

## Self Service Pickup of Holds

*Initial question:* Can a library offer self-pickup of holds using a system of wrapping a piece of paper around the items and then writing the patron's last name on the paper?

*Response from Bob Cooper, November 21, 2008:* I have been thinking since about the holds pickup question you asked and went back and reviewed the law and other materials MSL has issued on library records confidentiality through the years. Can a library have a patron sign a release making it legal to use his/her name on hold pickups? I have decided to say no to this customer service strategy. The law very clearly involves the direct authorizing of a specific person to whom records are to be disclosed via such a waiver. There is no indication of intent that such a waiver could apply to an entity like a library or any of its services or programs or to members of the library staff. This is by design a very restrictive piece of legislation and I have zero comfort level at reading into it anything its language does not specifically address. Add to that the practical component that human error could easily result in a name being used for which no such waiver was on file, and you have a cost risk to the library that just is not worth it. I really believe that the number approach is significantly more prudent than trying to figure out how to make using names work.

NOTE: This was a follow up to a conversation where Bob clearly indicated that it was a violation of the Library Records Confidentiality Act to put holds on the shelf with the patron's last name on it. He recommended using part of the patron's library card number or something else that is coded to comply with the law.