Waterloo PUBLIC LIBRARY

Waterloo Public Library Policy

Category: Legal
Policy Number: 3-1
Policy Name: Privacy and Access to Information

Purpose:

This policy outlines the kinds of personal information that may be collected from customers of the Waterloo Public Library, why it is collected and how personal information is stored by the Library.

Principles:

Informed citizens are essential to the democratic process and the more that people know about their local government and the Library, the better governed they will be. Openness is essential to accountability and effectiveness.

Waterloo Public Library is subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* that protects the privacy of personal information in the Library's records and ensures the right of access to information held by the Library.

Waterloo Public Library collects personal information of Library users under the authority of section 23(2) of the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44*, and personal information will only be used to administer services and programs at the Library. Personal information is collected directly from the customer (or parent/guardian), and Library employees take precautions to ensure the information is accurate and up-to-date. The individual will be informed of the purpose for which personal information is being collected.

Head of the Corporation:

Under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the Waterloo Public Library Board must appoint a person or committee to be the Head of the Corporation for the purposes of carrying out the responsibilities of the Act. For this purpose, the Library Board has appointed the CEO as the Head of the Corporation known as Waterloo Public Library.

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Privacy and Customer Accounts:

All information related to the customer's Waterloo Public Library account and information about the materials borrowed is collected for internal Library purposes (to confirm place of residence, to loan material, for Library fundraising etc.). The information is confidential except in the following circumstances:

- Overdue notification by email, phone or mail (titles are listed in mail and email)
- Fees payment: a receipt including title information may be given to the person paying
- Agencies collecting monies owed to the Library
- Official police investigations (a proper and valid warrant is required)
- Request for information by a parent or legal guardian regarding their child's account, provided the child is under 13 and the parent or legal guardian is able to provide proper identification
- The Library will release information to the Children's Aid Society, under the authority of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, which states that a person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child under 16 is in risk of harm, must report this suspicion to Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region immediately, directly and on an ongoing basis
- Membership information may be shared with Kitchener Public Library due to a shared computer system

A person in possession of a Waterloo Public Library card is assumed to be the owner or to have the owner's permission to use the card. This includes the cards of children or spouses. A customer who presents a library card, overdue notice or collection letter belonging to another person is assumed to have consent to pick up material or pay fines on behalf of the member. When it is known that the bearer of the card, overdue notice or collection letter is not the member named on these documents, access to other information from the member's account will not be released unless written permission acceptable to the Library has been provided. Customers must notify the Library immediately upon loss of their library card.

Information about material borrowed by customers is not kept in the customer record beyond the return of the item unless it becomes overdue or unless the customer has initiated the Reading History option. Overdue charges and outstanding material remain on a customer account indefinitely. Once library material is returned and checked in, a number is retained in a background file, which may be used to identify the last customer to use an item. This information is for use by authorized personnel only.

Inactive customer accounts that do not have outstanding charges are deleted from Library files after two to three years.

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The Library catalogue provides access to a customer's record through the use of the person's barcode. Customers are responsible for ensuring that their personal information is protected by properly logging out when using check out kiosks or a public or shared workstation.

Use of Images and Customer Comments:

The Library may feature images of customers on the website or in promotional materials and these images may be kept in an archive. Photos will not be publicly displayed without prior consent in writing from the subject or, in the case of a minor, from a parent or legal guardian.

When the Library exhibits personal creations by young people under the age of sixteen such as art, writing, photography, or reviews, the consent in writing of a parent or legal guardian is required before the person's name may be disclosed. Only the child's first name, or first name and initial of last name are displayed unless specific permission otherwise is given.

When the Library announces contest winners, or displays customer's comments, only the first name and first initial of the last name will be disclosed unless written permission is given otherwise.

Privacy and the Library Website:

Customers may contact the Library via email or by filling in a form on our website. The information provided by the customer, including their email address and any personal information disclosed, will be seen by staff as part of their customer service responsibilities and will be deleted from Library files within one year.

The Library tracks usage of the website for the purpose of service development and evaluation. Staff do not link website data (external IP addresses) and individual customers.

Privacy and Public Computers:

Customers who are believed to be violating the Library's *Internet and Computer Use Policy* repeatedly, by visiting sites that are offensive to others, may have their use of a public computer shadowed electronically if staff believe that a violation is occurring.

The Library cannot guarantee a customer's privacy regarding Internet sites visited on public computers.

The Library cannot guarantee privacy in situations where customers have saved personal documents on public computers. While the Library takes steps to reduce the risk of this occurring, customers must assume responsibility for correctly saving personal documents.

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Document Record:

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