

Privacy

Policy Statement:

Alameda County Library protects the right to privacy and confidentiality of all library members. Our commitment to privacy and confidentiality has deep roots in the ethics and practices of librarianship. In accordance with the American Library Association's Code of Ethics: "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." This policy explains information the Library collects and member privacy options.

Alameda County Library avoids creating unnecessary records, retaining records not needed for library business purposes and engaging in practices that might make personally identifiable information accessible without consent. The Library protects personally identifiable information by storing it on secure servers and changing passwords regularly.

The Library will keep all personally identifiable information it collects confidential except under the certain limited circumstances set forth in this Privacy Policy. We will not sell, license, or disclose it to any third party, except under such circumstances. Pertinent state and federal laws are linked at the end of this policy.

What information does Alameda County Library collect?

Information the Library collects includes, but is not limited to:

- Information to register for a library card (e.g. name, address, telephone number, email address, birthdate);
- Records of material currently checked out, charges owed, payments made;
- Records of communication between staff and members;
- Sign-up information for library classes or programs;
- Records of public computer sessions;
- Catalog or database search records;
- Records related to library volunteer work; and
- Other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities or services.

Library Accounts and Borrowing Records:

To obtain a library card, members are required to provide identifying information to associate with the account. This information includes member name, birthdate, and address and/or telephone number. Members can also provide optional information, including additional authorized users, a preferred language and/or preferred name. The Library keeps this information for the life of the library account.

Borrowing records, which are stored temporarily, include items currently checked out or on hold, overdue materials with fines and records of past fines paid.

The Library does not maintain a history of items borrowed and returned on time.

Lost Library Cards:

It is the cardholder's responsibility to notify the Library immediately if a library card is lost or stolen or if there is a concern that an unauthorized person is using the card or card number.

Maintaining Account Information:

Members may access their own personally identifiable information held by the Library and are responsible for keeping that information accurate and up-to-date. Staff is available to assist members with updating this information, or it may be updated online by accessing the member account.

Members may activate optional features in their accounts to save searches, create personal lists, or maintain a history of items borrowed. This data is not accessible without the member's library card number and may be permanently deleted by the member at any time.

Minors' Accounts:

Members under the age of 13 who wish to obtain a library card must have a parent or legal guardian sign or co-sign with them at the time of the application. Both parent/legal guardian's and child's names will be listed on the account and both will be allowed to access information about the account. The access for the parent/legal guardian is revoked at age of 13 unless permission is granted specifically by the child.

Access at Member's Request:

Members wanting the convenience of allowing another person to access their account may authorize an additional person to do so by including that person's name on the application, thereby granting access to the full range of rights and responsibilities of library cardholders. This authorization may be revoked by submitting a request in writing.

Users authorized by the member, including parents/legal guardians, who wish to obtain access to any library registration or borrowing records, or who wish to pick up items on hold, must provide the account holder's library card or card number, or ID matching an authorized name on the account.

Items on Hold:

The Library provides members the convenience of self-service holds. Held materials are shelved in a public area. For privacy reasons, members may request to have their items kept behind the counter for pick up.

Library Uses of Personally Identifiable Information:

Except for the limited circumstances set forth in this Privacy Policy, personally identifiable information provided by a library member will only be used to provide library services to the library member, update information at the member's request, communicate with the member about library services, or otherwise by a person acting within the scope of his or her duties within the administration of the library. These uses and disclosures include third parties that maintain and store member information on behalf of the library, under agreement to keep such information confidential.

Public Computers:

The Library's public computers delete any locally stored Internet browsing data and all searches after each session. Session logs are also deleted regularly. When utilizing the Library's public computers, members should take appropriate steps to safeguard personally identifiable information, including deleting information saved to storage media borrowed from the Library, logging-out of accounts, and ending the session or locking the device before stepping away.

Questions and Feedback:

The Library treats library resources information requests or inquiries, regardless of how they are received (in person, via telephone, fax, email or online) confidentially. Personal identifying information

related to these questions is used only for the purpose stated by the collection tool (form, survey, etc.) and questions are purged on an ongoing basis.

Answers to questions received that do not contain personally identifiable information may be shared publicly to facilitate access for others to the same answer.

Library surveys, focus groups, comment cards and other methods of soliciting feedback are voluntary. Any personally identifiable information collected from these tools will be used only for the purpose of improving library services and is not retained.

Website:

The Library website provides remote access to vital content and services for Library members. As members browse through the Library's website, certain information about the visit is automatically gathered and stored. No personally identifiable information about website visitors is collected or stored.

The Library automatically collects and stores only the following information:

- The domain and IP address used to access the website;
- The type of browser and operating system used to access the website;
- The date and time of access to the website;
- The pages visited;
- The address of the website from which the initial visit to the Library's website was launched, if any; and
- The address from which a visitor exits.

This information is gathered for statistical purposes only and enables the Library to improve the website and services.

Links to Other Sites:

The Library's website contains links to other sites including providers of online database services and eBook/eMedia services. The Alameda County Library is not responsible for the privacy practices of other sites, which may be different from the privacy practices described in this policy. The Library encourages library users to become familiar with privacy policies of other sites visited and services used, including linked sites.

Working with Law Enforcement:

Library registration, circulation and other personally identifiable member use records will not be made available to any agency of the state, federal or local government unless a subpoena, warrant, court order or other investigatory document is issued by a court. In the event of such an order, only the County Librarian or a designated member of the library management team has the authority to release records.

Members may conduct only legal activity while using library resources and services. Nothing in this policy prevents the library from exercising its right to enforce its Behavior Policy (see Chapter 4.02), protect its facilities, network and equipment from harm or prevent the use of library facilities and equipment for illegal purposes.

For security purposes, the library can electronically log activity to monitor its public computers and external access to its network and reserves the right to review such logs when a violation of law or library policy is suspected. Staff is authorized to take immediate action to protect the security of library

members, staff, facilities, computers and the network. This authority includes contacting law enforcement and providing information gathered from the library's network that may identify the individual(s) suspected of a violation.

Appendix:

Applicable State and Federal Laws

USA PATRIOT Act – Sections 214-216 of this Act gives law enforcement agencies expanded authority to obtain library records, secretly monitor electronic communications and prohibits libraries and librarians from informing library users of monitoring or information requests.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/107th-congress/house-bill/3162>

California Government Code – Section 6267 of this code defines the exceptions to the California Public Records Act related to library registration and use.

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120SB445

COPPA (Child Online Privacy and Protection Rule) – Imposes restrictions on websites or online services directed to children under the age of 13. <https://www.ftc.gov/enforcement/rules/rulemaking-regulatory-reform-proceedings/childrens-online-privacy-protection-rule>