BiblioCommons & Patron Privacy FAQ

User-Generated Content (UGC)

Q: Will BiblioCommons sell or re-use the reviews and lists I create?

A: By agreeing to the Terms of Use, you are granting your library and BiblioCommons the right to make use of that material, including copying, distributing and displaying it, as long as it is attributed. You retain ownership.

This type of arrangement, which is known as an Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike Creative Commons License, is widely used on sites where visitors share information. For example, see the Reviews, Comments, Communications, and Other Content section in Amazon's Terms of Use.

Such a license allows BiblioCommons or the library to, for example, tweet a book review you've written or post a link to it on a website without requiring your permission.

Adding comments, summaries, ratings and lists is an optional feature. As noted in the Terms of Use, if you don't wish to give the library and BiblioCommons the rights, don't contribute comments, lists or summaries.

Q: What about rating and commenting on items?

A: If you write a review, make a comment, tag or other type of content, use the My Shelves feature, rate something, or create lists within BiblioCommons, that information is retained on BiblioCommons' servers. You can choose to make your My Lists and My Shelves private. Reviews, comments, tags and ratings were designed to be shared, and will be displayed along with your chosen display name unless you choose to mark that title private. They are viewable by anybody searching the BiblioCommons system, whether or not they are a registered user.

If you plan to add ratings or comments to things you've borrowed, you should make them shared. Otherwise, no one else will be able to see what you've contributed! Regardless of your default shelf setting, you can make individual items private or shared. That enables you to share the bulk of your items with others, while keeping a few titles private if you wish to.

Q: Why would I let BiblioCommons—and everyone who uses it—see my shared content?

A: The ability to see ratings, comments, similar titles, lists of suggested titles, and more is one of the great benefits of BiblioCommons. With this user generated content, you can see what fellow patrons in your library and in BiblioCommons libraries in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have said about an item.

Furthermore, you can share your own expertise with your fellow patrons and the library community, making lists on topics you are passionate about, helping other patrons find similar books they might enjoy through matching titles you have read, or giving patrons insight into a title you loved—or didn't love—and why. The information you add to items in the catalog makes it easier for other members to discover new titles, and helps them determine if these items are of interest.

Q: What features are restricted for patrons under 13?

A: In the United States, children under 13 cannot enter free text. This means:

- A username must be created by choosing from a pair of dropdowns lists. Children under 13 also do not have the option of displaying their real names.
- List names must be created by selecting from a dropdown list.
- Children under 13 cannot send or receive messages.
- Children cannot add comments, summaries or tags.

- # Data Storage and Confidentiality

Q: I know my personal information is kept confidential by my library. Is BiblioCommons going to keep it confidential?

A: As a library patron, you have entered into an agreement with the Library to provide your information in exchange for services, and that information is governed by the policies and procedures of your library, and by any applicable laws pertaining to patron confidentiality and library records. Keeping both your personal information and the materials and services you access at the library confidential is a cornerstone of libraries, and is reflected as such in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations.

Effective privacy controls are a cornerstone of open and engaged communities. Full information about privacy and BiblioCommons may be found in the BiblioCommons Privacy Statement and BiblioCommons Terms of Use (both documents are links at the bottom of each BiblioCommons webpage. BiblioCommons may disclose your personal information and any content associated with your account if required to do so by law with a subpoena, or in a good faith belief that such disclosure is reasonably necessary to: (a) satisfy any applicable law, regulation, legal process or enforceable governmental request, or (b) enforce the Terms of Use, including investigation of potential violations hereof.

Q: Does BiblioCommons track what I check out from the Library? A: When you access your holds, checked out materials, and recently returned items through BiblioCommons, that data is fetched (or requested) from the data your library maintains and displayed for you in your account. It is not stored by BiblioCommons. When you log out of your account, no record of your holds, checked out materials, or recently returned items are retained on BiblioCommons' servers.The Recently Returned feature enables you to give the Library permission to store a record of the titles you have borrowed. By checking the "Enable Recently Returned" checkbox on your Privacy Settings page, the system will begin listing items that you have returned to the library. If you have not given permission to the Library to record the titles you have borrowed and returned, your library does not keep a record. The Recently Returned feature is not retroactive: it begins with the first item you return after you enable the setting. You are the only person who can view this record.This data -- of what you have checked out, and what you have checked out in the past, if you choose to keep it -- is governed by the policies of San Francisco Public Library and any applicable local, state, or federal laws pertaining to library records, and is not kept or stored in any way by BiblioCommons**Q: What actions trigger patron information to be stored on a BiblioCommons server?**

A: Upon successful completion of registration, BiblioCommons will store patron informationUser Generated Content (UGC) contributions such as tags, comments, ratings, lists, or adding to shelves are also stored. Only registered patrons who have accepted the BiblioCommons Terms of Use and BiblioCommons Privacy Policy can contribute UGC.

Q: If I enter my library card number and PIN, but then choose not to complete the remaining BiblioCommons account setup tasks, is my card number and PIN retained on a BiblioCommons server?

A: No. Patron information is only stored for completely registered users who accept theBiblioCommons Privacy Policy and Terms of Use (part of the registration process).

Q: How long does BiblioCommons store the information it collects?

