

Wisconsin Valley Library Service – Patron Privacy Policy

I. Introduction

Privacy is essential to the exercise of free speech, free thought, and free association. Within Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) the right to privacy is the right to open inquiry without having the subject of one's interest examined or scrutinized by others. Confidentiality exists when a library is in possession of personally identifiable information about users and keeps that information private on their behalf.

The courts have upheld the right to privacy based on the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution. Many states provide guarantees of privacy in their constitutions and statute law. Numerous decisions in case law have defined and extended rights to privacy. WVLS works to ensure that privacy and confidentiality policies are in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

User rights — as well as our institution's responsibilities — outlined here are based in part on what are known in the United States as the five "Fair Information Practice Principles." These five principles outline the rights of Notice, Choice, Access, Security, and Enforcement.

Our commitment to your privacy and confidentiality has deep roots not only in law but also 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."

II. Wisconsin Valley Library Service Commitment to Our Users Rights of Privacy and Confidentiality

This privacy policy explains your privacy and confidentiality rights, the steps that WVLS takes to respect and protect your privacy when you use WVLS member library resources, and how WVLS deals with personally identifiable information that we may collect from our users.

1. Notice & Openness

WVLS affirms that our member library users have the right of "notice" — to be informed about the system policies governing the amount and retention of personally identifiable information, and about why that information is necessary for the provision of services.

WVLS posts publicly, and acknowledges openly, the privacy and information-gathering policies of this library system. Policies changes are made available to the public.

WVLS avoids creating and retaining records not needed for the fulfillment of our mission, and we do not engage in practices that might place personally identifiable information on public view.

Information WVLS may gather and retain about current and valid member library users include the following:

- User Registration Information
- Circulation Information
- Electronic Access Information
- Information Required to Provide Services

2. Choice & Consent

This policy explains the information practices employed by WVLS and the choices you can make about the way the library system collects and uses your information. WVLS will keep your personally identifiable information confidential and will not sell or license it to any third party without your consent, unless we are compelled to do so under the law or to comply with a court order. From time to time WVLS may disclose personally identifiable information to vendors and/or partners relevant to the provision of services to member libraries and their users.

WVLS will never use or share personally identifiable information in ways unrelated to the ones described above without also providing you an opportunity to prohibit such unrelated uses, unless we are compelled to do so under the law or to comply with a court order.

If you wish to receive borrowing privileges, member libraries must obtain certain information about you in order to create and maintain your library account. When using WVLS or member library websites or electronic services, you may be asked to provide certain personally identifiable information.

You have the option of providing additional contact information, such as e-mail address or phone number, for the purpose of notifying you about your library account. You may request the removal of this contact information from your record at any time.

3. Access by Users

Individuals who use services that require the function and process of personally identifiable information are entitled to view and/or update their information. To access or update your personal information, you may be asked to provide meaningful verification such as a pin number or identification card to ensure verification of identity.

The purpose of accessing and updating your personally identifiable information is to ensure that library operations can function properly. These operations may include notification of overdue items, recalls, reminders, etc. Your library can assist you with accessing or updating your information.

4. Data Integrity & Security

Data Integrity: WVLS maintains data as accurately and securely as possible. WVLS strives to assure data integrity by:

- Using reputable sources of data
- Regularly reviewing personally identifiable information
- Updating data whenever possible
- Employing authentication mechanisms which do not require personally identifiable information
- Destroying untimely data or converting it to anonymous form.

Data Retention: WVLS protects personally identifiable information from unauthorized disclosure once it is no longer needed to manage library services. Information that should be regularly purged or shredded includes personally identifiable information on library resource use, and material circulation history.

Tracking Users: WVLS invests in technology to protect the security of any personally identifiable information while it is in the library system's custody, and works to ensure that summary data does not include personally identifiable information. Links between patron records and materials borrowed are removed when the data collection purposes have been satisfied. Users are discouraged from choosing passwords or PINs that could reveal their identity, including social security numbers. Member libraries are encouraged to remove cookies, Web history, cached files, or other computer and Internet use records and other software code that is placed on our computers or networks.

Third Party Security: To safeguard personally identifiable information, WVLS works to ensure

- That contracts, agreements, licenses, and offsite computer service arrangements reflect our policies and legal obligations concerning user privacy and confidentiality and address appropriate restrictions on the use, aggregation, dissemination, and sale of that information.
- That authentication to third party licensed databases abstracts personally identifiable information.
- That in the event of a data breach, member library users will be informed.

Security Measures: WVLS security measures involve both managerial and technical best practices and procedures to protect against loss and the unauthorized access, destruction, use, or disclosure of data. Our managerial measures include internal organizational procedures that limit access to data and ensure that those individuals with access do not utilize the data for unauthorized purposes. Our technical security measures to prevent unauthorized access include encryption in the transmission and storage of data; limits on access through use of passwords; and storage of data on secure servers or computers.

Staff access to personal data: WVLS permits only authorized member library staff with assigned confidential passwords to access personal data stored within the library system's network for the purpose of performing library work. The library system does not sell or lease users' personal information to companies, universities, or individuals.

5. Enforcement & Redress

WVLS will not share patron data with third parties unless required by law. WVLS conducts regular privacy audits to ensure that library system programs and services comply with this privacy policy. Library users who have questions, concerns, or complaints about the library system's handling of their privacy and confidentiality rights should file written comments with the Director of the library system. WVLS will respond in a timely manner and may conduct a privacy investigation or review of policy and procedures.

The WVLS Board of Trustees authorizes the library system Director and designated staff to receive or comply with requests from law enforcement officers; we may confer with our legal counsel before determining the proper response. WVLS will not make library records available to any agency of state, federal, or local government unless a subpoena, warrant, court order or other investigatory document is issued by a court of competent jurisdiction that shows good cause and is in proper form unless we are compelled to do so under the law.

Terms of Use - Acceptance of Terms

By using the WVLS web sites, you signify your acceptance of this Web site Privacy Policy. If you do not agree to this Policy, please do not use our sites. Your continued use of any WVLS web site following the posting of changes to these terms will indicate your acceptance of those changes.

See below: Wisconsin Statute 43.30, Public Library Records, and statement from the American Library Association on release of records:

Wisconsin Statute 43.30. Public library records.

(1) Records of any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds, including the records of a public library system, indicating the identity of any individual who borrows or uses the library's documents or other materials, resources or services may not be disclosed except by court order or to persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library or library system, to persons authorized by the individual to inspect such records or to libraries as authorized under subs. (2) and (3).

(2) A library supported in whole or in part by public funds may disclose an individual's identity to another library for the purpose of borrowing materials for the individual only if the library to which the individual's identity is being disclosed meets at least one of the following requirements:

- (a) The library is supported in whole or in part by public funds.
- (b) The library has a written policy prohibiting the disclosure of the identity of the individual except as authorized under sub. (3).
- (c) The library agrees not to disclose the identity of the individual except as authorized under sub. (3).

(3) A library to which an individual's identity is disclosed under sub. (2) and that is not supported in whole or in part by public funds may disclose that individual's identity to another library for the purpose of borrowing materials for that individual only if the library to which the identity is being disclosed meets at least one of the requirements specified under sub (2) (a) to (c).

History: 1981 c. 335; 1991 a. 269.

From the American Library Association:

"Confidential library records should not be released or made available in any format to a federal agent, law enforcement officer, or other person unless a court order in proper form has been entered by a court of competent jurisdiction after a showing of good cause by the law enforcement agency or person seeking the records."

See also Information about the USA Patriot Act and Library Records