**Starr Library**

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

**Purpose**

Starr Library’s commitment to the privacy and confidentiality of patrons 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.”

**Legal Basis**

* In compliance with New York State Civil Practice Law and Rules [4509](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/CVP/4509), the records of the library cardholders are confidential. Library records include but are not limited to patron registration records, circulation records, electronic access information required to provide users with online access to accounts, attendance records for library sponsored programs, records of computer use or reference services, or any other data linking a particular patron to specific library services or materials.

**Guidelines**

* Starr Library avoids creating unnecessary records, retains only records needed for the fulfillment of the mission of the library, and does not engage in practices that might place information on public view.
* Patrons have control over their library cards. Presentation of a valid library card will allow the patron whose name appears on the card (or the parent/legal guardian in the case of a minor child) access to information about the current circulation record of that patron. A person presenting the library card of a friend or family member may check out items on that card with authorization from the cardholder. However, no information from that library record may be given by library staff to a third party.
* Patrons have the option of providing an email address for the purpose of notifications about their library account. If the patron agrees to communication by email on their library card registration form, the library will also use email addresses to communicate about library programs and services through library newsletters and other emails. Patrons may unsubscribe from any of these communications at any time and, further, request removal of their email address from the patron record.
* Individuals who use library services are entitled to view and/or update their information online or in person. In both instances, patrons will be asked to provide some sort of verification such as a pin number, password, or photo ID to ensure their identity.
* The purpose of accessing and updating one’s personally identifiable information is to ensure that library operations can function properly. Such functions may include notification of overdue items, recalls, reminders, etc.
* No information from the library records will be released to any person, agency or organization, except in response to a valid court order or subpoena, properly presented to the Library Director or the Director’s representatives.

**Questions, Concerns, or Complaints**

Users who have questions, concerns, or complaints about the Library’s handling of their privacy and confidentiality rights should file written comments with the Library Director. Administration will respond in a timely manner and may conduct a privacy investigation or review of policy and procedures.

*(Adapted from Kingston Public Library and ALA)*

*Approved by Starr Library Board of Trustees June 26, 2025*