THE LIBRARY PRIVACY ACT
Act 455 of 1982

AN ACT to provide for the confidentiality of certain library records; and to provide for the selection and
use of library materials.


The People of the State of Michigan enact:

397.601 Short title.
Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as “the library privacy act”.


397.602 Definitions.
Sec. 2. As used in this act:
(a) “Computer” means any connected, directly interoperable or interactive device, equipment, or facility
that uses a computer program or other instructions to perform specific operations including logical,
arithmetic, or memory functions with or on computer data or a computer program, and that can store, retrieve,
alter, or communicate the results of the operations, to a person, computer program, computer, computer
system, or computer network.
(b) “Computer network” means the interconnection of hardwire or wireless communication lines with a
computer through remote terminals, or a complex consisting of 2 or more interconnected computers.
(c) “Computer program” means a series of internal or external instructions communicated in a form
acceptable to a computer that directs the functioning of a computer, computer system, or computer network in
a manner designed to provide or produce products or results from the computer, computer system, or
computer network.
(d) “Computer system” means a set of related, connected or unconnected, computer equipment, devices,
software, or hardware.
(e) “Device” includes, but is not limited to, an electronic, magnetic, electrochemical, biochemical,
hydraulic, optical, or organic object that performs input, output, or storage functions by the manipulation of
electronic, magnetic, or other impulses.
(f) “Harmful to minors” means that term as it is defined in section 4 of 1978 PA 33, MCL 722.674.
(g) “Internet” means that term as defined in section 230 of title II of the communications act of 1934,
(h) “Library” includes a library that is established by the state; a county, city, township, village, school
district, or other local unit of government or authority or combination of local units of governments and
authorities; a community college district; a college or university; or any private library open to the public.
(i) “Library record” means a document, record, or other method of storing information retained by a library
that contains information that personally identifies a library patron, including the patron’s name, address, or
telephone number, or that identifies a person as having requested or obtained specific materials from a library.
Library record does not include nonidentifying material that may be retained for the purpose of studying or
evaluating the circulation of library materials in general.
(j) “Minor” means an individual who is less than 18 years of age.
(k) “Obscene” means that term as it is defined in section 2 of 1984 PA 343, MCL 752.362.
(l) “Sexually explicit matter” means that term as it is defined in section 3 of 1978 PA 33, MCL 722.673.
(m) “Terminal” means a device used to access the internet or a computer, computer program, computer
network, or computer system.


397.603 Library record not subject to disclosure requirements; release or disclosure of
library record without consent prohibited; exception; procedure and form of written
consent; hearing.
Sec. 3. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a library record is not subject to the disclosure
requirements of the freedom of information act, Act No. 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, being sections
15.231 to 15.246 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.
(2) Unless ordered by a court after giving the affected library notice of the request and an opportunity to be
heard on the request, a library or an employee or agent of a library shall not release or disclose a library
record or portion of a library record to a person without the written consent of the person liable for payment
for or return of the materials identified in that library record.

(3) The procedure and form of giving written consent described in subsection (2) may be determined by
the library.

(4) A library may appear and be represented by counsel at a hearing described in subsection (2).


397.604 Violation of MCL 397.603; liability; civil action; damages; attorney fees and costs.

Sec. 4. A library or an agent or employee of a library which violates section 3 shall be liable to the person
identified in a record that is improperly released or disclosed. The person identified may bring a civil action
for actual damages or $250.00, whichever is greater; reasonable attorney fees; and the costs of bringing the
action.


397.605 Selection and use of library materials.

Sec. 5. (1) Except as otherwise provided by statute or by a regulation adopted by the governing body of the
library, the selection of library materials for inclusion in a library’s collection shall be determined only by an
employee of the library.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by law or by a regulation adopted by the governing body of the library,
the use of library materials shall be determined only by an employee of the library.


397.606 Restriction of internet access to minors; immunity from liability; exceptions.

Sec. 6. (1) If a library offers use of the internet or a computer, computer program, computer network, or
computer system to the public, the governing body of that library shall adopt and require enforcement of a
policy that restricts access to minors by providing the use of the internet or a computer, computer program,
computer network, or computer system in 1 of the following ways:

(a) Both of the following:
   (i) By making available, to individuals of any age, 1 or more terminals that are restricted from receiving
   obscene matter or sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors.
   (ii) By reserving, to individuals 18 years of age or older or minors who are accompanied by their parent or
   guardian, 1 or more terminals that are not restricted from receiving any material.

(b) By utilizing a system or method that is designed to prevent a minor from viewing obscene matter or
sexually explicit matter that is harmful to minors.

(2) A governing body of a library, member of a governing body of a library, library, or an agent or
employee of a governing body of a library or library, is immune from liability in a civil action as provided in

(3) This section does not apply to a library established by a community college district, a college or
university, or a private library open to the public.