Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest
Confidentiality of Patron Records

The Vestavia Hills Library in the Forest respects the library user's right to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed, acquired and transmitted.

The legal custodian of records for the Library is the Library Director. As the legal custodian of records, the Director may designate one or more employees to serve as person responding to any request for Library records or information about a Library user in the Director's absence.

The circulation and registration records of the Vestavia Hills Library shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal or local government except when a court order in proper form, issued by a court of competent jurisdiction after showing of good cause, is presented to the Library by the law enforcement agency or person seeking the records.

No Library employee or volunteer may release library records or reveal information about a library user to any third party or law enforcement agent unless authorized to so by the Library Director or the Director's designated alternate.

This policy is supported by the following sections from the Code of Alabama:

41-8-10. Registration, etc., records of public libraries to be confidential; right of parents to inspect records.

It is recognized that public library use by an individual should be of a confidential nature. Any other provision of general, special or local law, rule or regulation to the contrary notwithstanding, the registration and circulation records and information concerning the use of the public, public school, college and university libraries of this state shall be confidential. Registration and circulation records shall not be open for inspection by, or otherwise available to, any agency or individual except for the following entities:

1. The library which manages the records
2. The state education department for a library under its jurisdiction when necessary to assure the proper operations of such library.

Aggregate statistics shown from registration and circulation records, with all personal identification removed, may be released or used by a library for research and planning purposes. Provided however, any parent of a minor child shall have the right to inspect the registration and circulation records of any school or public library that pertain to his or her child. (Acts 1983, No. 83-565, p. 866, 2.)

36-12-40 Rights of citizens to inspect and copy public writings; exception for public library registration and circulation records

Every citizen has a right to inspect and take a copy of any public writing of this state, except as otherwise expressly provided by statue. Provided however, registration and circulation records and information concerning the use of public, public school or college and university libraries of this state shall be exempted from this section. Provided further, any parent of a minor child shall have the right to inspect the registration and circulation records of any school or public library that pertain to his or her child.

(Code 1923, 2695, Code 1940, T. 41, 145; Acts 193, No. 83-565, p. 866, 3.)

Procedure for Access

Library staff shall observe the following procedures:

On receipt of any legal process, order or subpoena, the Library staff member in charge will immediately consult with the Library Director or President of the Board of Trustees. All requests shall be referred to the Library Director for appropriate disposition. The Library Director will consult with the City Attorney to consider appropriate action. Until the legality of such process, order or subpoena has been affirmatively shown to the satisfaction of the City Attorney, the Library will resist its issuance or enforcement until any such defect has been cured.

Approved by the Library Board March 2015