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|  | **Ridgway Public Library****Response to Law Enforcement Policy** |  **Draft****July 10** **2025** |

Vision Statement

The Ridgway Public Library is a welcoming and positive gathering space for people of all ages to experience the joy of reading, the value of lifelong learning, the usefulness of creating, the excitement of art, the warmth of connection with others. The library provides flexible and diverse services that meet the needs of our patrons and community.

Purpose

The Response to Law Enforcement policy, approved by the Ridgway Public Library Board of Trustees, specifies staff’s response to requests for information and unscheduled visits from law enforcement.  Law enforcement includes local, state and federal officers (Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, etc.).

The Library strives to protect our patrons and their private information when they use our facilities and services. In all interactions with law enforcement officers, library staff will exercise professionalism and courtesy and adhere to all local, state and federal laws.

General Guidance

As a public facility, law enforcement officers are allowed to perform their official duties within the library's public areas. They may not enter non-public areas without a court order, warrant or subpoena, except in an emergency pursuant to applicable law.

 **Public Areas include** reading/study areas, children and young adult areas, stacks, bathrooms, public computer stations, and meeting rooms

**Non-public Areas include** staff spaces, director’s office, custodial areas, mechanical rooms and staff work areas.

As per [Colorado Confidentiality Law (C.R.S. 24-90-19)](https://steamboatlibrary.org/about-us/policies/patron-privacy-confidentiality), Library staff should not respond to inquiries or share any information about a Library employee or patron with law enforcement officials unless they have consulted with the director. The director in turn, will not share this information unless there is written consent from the employee or patron or unless served with a court order, warrant or subpoena verified by the director.

For safety reasons, staff should follow the direction of law enforcement in emergencies and not interfere in incidents involving law enforcement questioning a suspect in a public area. Staff may record law enforcement visits via written notes, audio and/or video. Staff may not engage in vigilantism: direct patrons not to answer questions, assist patrons in hiding or escaping, or make false statements to law enforcement.

 Responding to Law Enforcement Visits

 Frontline Staff Response

Greet the officer/agent politely and courteously as we greet all visitors and ask if they are on official business.

Unless they are there as a library patron on private business, notify the director that an officer/agent is in the building on official business.

 Request that the officer/agent wait until the director arrives or returns at a later time.

Director Response

 If a law enforcement officer is on official business, ask to see and make a copy of or write down the officer’s credentials (name and badge number). Also, ask for and copy or write down the telephone number of the officer’s supervisor.

Ask the officer to explain the purpose of their visit and write down the response.

 Ask the officer to produce any documentation that authorizes access to patron information or non-public areas. If they are unable to produce any documentation, please inform the officer Colorado Confidentiality Law and let them know that you are unable to assist them.

The director will review the documents to ensure that warrants, etc., are valid

- The warrant is signed by a judge or magistrate

- The warrant describes Ridgway Public Library’s building as the place to be searched.

- The warrant has the correct date and was issued within the past 14 days, and

- The search does not exceed the scope of the items authorized to be searched.

Administrative warrants signed by an immigration officer and not a judge or magistrate are not enough to allow ICE agents into non-public areas or access to patron data.

 If the officer provides documentation, make copies of all documents. The director will verify the authenticity of the court order, warrant or subpoena.

Document the officer’s actions in as much detail as possible, which may include taking photos and videos, when they enter public library premises, but without interfering with the officer’s movements.

 If the officer orders staff to provide immediate access to non-public areas, staff should comply with the officer’s order and immediately contact the director. Staff members should not attempt to physically interfere with the officer, even if the officer appears to be acting without consent or exceeding the purported authority given by a warrant or other document. If an officer enters non-public areas without authority, staff shall simply document the officer’s actions while at the facility, including taking photos and videos.

 The director will complete a document of the incident.

 If patron data was released to a federal immigration officer as per applicable law, the Director will notify the patron that this data was shared.

If children are left unattended as a result of enforcement agents' activities, contact local law enforcement.