information as required to provide services. Personal information on patrons will be discarded as soon as it is no longer needed. Library computers will keep no permanent record of Internet sites visited, electronic data bases used, or searches performed by patrons.

The library will do its utmost to uphold the privacy and confidentiality of patrons' free access to information. The library will rely on existing laws and library policies to control behavior that involves public safety or criminal behavior.

We will strive to create a library environment that is crime free, a safe place, a place for learning and pursuit of knowledge and information on any topic, and a place where patrons can ask any questions and discuss any topic.

DATA BASE SEARCH RECORDS: These records refer to searches of the collection a patron may conduct on Public Access Terminals. These searches are conducted by utilizing the library's automated circulation system. Once a search is conducted, the software does not retain a copy of the search. No records of the search will exist.

CIRCULATION RECORDS: Circulation software tracks materials currently checked out. It automatically erases a reader's borrowing record once material is returned. Fines and other blocked history do remain on patron history.

COMPUTER USE RECORDS: The library does not assign a computer to a patron and no paper record with the patron's information is generated. When a patron logs off a computer, the software erases all history of the research and activity.

INTER-LIBRARY LOAN RECORDS: Patrons may borrow items not owned by The Flint from other libraries outside MVLC through Inter-Library Loan (ILL). We track items currently being borrowed but this information is erased once an item is returned.

REFERENCE INTERVIEWS: No paper records are retained.

COMPLYING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Flint Staff will comply with law enforcement when supplied with legal subpoena or warrant.

All requests for confidential patron information, search warrants or subpoenas must be referred to the Director or Acting Director.

If presented with a subpoena, the Director will direct it to legal counsel for review of the document's legal sufficiency. The Director will tell the law enforcement office of the procedure. And photocopy the official identification of the person seeking information.

If the Library Staff is presented with a warrant, they will not interfere with the search and seizure. A warrant is executed immediately by an officer. The staff should request and copy identification of the officer and notify the Director immediately.

A record should be kept of all legal requests and a record of all costs incurred by any search and or seizure should be kept.

If a "Gag Order" is not in effect, the Director will notify the American Library Association and the Board of Trustees of the occurrence without the disclosure of patron information.

EMERGENCY DISCLOSURE OF COMMUNICATION

If the normal course of business, the Library Staff observes what can be reasonably construed to be a threat of imminent danger to life and/or limb, they are to contact law enforcement immediately by pushing the panic button under the circulation desk or by dialing 911 (a land line is faster than a cell phone). They should also contact the Director or Assistant Director as soon as possible and complete an incident report.

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