

# Spring Township Library Association

## Confidentiality of Patron Records Policy

**PURPOSE:** To ensure that all records relating to patron registration and the subsequent use of and circulation by patrons of materials provided by the library are considered confidential in nature.

### **REFERENCES:**

- 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 4428: Library circulation records
- American Library Association, Code of Ethics, Section III
- American Library Association, Confidentiality of Library Records Policy (52.4)
- American Library Association, Privacy: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

### **STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

1. The Board of Trustees of The Spring Township Library Association recognizes the confidentiality of records related to circulation of library materials that contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the library in accordance with Pennsylvania law: 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 4428.
2. The Board of Trustees supports the concept of intellectual freedom and the right of each citizen to free access to information without fear of intimidation or recrimination. The library's confidentiality policy safeguards the first amendment and privacy rights of library users. The library advises employees, volunteers, and patrons that all library records that contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the library are confidential.
3. The Board of Trustees of The Spring Township Library Association subscribes to Section III of the American Library Association Library Code which states. "We protect each Library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted."
4. Except as required by applicable law, The Spring Township Library Association safeguards access to patron library records and restricts access to that information to only the patron who owns the library card and provides that card or to the parent/legal guardian of a minor child with the stipulations and exceptions specified below in Section 7.

*Adopted at a regular and open meeting of the Board of Directors of the Spring Township Library Association on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Reviewed June 13, 2024.*

5. No patron records will be made available to federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies except by a court order as required by law. Court orders from law enforcement officers will be referred to the library director who will consult legal counsel. Other library employees will not provide any patron records to law enforcement agencies under any circumstances.
6. When library employees or volunteers speak either in person or on the telephone to anybody other than the patron, or to persons who cannot produce their library card numbers and provide other identification, information regarding
  - Items checked out
  - Items overdue
  - Fines
  - Holdswill be restricted as to information that does not reveal the content, such as number of items or figures for fines owed. Addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal information from patron's record will not be given out under the above circumstances. When a patron is unable to confirm his or her identity as required, a print-out of the requested information may be mailed to the patron using the mailing address provided in the library's registration records.
7. The library records of a child have the same confidentiality of protection under library policy as that of any other patron, except that parents or legal guardians shall be permitted access to all of the records of their minor children through the age of 17.
8. No patron may use this policy to steal library materials. Reference: [18 PA. Cons. Stat. Sec 3929.1: Library Act] In the event of theft, the library will release to the appropriate law enforcement officers the relevant patron records, including the name and address of the person committing the theft and a list of materials stolen with the replacement costs.

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