

## Introduction

Bossier Parish Libraries Board of Control is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of library users and patron records. The library shall ensure an individual's right to privacy concerning materials which are borrowed, as set forth in Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 44, section 13.

## Custodian

The legal custodian of library records is the director, who is responsible for responding to any request for library records or information about a library patron. The director may designate one or more library employees to serve as person(s) responsible for responding to any request for library records or information about a library user when the director is unavailable.

## Confidentiality of Library Records

State law prohibits the disclosure of information about circulation records of the library and other records identifying the names of users and material used by them and shall be confidential, regardless of the inquiry. The prohibition includes patrons' addresses, phone numbers and anything else about them, with very few exceptions as defined in LRS 44:13, paragraphs A – D.

Exceptions:

- Information may be given to a parent about the records of a minor child
- With the written permission of the patron
- In response to a valid court order

The circulation and registration records of the library shall not be made available to any third party nor any law enforcement agency of a local, state, or federal government except when a court order in proper form, issued by a court of competent jurisdiction after a showing of good cause, is presented to the custodian by the law enforcement agency or person seeking the records.

Terms used in this policy include:

- **Privacy** is the right to seek information through library resources without having the subject of interest known or examined by others
- **Confidentiality** exists when the library possesses personally identifiable information about patrons and keeps that information private on their behalf
- **Personally Identifiable Information** is information like name, library card number, email or mailing address and telephone number relating to patrons' accounts provided to the library

In general, patrons have the right to know when any library transaction creates a record of personally identifiable information and how such information is used and its confidentiality protected.

## Relevant Laws

Although the library makes every effort to protect patrons' privacy through compliance with state law and through local practice, under the federal USA PATRIOT ACT records of library activities (including materials borrowed and computer workstation usage) may be obtained by federal agents. That federal law prohibits library staff from informing patrons if federal agents have obtained their records. Additional information is available from the American Library Association webpage "The USA Patriot Act in the Library."