

Policy Manual



PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Effective Date: December 1, 2008

I. POLICY OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION

Privacy is essential to our exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. The Kellogg-Hubbard Library believes the only way to assure the right to open inquiry is by making sure, to the best of our ability, that your use of library materials is not subject to the scrutiny of others. Personally identifiable information about users is confidential and the library keeps that information private and confidential on their behalf.

Vermont provides guarantees of privacy in the constitution, statutory law, and the common law. Our privacy and confidentiality policy is in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

Our commitment to your privacy and confidentiality has deep roots not only in law but also in the ethics and practices of librarianship. In accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted."

II. LIBRARY USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

If you wish to receive borrowing privileges, we must obtain certain information about you in order to provide you with a library account.

We never use or share the personally identifiable information provided to us in ways unrelated to the ones described above, unless compelled to do so under 22 V.S.A. § 172 of Vermont law or to comply with a court order.

If you use library services that require personally identifiable information you are entitled to view and/or update that information in person. To protect your privacy we may ask you to provide some sort of verification or identity.

The purpose of accessing and updating your personal information is to ensure that library operations can function properly. Such functions may include notification of overdue items, library account status, reminders, etc.

III. CHILDREN

According to State law, parents or guardians have access to the library records of their children under the age of 16. To protect your children, we have the right to request a parent or guardian's proof of identity before releasing a child's records. Parents should remind their children to ask their permission before providing personal information to any website or purchasing any products or services online. The Library urges all parents to participate in their children's exploration of the internet and in their choice of library materials.

IV. DATA INTEGRITY AND SECURITY

The data we collect and maintain at the library must be accurate and secure.

We do not ask library visitors or website users to identify themselves or reveal any personal information unless they are borrowing materials, requesting special services, registering for programs or classes, or making remote use from outside the library of those portions of the Library's website restricted to registered borrowers under license agreements or other special arrangements.

We discourage you from choosing passwords or PINs that could reveal your identity, including social security numbers. We regularly remove cookies, Web history, cached files, or other computer and Internet use records and other software code that is placed on our computers.

When connecting to licensed databases outside the library, we release only information required for user authentication. Nevertheless, we advise users of the limits to library privacy protection when accessing remote sites.

V. STAFF ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA

We permit only authorized Library staff with confidential passwords to access personal data stored in the Library's computer system for the purpose of performing library work. We do not disclose patrons' personal data to any other party except where required by law. The Library does not sell or lease users' personal information to companies, universities or individuals.

Library users who have questions, concerns, or complaints about the library's handling of their privacy and confidentiality rights should file written comments with the Library Director, or, in his or her absence, the Executive Director. We will respond in a timely manner and may conduct a review of policy and procedures. 22 V.S.A. § 173 provides a right of patron action if their confidentiality rights have been violated.

The Executive Director is authorized to receive or comply with requests from law enforcement officers. We will not make library records available to any agency of State, Federal or local government unless a subpoena, warrant, court order or other investigatory document is issued by a court of competent jurisdiction that shows good cause and is in proper form. We have trained all library staff and volunteers to refer any law enforcement inquiries to library administrators.

VI. REVISION HISTORY

This policy supersedes any Library policies and practices in existence prior to its effective date. All earlier revisions of this document are superseded by this revision. The Kellogg-Hubbard Library Board of Trustees reviewed and approved this procedure on November 15, 2023.

Date	Revision #	Modification
2023-11-15	4.0	Policy revised to change administrative job titles to reflect current structure.
2019-07-09	3.0	Policy revised to remove outdated language and to change administrative job titles to reflect current structure.
2017-06-07	2.0	Policy revised to remove outdated language.
2015-06-10	1.0	Policy reviewed and reaffirmed.
2011-05-15	1.0	Policy reviewed and revised – amended by removing language in brackets.
2008-12-01	0.0	New policy approved by Kellogg-Hubbard Library Board of Trustees.