

MT. LEBANON PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY NUMBER: 27
TITLE: Confidentiality of Library Records
DATE ISSUED: November 18, 2025
REPLACES: Previous policy no. 27, issued July 18, 2002; October 21, 2004

PURPOSE: To ensure that all records relating to patron registration and the subsequent use of and circulation by patrons of materials provided by the Library are considered confidential in nature.

REFERENCES:

- 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 9375: Privacy of Circulation Records
- 18 PA. Const. Stat. Sec 3929.1: Theft
- Mt. Lebanon Public Library Lending Policy (#21)
- American Library Association, Code of Ethics, Section III
- American Library Association, Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records
Adopted January 20, 1971, by the ALA Council; amended July 4, 1975; July 2, 1986 [ISBN 8389-6082-0]
- American Library Association, Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, Adopted June 19, 2002, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 2014; and June 24, 2019

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

1. The Board of Trustees of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library specifically recognizes the confidentiality of records related to circulation of Library materials that contain the names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the Library in accordance with Pennsylvania law: 24 Pa. Cons. Stat. Sec. 9375.
2. The Board of Trustees supports the concept of intellectual freedom and the right of all people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use and free access to information without fear of intimidation or recrimination. The Library's confidentiality policy safeguards the First Amendment and privacy rights of Library users. The Library advises employees, volunteers, and patrons that all Library records that contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of the Library are confidential.
3. The Board of Trustees of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library further subscribes to the American Library Association Library Code of Ethics, Section III, which states,

Mt. Lebanon Public Library Policy No. 27

Confidentiality of Library Records

“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.”

4. In all instances and regardless of circumstances, Mt. Lebanon Public Library safeguards access to patron Library records and restricts access to that information to only the patron who owns the library card and provides that card or to the parent/ legal guardian of a minor child with the stipulations and exceptions specified below in section 7.
5. No patron records will be made available to federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies except by a court order as required by law.
 - 5.1 Court orders from law enforcement officers will be referred to the Library Director who will consult legal counsel. Other Library employees will not provide any patron records to law enforcement agencies under any circumstances.
 - 5.2 The Library will take such action as is necessary to determine that any court order or process issued by any court or pursuant to any court rule or any agency of government requires that such records be made available.
6. When Library employees or volunteers speak either in person or communicate by other methods to anybody other than the patron, or to persons who cannot produce their Library card numbers and provide other identification, information regarding items checked out, items due, fees connected to card (for lost books, etc), and holds will be restricted as to information that does not reveal the content, such as number of items or dollar amount owed.

Addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal information from patron records will not be given out under the above circumstances. When a patron is unable to confirm his or her identity as required, a print-out of the requested information may be sent to the patron using the contact information provided in the Library’s registration records for that patron.

7. The Library record of a child has the same confidentiality protection under Library policy as that of any other patrons with the following exception.
 - 7.1 Parents or legal guardians are permitted access to the records of their minor children under the age of 18 (eighteen). The parent/ legal guardian must be accompanied by the child, provide the child’s Library card, and/ or provide other acceptable identification. In the case of telephone inquiries, Library

Mt. Lebanon Public Library Policy No. 27

Confidentiality of Library Records

card number and verification of the child's address, telephone number, and date of birth are required.

7.2 Mt. Lebanon Public Library recognizes that parents or legal guardians who have signed their minor children's applications have assumed the financial responsibility for materials charged out to their children's cards; therefore, parents or legal guardians will be provided with specific information about their minor children's Library materials when materials are overdue or lost.

Parents or legal guardians assume responsibility for deciding what Library resources are appropriate for their children, including information accessible through the Internet. *(as stated in Appendix I)*

8. Adult patrons are ensured confidentiality of their library records but may grant access to another adult cardholder by informing the Library of that permission, in person, when the card is created or anytime thereafter. This permission may be revoked by the cardholder, in person, at any time. The Library will include this information in the cardholder's record.

Patrons in physical possession of another patron's Library card will be assumed to have permission to pick up materials held and check out materials on behalf of the cardholder. A cardholder with a lost or stolen card should contact the Library immediately so that Library staff can restrict access to that record.

This waiver does not negate the borrowing rules set forth in the Library Lending Policy (# 21). Borrowers are responsible for the items checked out to their card, even if they are picking them up as having been placed on hold for another patron.

9. No patron may use this policy to steal Library materials. Reference: [18 PA. Cons. Stat. Sec 3929.1: Library Theft] In the event of theft, the Library will release to the appropriate law enforcement officers the relevant patron records, including the name and address of the person committing the theft and a list of materials stolen with the replacement costs.

10. All patrons are required at the time of registration to provide their consent, acknowledging their responsibility for Library property charged to their card and if registering a minor child, that they as a parent/ legal guardian assume responsibility for their child's use of all Library services and resources.

*Mt. Lebanon Public Library Policy No. 27
Confidentiality of Library Records*

APPENDIX I: PATRON AGREEMENT

(This agreement will be provided/ read to patrons at time of registration. Patrons will be required to provide their consent in the form of a signature on an electronic signature pad connected to the Library's Integrated Library System (ILS) or by the method in current use by the Library. Printed copies of this agreement will be provided on request).

A Library card permits the borrowing of valuable material that is public property and must be returned. The cardholder is financially responsible for Library property checked out to their card. The parent/ legal guardian who endorses a child's application is financially responsible for materials checked out to patrons under the age of 18.

Parents or legal guardians assume responsibility for deciding what Library resources are appropriate for their children, including information accessible through the Internet.

The confidentiality of Library records is protected by law and the administrative policies of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library. This safeguards your rights to free speech and privacy. In order to safeguard access to Library records, only the patron who owns the Library card, or in the case of overdue or lost books, the parent/ legal guardian of a minor, will have access to their record upon verification of the Library card number. All other information will be restricted to that which does not reveal the content.