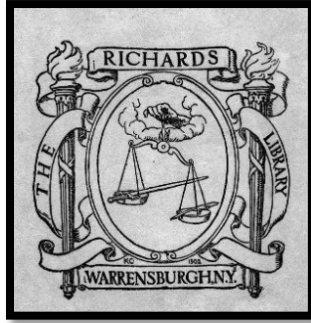


# The Richards Library



## Privacy and Confidentiality of Library Records Policy

The following are rules and regulations approved by The Richards Library Board of Trustees. These will be reviewed every 5 years or as needed to reflect evolving privacy standards and technologies. These privacy protections apply equally to all Library patrons, regardless of age, race, national origin, immigration status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

The Richards Library protects the privacy of records and the confidentiality of patron library use as required by law. New York Civil Practice (CVP) Law & Rules § 4509 states:

*“Library records, which contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of public, free association, school, college and university libraries and library systems of this state, including but not limited to records related to the circulation of library materials, computer database searches, interlibrary loan transactions, reference queries, requests for photocopies of library materials, title reserve requests, or the use of audio-visual materials, films or records, shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except that such records may be disclosed to the extent necessary for the proper operation of such library and shall be disclosed upon request or consent of the user or pursuant to subpoena, court order or where otherwise required by statute.”*

Therefore, New York public libraries cannot disclose information from a library user’s records except:

1. Upon Request or Consent of the User;
2. To The Extent Necessary for the proper Operation of the Library;
3. Pursuant to Subpoena, Court Order or Where Otherwise Required by Statute.

Library Records Includes, but is not limited to:

Circulation records; Workstation logs; Security video; Information sought or received; Materials consulted, bought, or acquired; Database search records; Interlibrary loan records; Program registration information; Sign-up sheets; Material complaint forms; E-mails; Voicemails **OR** any other such records, with personally identifiable uses of materials, facilities, programs or services that may be accumulated.

Personally Identifiable Information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, library card numbers, internet usage data, and any data that can be linked to an individual.

The Library will collect only the minimum necessary personal data required for operations and will regularly review and securely dispose of records no longer needed. The Library may disclose information to cooperating libraries to assist patrons and provide for interlibrary loans.

Since the Library is part of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS), information is gathered through the Joint Automation Project, which allows interlibrary loans for libraries within SALS/MVLS (with the exception of the Schenectady County Public Library and its branches). The Joint Automation Project does not record patron usage of database searches, individual member library computer use or interlibrary loan requests for materials outside of the systems. Library records that are not necessary for the proper operation of member libraries and our systems are purged after 30 days. SALS ensures third party vendors for digital services and platforms (including but not limited to website analytics, eBooks and databases) protect patron privacy and comply with this policy. To find out more about how SALS protects patron data privacy visit <https://salsblog.sals.edu/data-privacy/>

Parents or guardians requesting records of children under the age of 18 may be asked to provide proof of custodial authority. Requests will be complied with as soon as practicable. Requestors who are denied may appeal to The Richards Library Board of Trustees.

Written consent, including parental consent for children under the age of 18, for use of identifiable photos or videos of patrons will be obtained before being publicly published or displayed. Consent forms will be kept on file for as long as New York state recommends.

All staff must refer any request for Library records from law enforcement to the Library Director. The Library will not release any records without a court order or subpoena reviewed by legal counsel. If there is cause to believe that a criminal act has been committed on Library property or with Library resources, the Library will cooperate with law enforcement authorities to obtain patron consent or a court order for release of privileged Library records for criminal investigation and prosecution. The Library staff will cooperate fully with law enforcement to the extent allowed by law. All Library staff will receive annual training on this policy, including procedures for handling patron data and law enforcement requests.

**Reformatted, Revised, Reviewed and Approved by The Richards Library Board of Trustees on December 1, 2020.**

**Revised, Reviewed and Approved on August 5, 2025.**