

Confidentiality of Patron Records

It is the policy of the library board to protect as far as possible, the privacy of customers who use the library and not to make inquiry into the purpose for which a customer requests information. Staff members should not under any circumstances ever give a third party information about what a library customer is reading or requesting from the library's collection.

Library personnel should be aware that all library registration, circulation and reference records must remain confidential and are protected by the library policy and under state law (Code of Iowa Section 22.7)

13. The records of a library which by themselves or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out or requesting an item or information from the library. The records shall be released to a criminal or juvenile justice agency only pursuant to an investigation of a particular person or organization suspected of committing a known crime. The records shall be released only upon a judicial determination that a rational connection exists between the requested release of information and a legitimate end and that the need for the information is cogent and compelling.

22.2 Right to examine public records—exceptions.

1. Every person shall have the right to examine and copy a public record or to publish or disseminate a public record or the information contained in a public record. Unless otherwise provided by law, the right to examine a public record shall include the right to examine a public record without charge while the public record is in the physical possession of the custodian of the public record. The right to copy a public record shall include the right to make photographs or photographic copies while the public record is in the possession of the custodian of the public record. All rights under this section are in addition to the right to obtain a certified copy of a public record under sections 622.46.
2. A government body shall not prevent the examination or copying of a public record by contracting with a nongovernment body to perform any of its duties or functions.
3. However, notwithstanding subsections 1 and 2, a government body is not required to permit or use of the following:
 - a. A geographic computer data base by any person except upon terms and conditions acceptable to the governing body. The governing body shall establish reasonable rates and procedures for the retrieval of specified records, which are not confidential records, stored in the data base upon the request of any person.
 - b. Data processing software developed by the government body, as provided in section 22.3A.

Information concerning a customer's registration record (including whether or not he or she has a card), circulating records and reference questions asked will only be available

pursuant to a process, subpoena, or court order authorized pursuant to a federal, state, or local government authority.

A staff member receiving a request to examine or obtain information relating to customer records should immediately refer the person making the request to the library director who shall explain the confidentiality policy.

Revised October 26, 2020