



# Confidentiality Policy

Approved by: Eastern Counties Regional Library Board  
Date approved: 2018-03-29  
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Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) recognizes its responsibility to members of the public to preserve the confidentiality of information entrusted to its care.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms upholds freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression. In support of this principle, ECRL protects the privacy of individuals by maintaining confidentiality of user records and transactions in any medium (print, electronic, etc).

This policy includes, but is not restricted to, all information pertaining to the individual's use of the library:

- user information
- databases and other files or materials consulted
- computer and/or internet use
- number and/or character of questions asked
- number and/or character of library programs attended

ECRL supports the Canadian Library Association's Code of Ethics and library staff have the responsibility to "...protect the privacy and dignity of library users and staff" by respecting the confidential nature of customer records and interactions. ECRL retains **only** the personal information that is necessary for the provision of library service.

Users must provide their library card in order to access their records; if the user does not have their library card with them, they must confirm their identity by verifying information on their account.

Staff will view user records only as required to perform appropriate library functions. Only those staff who are authorized to do so may alter the record of a library user or fellow employee. Staff may not use their knowledge of the Integrated Library System (ILS) or any other library software to perform unauthorized functions. An employee who does so will be subject to disciplinary action. Information relating to a library user may only be used by library staff working within the scope of their duties and staff will do so in a responsible fashion to ensure the privacy of the user.

Information will only be provided by ECRL Management and only in one of the following circumstances:

- a subpoena or court order is presented
- an adult library user gives written consent
- a minor library user's parent/guardian gives written consent
- the information is required to ensure the safety of library staff and / or library users and members of the public
- to protect library property

Library staff may provide information to a police officer about whether an individual was in the library at a certain time, if the safety of that individual or others is at risk, or for other compassionate reasons.

Under no circumstances will any information be given over the telephone.

Notwithstanding the above, libraries are public buildings and confidentiality of records does not guarantee anonymity. Library staff will not prevent police officers entering branches to search for, question, and/or apprehend individuals in the course of an investigation.

## Parental Access to Children's Library Records

Parents/legal guardians will be provided access to library records for children 0-13 when requested and library staff has confirmed the identity of the parent or guardian and the age of the minor.

Parents/legal guardians will be given access to library records for young people ages 14-18, only after the policy on confidentiality is explained and the library staff has confirmed the identity of the parent or guardian and the age of the minor.

Any other requests for information regarding a minor's use of the library not covered by this policy will be handled according to the Youth Conduct and Safety in the Library Policy.

## Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy or its related procedures please contact the Director, Collections and Technology at [admin@ecrl.ca](mailto:admin@ecrl.ca).