

East Providence Public Library Patron Confidentiality and Law Enforcement Policy

The East Providence Public Library (“EPPL”) respects the privacy rights of all its patrons. It therefore holds confidential all services offered at any library site for which patrons may hold a reasonable expectation of privacy including but not limited to the circulation of materials, access and usage of the library’s computers and the library’s wireless network, and access and usage of the library’s programs.

All law enforcement requests must be subject to approval by the Library Director or the Director’s designee. Other staff members are not authorized to disclose any of the material discussed in this policy to law enforcement personnel.

Library ILS database records

All patron records in the EPPL’s ILS database are protected by RIGL 11-18-32 and therefore held as confidential; their disclosure is illegal. They will not be released voluntarily to law enforcement personnel and their release can only be compelled by a court order

Other library usage records

The library may collect usage statistics for the assessment of its services as in, for example, computer usage. Wherever possible these statistics will be anonymized so that usage cannot be linked to patron identities. These records are interpreted similarly to ILS database records and are, therefore, regarded as confidential and will only be released to law enforcement personnel when compelled by a court order.

Video surveillance

The EPPL uses camera systems at the Weaver library for the purpose of security enhancements for property, staff members, and patrons. As the EPPL is a public space, patrons should have no reasonable expectation of privacy for being within that space and may, therefore, be identified on the EPPL’s video surveillance. The EPPL reserves the right to disclose voluntarily surveillance footage to law enforcement personnel when the Library Director or the Director’s designee deems it appropriate.

Patron location

Although the EPPL is a public place in which patrons have no reasonable expectation of privacy, library staff will not disclose the presence or location of any patrons within the EPPL to inquiring persons when the relationship between the inquiring person and the patron sought is in any way unclear, uncertain, or threatening. For example, a person who calls the EPPL asking for the location of a friend will not receive any information on that person. However, if a person alleging to be a child’s parent enters the library looking for his or her child, and a staff member can verify the legitimacy of this parental relationship, then that information may be relayed to the person requesting the information. The EPPL may disclose voluntarily the presence of a person to law enforcement personnel.

Minors

The records of minors will be kept confidential. Information may be relayed to parents or guardians only for the reconciling of financial transactions, as the parents or guardians are financially responsible for a minor’s actions.