

ESTHERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Confidentiality of Library Records

Confidentiality of library records is addressed in Iowa Code, Section 22.7 and states that the records of a library shall be kept confidential when, by themselves or examined with other public records, they would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out or requesting specific item(s) or information.

Information concerning an individual's account will be released to that individual only, with the following exceptions:

1. The library interprets possession of a card (or card number) as consent to use it unless it has been reported lost or stolen, or there is reason to believe that consent has not been given.
2. The library will release information to the parent or guardian of a minor child for the purpose of recovering overdue materials and settling accounts for lost, late or damaged material, and for other matters related to the recovery of material or charges incurred by minor children for which a parent or guardian may be considered liable. However, information will not be provided to the parent or guardian who is merely attempting to determine what library materials a minor child is using.
3. Library accounts for which a bill has been sent may be revealed to a collection agency or law enforcement personnel.

Confidentiality extends to information sought or received and materials consulted, borrowed, or acquired, and includes Internet and electronic resource search records; reference interviews and transactions, circulation records, interlibrary loan records, and other personally identifiable uses of library materials, equipment or services. Exceptions:

1. Contact information for displays and meetings is provided by the user and considered public information.
2. Persons attending library programs or public meetings may be videotaped or photographed as an audience member. These images may be used for library programming or promotion, including broadcast via local news outlets, the library website, the Internet and other media. A permission form for photos of minor children will be available on the EPL website and in paper form at the Children's desk on-site.

The Estherville Public Library will ensure the confidentiality of a patron's library record, account, and library presence by securing and limiting access to these same records and back-up records to only approved staff members and circulation volunteers.

The library cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information sought or received, or materials consulted or borrowed, from third party digital services to which we provide access.

At no time will the Library Director (or the Director's designee), who serves as custodian of the records, release protected records except pursuant to a process, subpoena or court order authorized pursuant to a federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, administrative or legislative investigative power. Library staff will seek legal counsel from the City Attorney's Office in the event of such request for release of library records, and will respond to the request according to advice of counsel.

Security Cameras

Security cameras are installed in the Library to protect the safety and security of people, the building and its contents. Because library staff members are unable to provide direct supervision over all areas within the library and library grounds, video security cameras have been placed at selected locations in order to observe and record visible activities of persons within the library and library grounds in lieu of direct supervision. Only authorized Library staff may view recordings. Library security camera recordings will be shared with law enforcement as a part of investigating and prosecuting crimes committed in the Library.

To the extent that any recorded images include identifiable persons requesting information or checking out an item, such record shall be treated as confidential as provided in Iowa Code §22.7 (13). Only designated library staff may view real time images or screen recorded images for potential breach of confidentiality. Any inadvertent views of protected information shall be held in confidence by the library staff under the library's confidentiality policy. Access to real time or recorded imagery is also authorized to designated staff upon report of suspicious behavior, including policy violations, criminal activity, destruction or theft of library property or assets, or other activity that may be disruptive to library operations.

All requests for the viewing of real time or recorded imagery by law enforcement officials must be presented to the library director. If the library director is unavailable, such requests shall be presented to the administrative or supervisory staff designated by the library director to hold such authority. Law enforcement may view recorded images unless such images include records protected by Iowa Code §22.7 (13), in which case such records would be released only pursuant to valid court order.

All requests for public disclosure of recorded images shall be presented to the library director or the administrative staff member designated to act in his/her stead. Guidelines for public disclosure of video imagery shall follow the procedures established by the library director in accordance with Iowa Code Chapter 22.

Any request to view recorded images may be subject to review by the City Attorney's Office prior to granting access.

Adopted by the Estherville Public Library Board of Trustees 11/6/2012

Reviewed: 8/9/2016, 4/3/2017, 9/1/2020, 1/2/2024

Revised: 4/3/2017, 9/1/2020, 1/2/2024

*This policy was adapted from a combination of
the Ames Public Library, Carnegie-Stout Public Library
and Iowa City Public Library policies.*