A: Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) is stored permanently, so long as the patron remains registered for their BiblioCommons account. If the patron chooses to have their account unregistered, all SPI associated with that account will be deleted from the servers.

Q: Where are BiblioCommons' servers?

A: BiblioCommons uses two third-party services. The BiblioCommons databases and servers that store patron information are hosted by Beanfield Metroconnect in Toronto, without duplication outside of Canada. The security provisions there include firewall protection, secured cabinets in a facility with 24-hour security card access, and 24-hour staffed building security.

- All personal information is encrypted when stored, and only a limited number of BiblioCommons employees have access to it.

- The other service BiblioCommons uses is Amazon's EC2. Those servers are outside of Canada, and they are used for catalog data and search servers. They do not store patron information.

Q: Is stored patron information also saved to secondary backup media? If so, where?

A: Yes. Backups of patron information are stored with Iron Mountain, a company that specializes in record management, data backup and recovery, and document management.All personal information is encrypted when stored, and only a limited number of employees have access to it.

Q: How long is the backup media maintained?

A: Daily backups are stored for one week, weekly backups for one month, monthly backups for one year, yearly backups are stored indefinitely.

Q: Can the patron or Library staff initiate an action that triggers previously stored patron information to be purged?

A: Library Staff with access to a Library Admin permissions-level card in BiblioCommons can unregister a patron account at the patron's request. Unregistering a patron's BiblioCommons account will purge all patron information, including UGC contributions, from the BiblioCommons servers.

Q: Is BiblioCommons ever going to sell my personal information?

A: BiblioCommons will not sell, rent or trade your personal information (for example, your email address, date of birth or library barcode). Your personal information is protected by the policies of your library, any applicable local, state, or federal laws pertaining to library records, and the BiblioCommons Privacy Statement and BiblioCommons Terms of Use. Information in your BiblioCommons account that personally identifies you is encrypted and stored in a secured facility.

Data Collection

Q: What is BiblioCommons, anyway? I thought I was using my library.

A: BiblioCommons is an online service the Library uses that makes it easier to track your holds and renewals and find the titles you are looking for in your library's collection. BiblioCommons also allows you to share ratings and commentary about the titles you find at the Library, and to connect with other library users.

Q: Why do I need to register?

A: Registration is important for patrons, the library and the service provider, BiblioCommons. For the patron:

- Registration allows you create an easy-to-remember username you can use to log in, so you don't have to type your barcode every time you want to check your account.
- Registration also allows you to get personalized recommendations and contribute ratings and reviews.

For the Library and for BiblioCommons:

- It is good practice to communicate what information is collected and how that information will be used. By registering, a patron signals that she or he understands these policies and grants permission to store and use personal information as noted.
- Registration also gives the Library and BiblioCommons an opportunity to clearly address some key questions about how the service works, such as the responsibilities of the user, licensing arrangements for user content and other content on the site, safety issues, and the use of the site by children.

Q: What information does BiblioCommons need to create my account?

A: BiblioCommons accesses some of the personal information you have already provided theLibrary, including:

- your name
- your library barcode, PIN/password, and patron number.

In addition, if you have provided these to your library, they will be provided to BiblioCommons during the creation of your account:

- the month and year of your birth (which is required for compliance with US federal law [COPPA, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act])
- your email address.

Although you have shared your address and phone number, among other personal information, with your library, BiblioCommons does not have access to that information.

Q: Why do I have to provide my birth information?

A: Age information is used to protect minors, as required by COPPA, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. In the United States, children under 13 are not allowed to enter free text.

If your birth year and month is not part of your library patron record, you will be asked for it during registration. Providing it is *optional*. You can still register and create an account without birth information. However, certain features, such as the ability to add comments or summaries, will be restricted. BiblioCommons treats all patrons without birth information as if they were minors.

Q: Why do I have to provide an email address?

A: BiblioCommons uses your email address for two functions:

- To allow you to reset your PIN if you forget it.
- If the library has eBooks and downloadable audiobooks from certain vendors, your email address is used to notify you when a title is available to download.

If there is not already an email address on your library patron record, you will be asked for one during registration. Providing it is *optional*. You can still register and create an account without one. However, you will need to contact the library if you forget your PIN, and your ability to download certain types of content may be limited.

Q: What if I don't want to give BiblioCommons my birth date or email address?

A: You don't have to. If your Library record does not have your birth date or an email address, you will be asked to provide them when creating your BiblioCommons account. It is your choice to provide them or not. If you do not provide your birth month and year or an email address, you may still create an account, although some services, such as the ability to type in free-text content (for example, comments and summaries) or receive notifications cannot be provided.

Q: What if I don't want to do any of this?

A: The Library has a "classic catalog" that you can use instead of BiblioCommons. With a non-BiblioCommons view of the catalog, you will not be able to see your fellow library patrons' ratings, comments, or other content; take advantage of the variety of shelves offered to organize your materials; or use the searching functions, including the ability to narrow your search results in ways likely unavailable in the "classic catalog", among other things. You will still be entering into a transaction with your library, using third-party software provided by the Innovative Interfaces Integrated Library System Sierra (or catalog) that the Library uses.

Your personal information and/or borrowing history (if kept private) is no more vulnerable in BiblioCommons than in any other software used by the Library.