Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records with Procedures

A. State Law
The Board of Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library recognizes that Massachusetts law mandates that certain records and information are confidential.

The Board has directed the Library Director to periodically advise members of the staff of the content and purpose of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 7, which reads in part:

“That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record…”

Members of the staff shall be instructed to immediately refer any inquiry regarding the intellectual pursuits, borrowings, use of electronic resources, or materials usage of patrons to the library privacy contact, who shall explain to the party making the inquiry the library’s confidentiality policy and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts confidentiality law. Staff shall not disclose patron information.

Formal requests for circulation, registration, or usage records should be referred to the Executive Director of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (See MVLC Privacy Policy).

The library privacy contact is the Library Director, or the Library Assistant Director in the absence of the Library Director. All requests for confidential patron information, search warrants or subpoenas must be referred to the library’s designated privacy contact.

B. Federal Law
Whereas a subpoena or a search warrant under the USA Patriot Act (P.L.107-56) suspends state statutes, formal requests for circulation, registration, or usage records should be referred to the Executive Director of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium, (see MVLC Privacy Policy).

1. Any staff member approached by a federal officer with a search warrant shall immediately contact the library privacy contact.

2. The library privacy contact shall refer the officer to the Executive Director of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium.

Attached: Retention Policies for Ipswich Public Library Records MVLC Privacy Policy

Approved by the Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library on September 17, 2012
Retention Policies for Ipswich Public Library Records

Internet Class Signup Sheets:  Destroyed after class is given
Internet PCs:  History and Temp files cleared daily
Searches on iPac:  Not retained by Horizon
Circulation Records in Horizon:  System retains records of materials checked out until retuned and fines or fees are paid. See MVLC’s ‘Circulation Record Retention By Block Type’
Reference questions:  No paper record retained
Reference inquires by letter or e-mail:  Retained 2 years
Registration Cards:  Retained until we know that patron has moved or is deceased
Registration Records in Horizon:  Retained unless we delete when patron has moved outside MVLC or is deceased
Ipswich Room Archives Sign-in sheets:  Retained for 1 year
Interlibrary Loan Requests:  Retained for 1 month after material is returned
Collins Room sign-in sheets:  Previous years’ records destroyed at end of year
Reserve Forms:  Retained until transaction is completed
Reserve Pick up Register:  Record destroyed after 2 months
Museum Pass Bookings Register:  Previous week destroyed on Tuesday of following week

Adopted by the Board of Library Trustees of the Ipswich Public Library on May 19, 2003