



Bent Northrop Memorial Library Confidentiality of Library Records Policy

The purpose of the Confidentiality of Library Records policy is to clarify the library's position regarding accessibility to library records by individuals or institutions other than library personnel.

The Bent Northrop Memorial Library Board of Trustees recognizes that, in accordance with 22 V.S.A. chapter 4, its patron circulation records and transaction records identifying the names of library patrons are confidential in nature. This policy is upheld in the American Library Association Policy Manual, Code of Ethics, point III: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted." Confidentiality of patron records is also protected in 1 V.S.A, chapter 5, § 317 (c), paragraph 19 and 22 V.S.A. chapter 4 §171-173.

Library patron records are not just registration or circulation records, but also encompass an individual's activities within the library, including the materials that have been viewed in print or electronic form, research questions posed, materials in any format that the patron has requested through interlibrary loan or has borrowed, or any other library service or consultation that the patron has requested.

All library employees and volunteers will be advised that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal, or local government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigative power. Should such cases arise, the Library Director will consult with legal counsel and/or the Town Attorney, who will provide advice on the correct procedure to follow.

Certain records may be shared at the library's initiative in matters relating to the safety and security of library facilities, collections, personnel, and patrons, under exemptions as defined in 22 V.S.A chapter 4 § 172.

All cases involving confidentiality shall be reported to the Town Attorney and the BNML Board of Trustees, unless prohibited by existing federal legislation.

Adopted: 8/15/24

Bent Northrop Memorial Library Trustees