



Confidentiality of Records and Patron Privacy

The James Blackstone Memorial Library recognizes that privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association.

Confidentiality of Library Records

When a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users it must keep that information private on their behalf. The James Blackstone Memorial Library circulation and registration records are confidential and are to be used only to conduct library business. Patrons may access their own records from a link on the Library's website.

The records of patron use of library resources, materials or services are confidential per the laws of the State of Connecticut. Section 11-25(b) of the General Statutes of Connecticut states, *Notwithstanding section 1-210, records maintained by libraries that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format, shall be kept confidential, except that the records may be disclosed to officers, employees and agents of the library, as necessary for operation of the library.*

Pursuant to this statute, and as recommended by the American Library Association and the Connecticut Library Association, the James Blackstone Memorial Library recognizes the following information as confidential:

1. Circulation records, including but not limited to, titles and number of items checked out, held on reserve, overdue, lost, or borrowed from another library through interlibrary loan.
2. Borrower registration records that are prerequisite to issuing library cards and permitting individuals to borrow library materials.
3. Computer-traceable or stored information or records of what library patrons viewed on the Internet while using the library's public access computers.

These records may be revealed only as follows:

1. To the individual named in the record;
2. To the parent or legal guardian of a minor (defined by the State of Connecticut as any person below the age of 18), the party made financially responsible for damages or losses to the library caused by the minor;
3. As requested by an agency of the federal, state, county or local government or to any other person only when a court order or search warrant requiring disclosure has been issued by a court of competent jurisdiction;
4. To persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library.

Surrender of Records

As a public institution, the library is legally required to comply with information requests pursuant to a Federal law titled "the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act," commonly known as the USA Patriot Act. In providing information pursuant to this act or another court order, the Library shall observe the following procedures.

1. Any requests for information regarding a library user are to be referred to the library director, or designee, who will explain the library's policy and the Connecticut law.
2. If the library staff member is presented with a subpoena, he/she is to refer the presenter to the library director or designee, who is to contact legal counsel to verify its validity and advise the library of what action to take.
3. If the library staff member is presented with a search warrant from a law enforcement officer, he/she is not to interfere with their search and seizure. The staff member is to contact the library director, or designee, as soon as possible after a search warrant has been served so that the director may ask the officer to allow them to consult with legal counsel and to ask that the library's counsel be present during the search. Whether or not the law enforcement official agrees to await the arrival of counsel, legal counsel should be contacted promptly. A search warrant must be specific as to the information requested. Information outside of the scope of the search warrant should not be released.

Records beyond the Library's Control to Keep Confidential

The Library's automated system, including its circulation records, borrower registration records, and automated catalog system is connected to an offsite vendor system. Eradication of all patron information at these offsite locations cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the Library has no control over data that a Library computer user sends to another computer server during an internet session and, although transactions are erased regularly, data can remain on the hard drive of a computer, thereby allowing sophisticated software to locate and retrieve the data at a later time. In addition, national security systems or computer hackers may possibly monitor computer searches.

Third Party Services and Internet Communications

We seek to ensure that the Library's contracts, licenses, and offsite computer service agreements reflect our policies concerning privacy and confidentiality. For example, the Library maintains licenses with a variety of third-party databases that permit users to access these databases through Library computers or the Library's website. If a user seeks to access such a database through the Library, we only provide information that authenticates the user as a registered Blackstone Library patron and do not provide personally identifiable information about the user. Nevertheless, users must be aware, when accessing third party sites—even sites maintained by organizations with which the Library has a contractual relationship—that there are limits to the privacy protections the Library can provide. Any use of third-party content or services will constitute your agreement to the terms of any privacy policy applicable to that content or service. The Library encourages users to review the privacy policies of all third-party providers.

Some users may choose to take advantage of the ability to receive hold and overdue notices via e-mail or text message. Users are cautioned that any electronic communication utilizing the internet or a wireless network is subject to unauthorized interception.

E-Content

The James Blackstone Memorial Library works with a variety of service providers to provide eContent (e.g., eBooks, eVideo, eMusic, and eAudiobooks) to our users. Before accessing any of the Library's eContent, users should read the privacy policy, if any, of the relevant service provider. For example, users who check out eBooks from the Blackstone Library website for use on their eReader (or via an eReader app) may receive those eBooks via Amazon or another third party. Amazon's privacy policy describes the kind of information that is collected and stored in connection with such transactions, and we encourage users to familiarize themselves with that policy before engaging in any such transaction.

Use of Information in Connection with Other Programs, Services and Activities

The Library may compile aggregate demographic data related to our users and donors to better manage existing services, plan additional services and to provide aggregate information to potential donors to the Library's programs. In addition, as with other similar organizations, the Library collects certain personally identifiable information about our users and donors for purposes related to our mission. For example, information is obtained from online transactions such as donations as well as responses to our e-newsletter and email communication. This information may be used to send information to users or to donors about various programs and services offered by Blackstone Library as well as other Blackstone Library initiatives and information. An individual who wishes to stop receiving any particular type of communication may do so by clicking the unsubscribe link in the relevant e-mail or may contact the Library.

As is customary in the non-profit world, the Library will sometimes send appeals for support to people who have expressed interest in the Library's programs or services. To ensure the most efficient use of Blackstone Library's fundraising dollars, we use third party vendors to make sure the contact information we have for our users and donors is accurate and to determine which users and donors are most likely to support our mission. The Library does not sell or license information about our users or donors nor does it send donor solicitation mailings on behalf of any other organization.

Library Security Cameras

Selected areas of the library are equipped with video cameras for the protection and safety of patrons, employees, and property and to identify persons breaking the law, threatening the safety of patrons or staff, breaching security or violating the library's code of conduct (collectively, "wrongful conduct"). A sign is posted at the library entrances informing the public that video cameras are in use. Camera placement shall be determined by the library director. Cameras shall not be placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as toilet areas within restrooms or the staff room, nor are they positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities in the library. Cameras will record activities in real time and images will be saved to the camera server's hard drive. The hard drive has the capacity to store up to 12 TB of data. Once the drive is full, the system re-records beginning with the oldest data. Cameras will not be monitored continuously by library staff. Access to the stored images is restricted to the library director and designated library managers, who may review the

archived materials in the course of evaluating incidents of suspected wrongful conduct and related litigation. Authorization to view stored images may be granted by the library director or his/her designee(s) when there is reason to believe that wrongful conduct has occurred.

The library director, or authorized library managers, upon notice to the director, may ask other town personnel, including the police, to review recorded images when such participation may contribute to the assessment of security concerns related to a specific incident. Access is also allowed to any agency of the federal, state, county or local government pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or when otherwise required by law. All law enforcement requests for access will be referred to the library director or, in his or her absence, the manager in charge.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, September 9, 2020

(Policy developed with assistance from Wallingford, CT and Greenwich CT Libraries with sincere appreciation.)