

## **Wallingford Public Library Confidentiality of Library Records and Patron Privacy**

Wallingford Public Library recognizes that privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. The right to privacy includes the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others.

### **Confidentiality of Library Records**

Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf. Wallingford Public Library circulation and registration records are strictly 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, Wallingford Public 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, 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 or sent to the printer 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 entered by a court of competent jurisdiction or persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library.

### **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.

## **Library Security Cameras**

Selected areas both inside and outside the Library building are equipped with video cameras for the protection and safety of patrons, employees, and property and to identify persons breaking the law or violating the library's code of 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 within restrooms or the staff room.

Cameras will record activities in real time and images will be saved to the Library's cloud storage. The storage system allows for images to be stored for one month. Cameras will not be monitored continuously by library staff.

Access to images is restricted to the Library Director and library managers, who may review the archived materials in the course of evaluating incidents of suspected criminal activity, threats to the safety of patrons or staff, matters related to litigation, or violations of the Library's Code of Conduct. Storage of video/images exceeding one month and/or authorization to view stored images may be granted by the Library Director or their designee(s) when there is reason to believe that a breach of security, a threat to safety, or a violation of law 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 their absence, the manager in charge.

Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains personally identifiable information about Library users.

The Library disclaims any liability for use of the video data in accordance with the terms of this policy, given that the Library is a public facility and the security cameras shall be limited to those areas where Library users and staff have no reasonable expectation of privacy.

*Adopted by Board of Managers March 19, 1979. Revised January 19, 1981, March 22, 2004, June 24, 2013, November 26, 2024.*

*See Also: Code of Conduct Policy.*