

## Ida Public Library Registered Offender in the Library Policy

The Board of Trustees, Administration, and Staff of the Ida Public Library acknowledge that registered sex offenders live within the communities that we serve. Public libraries are recognized as a community-gathering place and a primary point for information of all kinds to be disseminated to the public. The Ida Public Library acknowledges that the right to some level of access to a public library is constitutionally protected under the First Amendment right to receive information. To that end, all individuals are welcome in our libraries, provided that in so doing they do not violate the law or any library policies/procedures.

Like many other states, the State of Illinois enacted the “Sex Offender Registration Act” (730 ILCS 150/1, et seq.) which requires all persons adjudicated sexually dangerous who are later released, or found to be no longer sexually dangerous and discharged, to register with proper local law enforcement authorities so that their whereabouts are known by these authorities. The “Sex Offender Registration Act” also prohibits child sex offenders from residing within 500 feet of a school, park, playground or other facility providing services exclusively to persons under the age of 18. As public libraries do not provide services exclusively to persons under the age of 18, registered sex offenders in Illinois can live within 500 feet of a public library.

### **Areas of Access Within Ida Public Library Facilities**

Whenever a registered sex offender wishes to enter an Ida Public Library facility, including the Bookmobile, they need to be aware of the following limitations with regard to where they can go and what they can take part in while on library property.

Registered sex offenders **May:**

- Visit library collection areas intended for adults.
- Use a public computer located in the adult area of our library upstairs.
- Request and receive quality adult reference service, place holds on library materials, check out materials with a library card in good standing, and otherwise receive access to library information.
- Attend library programming intended exclusively for adults.
- If they are the parent or legal guardian of a minor child (with proper paperwork documenting this), a registered sex offender may accompany that child into areas of a library facility that are primarily for the use of minors, into programs intended for minors, etc. so long as abuse is not suspected and the minor remains with the registered sex offender the entire time.

Registered sex offenders **May Not:**

- Loiter or linger outdoors on library property
- Loiter or linger in entryways or any other common areas of the library
- Be present in any areas of the library facility that are primarily for the use of minors, including but not limited to the Youth Services Department as a whole, any story time room or room being used for children's programming.
- Attend library programming whose audience can be reasonably expected to contain minors, including outdoor programming for minors unless they are accompanying their own minor child so long as abuse is not suspected and the registered sex offender remains with their minor child the entire time.

**Library Staff Expectations:**

- Staff **Will Not** be expected to regularly review the registered sex offender database, but they may know that an individual is a registered sex offender because the individual self-identifies, law enforcement has provided identification, or staff may have independent personal knowledge.
- When that is the case, the Director or Person in Charge will be notified if the offender is in the prohibited areas of the library.
- If a patron tells staff that a registered sex offender is on the premises, the patron will be allowed to point out the individual to the Director or Person in Charge and, if possible, provide the name of the alleged sex offender.
- In all instances, the Director or Person in Charge will review the sex offender database, verify that the individual is listed, and then advise the offender of the Registered Sex Offender Policy.
- Individuals will not be approached if their name cannot be obtained, or if their status as a registered sex offender cannot be confirmed.