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Policy Type: **Operational**

Policy Number: **OP - 01**

Policy Title: **Confidentiality and the Protection of Privacy**

Policy Approval Date: June 1994

Policy Review Date: March 2026

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#### PURPOSE

The Milton Public Library recognizes that in order to fulfill its purpose statement, library users and staff must not feel constrained in their use of library resources because they fear invasion of personal privacy. The users' choice of materials they borrow and websites they visit is a private matter. The library will therefore make every reasonable effort to ensure that personal information about its users and their use of library materials, services and programs remains confidential.

#### SCOPE

1. Personal information is defined in ***Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***, R.S.O.1990, c. M56 (MFIPPA), in part, as “recorded information about an identifiable individual.” This could include, in the library context, information on a user’s borrowing habits, as well as information related to computer use and information on Internet use.
2. The Board ensures that:
  - a. the library complies with the spirit, principles and intent of MFIPPA
  - b. members of the public have access to information about the operations of the library and to their own personal information held by the library in accordance with the access provisions of MFIPPA
  - c. the privacy of an individual’s personal information is protected in compliance with the privacy provisions of MFIPPA
  - d. staff may view and amend patron records as required to perform appropriate library functions
  - e. staff are not permitted to view or amend records outside the scope of their duties.
3. The Board is responsible for personal information under its control and designates the CEO as the individual accountable for the organization’s compliance with legislation and ensures that:
  - a. the purposes for which personal information is collected shall be identified by the library at, or before, the time the information is collected

- b. consent of the individual is acquired for the disclosure of collection use or personal information
- c. the collection of personal information shall be limited to that which is necessary for the proper administration of the library and the provision of library services and programs
- 4. The library will retain personal information only as long as necessary to provide services and administer library operations.
  - a.
  - b. the Library will not disclose personal information to any third parties without having obtained prior consent of the person to whom the information pertains, except when MFIPPA permits disclosure or other applicable law requires that the Library disclose the personal information
  - c. personal information shall be as accurate, complete and up-to-date as is necessary for the purpose for which it is used
  - d. personal information shall be protected by security safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information
  - e. upon request, an individual shall be informed of the existence, use, and disclosure of his or her personal information, and shall be given access to that information. An individual shall be able to challenge the accuracy and completeness of the information and have it amended as appropriate
  - f. an individual shall be able to address a challenge concerning compliance with the above principles to the CEO

The possession of a physical library card or access to the card in digital format implies consent for the holder to pay fines or pick up materials on behalf of the card owner, but does not allow access to any library account information such as materials checked out on the card.

Library account information can be shared only with the account holder, or with the person who has lawful custody of the individual for a person who is less than 16 years of age, or with someone holding Power of Attorney for the specified individual.

Personal information may be shared with agencies and companies working within the scope of their duties on behalf of the library and in compliance with this policy.

Any disclosure of personal information to law enforcement officials must be approved by the CEO. Exceptions can be made in compassionate circumstances where the manager in charge may disclose information in the case of a missing person where time is of essence.

**Related Documents:**

***Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O., 1990, c. M56***