

# VALLEY COTTAGE LIBRARY

110 Route 303, Valley Cottage, New York 10989 • 845.268.7700 • www.valleycottagelibrary.org



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## VALLEY COTTAGE LIBRARY PUBLIC ACCESS TO LIBRARY INFORMATION AND RECORDS

### 1. Purpose and Scope.

- a. Although the Valley Cottage Library (the “Library”), as a private entity, is not obligated to comply with the Freedom of Information Law, the Board of Trustees has adopted a policy of free, open, and transparent access to those records of the Library in which the public has an interest, and directs Library personnel to furnish to the public information and records concerning library operations, finances, and decision-making, except to the extent that disclosure could be harmful to the Library or to the privacy rights of a person or entity.
- b. This policy provides information concerning the procedures by which records may be obtained from the Library.

### 2. Designation of Records Access Officer.

- a. The Board of Trustees of the Library is responsible for insuring compliance with the provisions of this policy, and designates the following person as records access officer:

Director  
Valley Cottage Library  
110 Route 303  
Valley Cottage, New York, 10989

- b. The records access officer is responsible for insuring appropriate Library response to public requests for access to records. The records access officer shall insure that library personnel:
  - i. Assist persons seeking records to identify the records sought, if necessary, and when appropriate, indicate the manner in which the records are filed, retrieved or generated to assist persons in reasonably describing records.
  - ii. Contact persons seeking records when a request is voluminous or when locating the records involves substantial effort, so that personnel may ascertain the nature of records of primary interest and attempt to reasonably reduce the volume of records requested.
  - iii. Upon locating the records, take one of the following actions:
    1. Make records available for inspection; or,
    2. Deny access to the records in whole or in part and explain in writing the reasons therefor.

- iv. Upon request for copies of records:
  - 1. Make a copy available upon payment or offer to pay established fees, if any; or,
  - 2. Permit the requester to copy those records under the supervision of Library personnel.
- v. Upon failure to locate records, certify that:
  - 1. The Library is not the custodian for such records, or
  - 2. The records of which the Library is a custodian cannot be found after diligent search.

**3. Location.**

Records shall be available for public inspection and copying at the Library.

**4. Hours For Public Inspection.**

Requests for public access to records shall be accepted and records produced during all hours in which the Library's administrative department is regularly open for business. Currently, these hours are: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Access to records during these hours must be through prior arrangement with the Records Access Officer.

**5. Requests For Public Access To Records.**

- a. The Library will require that all request(s) for access to records will be in writing, except that an oral request may be allowed when records are readily available.
- b. If records are maintained on the internet, the requester shall be informed that the records are accessible via the internet and in printed form either on paper or other information storage medium.
- c. The Library will respond to all requests in a reasonable time.
- d. The Records Officer reserves the right to seek the counsel of the Board President or full Board of Trustees at the next scheduled meeting to determine the suitability of records for public release.

**6. Denial of Access To Records.**

- a. Denial of access to records shall be in writing stating the reason therefor.
- b. In general, records will only be denied if there is a legitimate reason to not disclose, which reason may include, but is not limited to, the fact that disclosure could injure the privacy rights of a person or entity.
- c. No document that constitutes a Library Record pursuant to N.Y. Civil Practice Law and Rules §4509 will be released except in accordance with the procedures set forth in that section.
- d. Appeals to Record Request Denials shall be made to the Board of Trustees at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

**7. Fees.**

- a. There shall be no fee charged for inspection of records
- b. Reasonable fees may be charged for copies of records made by library staff.

Adopted: November 6, 2002

Revised: March 16, 2022

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## Application for Public Access to Records

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby apply to inspect the following record(s):

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Contact Information:

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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### For Library Use Only

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

DENIED: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date