

# Knox Public Library

## Confidentiality of Patron Records

### Purpose:

To ensure that all records relating to a patron registration and the subsequent use of and circulation by patrons of materials provided by the Knox Public Library are considered confidential in nature.

### References:

- 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 4428: Library circulation records
- American Library Association, Code of Ethics, Section III
- American Library Association, Confidentiality of Library Records Policy (52.4)
- American Library Association, Privacy: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

### Statement of Policy:

1. The Board of Trustees of the Knox Public Library specifically recognized the confidentiality of records related to circulation of Library materials that contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the Library in accordance with Pennsylvania law: 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 4428.
2. The Board of Trustees 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, and patrons that all Library records that contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the Library are confidential.
3. The Board of Trustees 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 all instances and regardless of circumstances, the Knox Public Library 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/guardian of a minor child with the stipulations and exceptions specified below in Section 7 and to the linked household members specified below in Section 8.
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.
  - a. Court orders from law enforcement officers will be referred to the Director who will consult legal counsel. Other Library employees will not provide any patron records to law enforcement agencies under any circumstances.
  - b. The Library will take such action as is necessary to determine that any court order or process issued by 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 or on the phone to anyone other than the patron, or to person who cannot produce their Library card numbers and provide other identification, information regarding:

- a. Items checked out
- b. Items overdue
- c. Fines
- d. Holds

will be restricted as 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 printout of the requested information may be mailed to the patron using the mailing address provided in the Library's 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.

- a. Parents/guardians are permitted access to the records of their minor children through the age of seventeen. The parent/guardian must provide the child's Library card, and/or provide other acceptable identification. In the case of telephone inquiries, Library card number and verification of the child's address, telephone number, and date of birth are required.
- b. The Knox Public Library recognizes that parents/guardians who have signed their minor children's registrations have assumed the financial responsibility for materials checked out to their children's cards; therefore parents/guardians will be provided with specific 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 executing a limited waiver form, set forth in Appendix II. The limited waiver form must also be executed by the adult who will be permitted access to the adult patron's otherwise confidential library records.

9. No patron may use this policy to steal Library materials. Reference: [18 PA. Cons. Stat. Sec 3929.1: Library Act] 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. All patrons are required to read and sign the patron agreement (Appendix I) that is on the back of their Library Card and the one printed on the Library card registration form.

Approved: 02/2022

#### **Appendix I:**

##### Patron Agreement (back of library card)

(Signature) is responsible for all materials borrowed on this card WHICH MUST BE PRESENTED each time loans are made. A charge will be made for lost card. THIS CARD IS NON-TRANSFERABLE.

##### Patron Agreement (registration form)

I hereby express my intention to use our public Library and promise to obey all its rules, to take good care of all materials drawn by me, to pay promptly all fines or damages charged to me, and to give prompt notice of change in my address. (Signature)

Appendix II:

**Knox Public Library**  
**Waiver of Right of Confidentiality of Library Records**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant a limited waiver of my right to have my records at Knox Public Library remain confidential in accordance with 24 Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Sec. 4428, and Knox Public Library's Confidentiality of Patron Records Policy.

This limited waiver is granted to allow \_\_\_\_\_ to represent my interests regarding library materials I have signed out, put on reserve, or have not returned to the library in a timely manner (overdue).

I may revoke this limited waiver at any time by written notes to the Knox Public Library.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cardholder's Signature

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cardholder's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Staff Person

I accept the limited waiver granted to me by \_\_\_\_\_ as set forth above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cardholder's Signature

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cardholder's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Staff Person