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# HELIN Policy on Confidentiality of Records

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## HELIN Policy on Confidentiality of Records

In order to support the intellectual freedom of the members of its constituent libraries, HELIN will protect each library users right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received, and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired, or transmitted ([ALA Code of Ethics, Article III](#)).

Rhode Island state law (though not strictly applicable to all of the member institutions) also makes clear the presumed right to privacy of library users (R.I. General Laws, 11-18-32 (2001)).

Under no circumstances with the exception of being in compliance with applicable state and federal law, will HELIN release information about borrowers and their use of members' collections. Confidential library records will not be released or made available in any format to a federal agent, law enforcement officer, or other person unless a court order in proper form has been entered by a court of competent jurisdiction after a showing of good cause by the law enforcement agency or person seeking the records.

It is the policy of HELIN to respond to any such request by immediately referring the matter to legal counsel before any action is taken by HELIN staff.

HELIN staff, working with legal counsel, will generally follow procedures as outlined in ALA's Confidentiality and Coping with Law Enforcement Inquiries: Guidelines for the Library and Its Staff which can be found at: <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/guidelineslibrary.html>