

S P O K A N E C O U N T Y L I B R A R Y D I S T R I C T

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| Policy Title | Confidentiality of Library Records | | |
| Approval Date | January 8, 1976 | Revision Date | April 15, 2025 |
| Related Policies | Computer, Wireless Network and Internet Use Library Meeting Room Use | | |
| Statutory References | RCW 42.56.050 RCW 42.56.310 | | |
| Purpose | To outline the manner in which the Spokane County Library District (District) will protect the privacy and confidentiality of library user or customer records pursuant to state and federal law. | | |

In the event of the amendment of any law, regulation, or ordinance incorporated into this policy or upon which this policy relies, the policy shall be deemed amended in conformance with those changes.

In cases where this policy conflicts with any local ordinance, state or federal law, the terms of that law, and its underlying rules or regulations shall prevail. In all other cases, Spokane County Library District policies and practices prevail.

The Board reserves the right to change and/or modify this policy at any time, as circumstances dictate and in accordance with applicable law.

Policy:

Background

Library records, the primary purpose of which is to maintain control of library materials, or to gain access to information, that discloses or could be used to disclose the identity of a library user are exempt from disclosure under the Washington State Public Records Act.

The District maintains library records in order to conduct operations of the District. The District is committed to protecting the confidentiality of its users or customers as it pertains to their use of library resources and materials.

General Policy

The District upholds state and federal laws intended to protect the privacy of individuals as they pertain to the access and use of library resources and materials. Privacy is essential to free speech, free thought, and free association. Confidentiality extends to all records with identifying information about users or customers including, but not limited to: account registration records, requests for information and/or materials, material borrowing records, financial information, computer booking and use records, and/or online resource access and use records.

The District will keep records pertaining to the use of library resources and materials private and confidential except as is necessary for proper operation of the District, upon consent of the user, pursuant to a valid subpoena or court order, or as otherwise required by law. The library records of a minor child may be accessed by a parent or legal guardian.

While library records are confidential, District facilities are public places, and people entering a library or other District facility have no expectation of privacy beyond the content of library records.

The District may enter into agreements with third-party providers in order to provide certain library- related services to our users or customers. Information that users or customers submit to a third party voluntarily is not subject to District control, and therefore the District cannot guarantee the same level of confidentiality and privacy. Users or customers are encouraged to read and become familiar with the privacy policy of these third-party providers.

The District reserves the right to use personal information provided by users or customers for the purpose of conducting periodic surveys or providing information regarding library programs and services. This information may also be used by District partners such as the Library Foundation of Spokane County, Friends of the Library, or other groups whose sole purpose is to support the District. The District will not sell or provide access to personal information to other groups unless required by law.

The District will make a good faith effort to implement this policy in a fair and consistent manner.

The Executive Director will establish administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.