

Confidentiality of Library Records

The Southold Free Library's' philosophy is in keeping with the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States that reads:

“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated.”

The Director and staff of the Southold Free Library have access to information about individual patrons as it relates to their usage of library services, facilities, computers and books. Neither the Director nor the staff may divulge individual data or transactions to third parties except by court order.

New York Civil Practice Law and Rules Section 4509. Library Records (2001):

“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 relating 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 when otherwise required by statute.”

No member of the staff other than the Library Director or director's designee is authorized to respond to any form of judicial process or to provide any patron-specific or library-business information, in writing or in oral form, to a law enforcement officer or any other person.

The Library Director, upon receipt of a process, order or subpoena, shall consult with the president of the Board and with legal counsel to determine if such process, order, or subpoena is in good form and if there is a showing of good cause for its issuance.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees January 26, 2005; Revised May 23, 2007; Reviewed April 22, 2009; Revised March 23, 2011; Reviewed February 27, 2013, November 17, 2021