Patron Anonymity Policy

Because the traditional role of public libraries in a free democratic society is to make books, writings and information on all subjects of interest easily available without charge to all people, so as to maintain a well-informed and well-educated citizenry.

And because libraries traditionally seek to ensure a wide and free dissemination of all ideas and writings, including unpopular ones, libraries have traditionally preserved the anonymity of patrons.

For these reasons, Kent Memorial Library remains strongly committed to the principle of patron anonymity.

THEREFORE, the Commission of the Kent Memorial Library declares the following policy on the subject of Patron Anonymity:

1. The Library shall retain no records of any kind, including non-tangible electronic or computer records, or hard copy or paper records ("Records") relating to any patron, or containing any patron information, which are unnecessary to efficient operation of the Library. Lending and inter-library loan records are maintained long enough to insure safe return of materials. Patrons are advised, however, that the Library's database search (computer card catalog) system and circulation records are connected to an offsite vendor system, beyond the Library's control, so eradication of all patron information at these off-site locations cannot be guaranteed.
2. The Library shall take affirmative steps to promptly and thoroughly destroy any Records relating to any patron, or including any patron information, which are unnecessary to the efficient operation of the Library.
3. All Records, relating to internet or computer use shall be destroyed thoroughly, to eliminate any opportunity for recovery of any user information, and as promptly as is reasonably practicable,. Patrons are advised, however, that no hardware scrub or similar program is used by the Library for this purpose, and complete eradication of all user information cannot be guaranteed.
4. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 11-25, patron and circulation records of the Kent Memorial Library are strictly confidential and not subject to disclosure to the public or to any law enforcement officers except by court order or with written permission of the patron. Library employees and any agents of the library are bound to observe this confidentiality.
5. Any person with a court order making a request for library information shall immediately be referred to the Director of the library, or, if that person is not available, the most senior staff member. The Director or senior staff member will then contact the Town Attorney. No information will be given to the requester until advised to do so by direction of the Town Attorney.