

**SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY  
CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATRON RECORDS  
POLICY:**

*The choice of books and other library materials and the use of the informational resources of the library are essentially an individual's private matter. It is the intent of the Board of Trustees of the Library to maintain the confidentiality of registration, use patterns, and borrowing records of those using the library to the maximum extent possible remaining compliant with state and federal laws and regulations.*

*Because the Trustees recognize that on occasion patrons desire accommodation to special circumstances, the library will attempt to make those accommodations when possible within the law.*

**PRACTICE:**

The following guidelines will normally prevail:

Library staff will not divulge patron registration information or borrowing records to local, state or federal authorities or to any group, agency, corporation, or institution without a duly executed court order or court-ordered subpoena or search warrant.

Library staff will not divulge patron records to a third party except

- ❑ To the parent/guardian for overdue records of a youth under 18 years for which a parent/guardian is held financially responsible;
- ❑ To a family member with clear identification picking up reserve materials on hold for another immediate family member;
- ❑ To a parent/guardian with clear identification seeking a record of current titles borrowed by a child under 12 years;
- ❑ Under unusual circumstances such as illness and at the request of and for the convenience of a borrower.

Further, library staff will not divulge the library's records pertaining to reference queries; title records; reserve requests; the number of or character of questions asked by a patron; computer search information; or the frequency or content of a patron's lawful visits to the library or any other information supplied to the library without a court order or a court-ordered subpoena or search warrant.

Upon presentation of a court order or court-ordered subpoena or search warrant, to the extent possible in the circumstances, the Library Director will consult with the library's attorney to determine the bona fides of the order or subpoena. If the Director is unavailable, staff will inform the Board President who shall consult with the attorney and then guide the staff. After a good faith effort to ascertain the bona fides of the subpoena such shall be complied with unless such consultation reveals that the order or subpoena is clearly invalid or unenforceable.

Upon presentation of what appears to be a valid federal or state or local law enforcement branch a valid search warrant the staff member in charge will comply immediately, and give notice to the Director of compliance, who shall notify the Board President.

Public access to general library records is governed by the freedom of information laws of the State of New York and United States.

Approved January 27, 2004