

Confidentiality of Customer Information

REDWOOD CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY | redwoodcity.org/library | 650.780.7020



Redwood City Public Library Policy on Confidentiality of Customer Information

Redwood City Public Library (“Library”) collects customer data, including name, address, and other personal information on Library card applications. The purpose of collecting this information is to contact customers regarding Library issues, including overdue items, arrived holds, or upcoming Library events. The confidentiality of Library records is protected by Section 6267 of the California Government Code, and information is not shared with any other parties except as required by law and as specified in this policy. “Library records” include any “written or electronic record used to identify the patron,” as well as “personally identifiable uses of Library resources, information requests, or inquiries.”

The Redwood City Library is part of the Peninsula Library System, a consortium of the public and community college libraries in San Mateo County. Within the Peninsula Library System, records of items borrowed are deleted as soon as the items are returned, and the Library does not maintain a history of items borrowed, with the following two exceptions:

1. If a Library account is assessed fees for lost or damaged materials or for overdue fines for late returns, the online system does keep a record of the items associated with fees owed and/or paid. Section 6267 of the California Government Code specifies that fines are excluded from confidentiality protections.
2. If a user chooses to opt in to enable Borrowing History or Saved Searches for an account in the Library’s online catalog, the Library will maintain these records, and they could be disclosed under the circumstances described below.

California Government Code Section 6267 provides for disclosure of Library records under three circumstances:

1. By a person acting within the scope of his or her duties within the administration of the Library.
2. By a person authorized, in writing, by the individual to whom the records pertain, to inspect the records.
3. By order of the appropriate superior court.

Examples of circumstances where records are disclosed include the following:

- For long overdue materials, the Library utilizes a collection agency in order to facilitate the return of Library materials, and the Library provides the agency with customer names, contact information, and fines and fees owed, as well as details about the items which have not been returned. The conditions for an account being sent to a collection agency are determined by the Library’s Borrowing Policy.
- If the Library is presented with a court order in proper form, the Library must disclose any requested records in its possession.

Computer Use Records

The Library does not restrict, filter, monitor, record, or edit Internet content, nor does it keep a permanent record of Internet sites visited or searches performed by individuals. Computer reservation data is routinely deleted. Internet users should be aware that public computers and wireless networks present security risks and vulnerability to unauthorized access, and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding users’ activities. Users should assume that their information may not be private.