

## Introduction to Privacy Inventory

The San Francisco Public Library's Privacy Policy affirms its commitment to patron privacy and confidentiality: "The San Francisco Public Library champions the protection of personal privacy. Protecting library user privacy and keeping confidential information that identifies individuals or associates individuals with their use of library books, materials, equipment, programs, facilities, and/or staff assistance is an integral principle of the Library."

The provision of services to individuals necessitates some data collection and use. Although anyone can enter the public library and use materials on site without providing any personal information, borrowing of materials and use of some licensed services requires that the person has been issued a library card. The library's obligation is to assure that only the data necessary to perform the service are gathered, that the record is only kept for as long as is needed to provide the service or to meet any institutional or city-wide records retention rules, and that access to the data be limited to those who must use it in the performance of their library duties.

In February and March of 2007, the San Francisco Public Library engaged in an audit of library records that contain data about use of its materials and facilities. The purpose of the audit was to create an inventory of all library records that relate to patrons and patron activity within the definition of the confidentiality rules, to determine exactly what data is gathered, who has access to the data, and the records retention practice in relation to that data.

The audit looked at records storage in the following areas. These areas were identified by library staff as having some data gathering in the course of the provided service:

- Circulation and borrower records
- Library database and system
- Reference services
- Library web site
- Reader services
- Public workstations
- Remote and licensed services
- Meeting room use

The [Library Patron Privacy Inventory](#) is the result of the audit. This document will be updated as existing services changed or are redefined and as new services are developed that have an impact on patron privacy and/or confidentiality.