

Confidentiality of Library Records Policy

Confidentiality of library records is essential to uphold the First Amendment rights of our patrons and to protect their privacy. Libraries serve as pillars of democracy by ensuring unrestricted access to information. Without confidentiality, the freedom to explore ideas and access information is compromised.

In accordance with New York State Law and the fundamental values of librarianship, the library will maintain the confidentiality of all library records and patron inquiries, regardless of their age.

To ensure that all individuals feel free to utilize library resources without fear of exposure, the Belmont Literary & Historical Society Free Library Board of Trustees has adopted the following confidentiality guidelines:

No information regarding or including, but not limited to:

- A patron's name (or whether an individual is a registered borrower or has been),
- A patron's address,
- A patron's phone number,
- A patron's borrowing records,
- The number or nature of inquiries made by a patron,
- The frequency or content of a patron's lawful visits to the library,
- Or any other information supplied to or collected by the library

shall be disclosed to any individual, organization, corporation, institution, government agency, or other entity without a valid legal process, court order, or subpoena.

If such a legal request is presented, the library will take appropriate steps to ensure compliance with legal requirements while also protecting patron confidentiality to the fullest extent possible. The library will resist enforcement of any legal request until a proper demonstration of good cause is made in a court of competent jurisdiction. If the request does not meet legal standards, the library will seek to have any deficiencies corrected before releasing any records.

Retention of Patron Registration Forms

Patron registration forms will be retained for a period of six (6) months from the date of registration in accordance with the library's records management policy. After this period, registration forms will be securely disposed of to maintain patron privacy and data security.

This policy affirms our commitment to patron privacy and intellectual freedom, ensuring a safe and open environment for information access.

Approved March 20, 2025