



## Onondaga County Public Library Board Policy

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### Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

1<sup>st</sup> Consideration: 12/9/13  
2<sup>nd</sup> Consideration:  
Resolution #: 14-02  
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### Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

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The *Onondaga County Public Library (OCPL)* and its staff respect your right to privacy when using library facilities and services.

The state of New York also respects your right to privacy. Library records that are deemed confidential are covered by New York State Law signed on June 13, 1988 (I CPLR 4509).

#### *§4509. Library records*

*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.*

That is, the library staff **will not respond** to requests about a library patron's use of the library's collections or computers from a third party or any agency of government (local, state, or federal), **unless**:

1. Necessary for the proper operation of the library;
2. Pursuant to a subpoena or court order;
3. Specifically required by law.

In addition, OCPL will not:

1. Sell, trade or rent any customer information, including e-mail addresses; or
2. Disclose personally identifiable information or credit or debit card information to third parties, except to complete a payment transaction or for library debt collection purposes.
3. Retain library records no longer needed for the proper operation of the library. The practice of OCPL is to delete the borrowing records of active patrons in good standing. Patron registration information of patrons in good standing is removed upon borrower request or after the borrower card has had no activity for three years.

The OCPL Board of Trustees has authorized staff to request identification from library users as necessary and appropriate for use of library services, such as obtaining a card, placing and picking up holds, using library computers or registering for a program. Information communicated under these circumstances is

kept confidential. Refusal to identify one's self under these circumstances may be grounds for denial of service.

### **Confidentiality and the OCPL Website**

As library users browse through the Library's Website, read pages, or download information, certain information will be automatically gathered and stored about the visit, but not about the library user. The Library uses this information to help the Library make the site more useful to visitors and to learn about the number of visitors to the site and the types of technology visitors use. The data that is collected is not connected to any personal information or identity. The types of information collected include:

- The address (IP number) of the computer you are using.
- The type and version number of the browser you are using.
- The type of computer and operating system you are using.
- The date and time of your visit, and how long you stay.
- The Internet address of the Website that referred you to our site.

The OCPL website contains links to external websites not maintained by Onondaga County Public Library. The Library cannot be responsible for user privacy when visiting outside websites. Please consult the privacy policies of those websites should there be questions regarding their use.

### **Cookies**

A cookie is a small data file written to a computer's hard drive. They are generated by websites to provide users with a personalized and often simplified online experience. The Library website does not employ cookies. Certain third party database services within our site, such as OCPL's subscription databases and 24/7 AskUs program may generate and store cookies on user's computer's hard drives if users engage in such services.

### **Reference Questions**

OCPL often receives requests for research assistance by email, chat or text. The way this information is handled varies, depending on the method used. For example, chat and text services keep databases of questions and answers, in order to answer future questions more efficiently, while email questions and answers are kept in the email service, to improve future email replies, and to allow follow-up on questions as needed. The Library treats reference questions, regardless of format of transmission (in person, via telephone, fax, email or online) confidentially.

### **eContent**

OCPL works with a variety of partners to provide eContent (e.g., eBooks, eMusic, and eAudiobooks) to our users. Before checking out any of OCPL's eContent, users should read the privacy policy of the company that is providing the service in question. For example, users who check out eBooks from OCPL's catalog for use on their Kindle (or via a Kindle app) will receive those eBooks via Amazon. Amazon's privacy policy describes the kind of information that is collected and stored in connection with such transactions, and we encourage our users to familiarize themselves with that policy before engaging in such transactions.

### **The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**

As a non-profit agency, OCPL is not subject to the provisions of COPPA. However we want to inform users about it. Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA) went into effect on April 21, 2000. It places parents in control over what information is collected from their children while online. The law applies to operators of commercial Web sites and online services directed to children under 13 that collect personal information from children, and operators of general audience sites with actual knowledge

that they are collecting information from children under 13. OCPL does not knowingly collect information from children under the age of 13 on our Website.