Policy Title/Subject: Lost and Found

Policy:

The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center (HSLIC) has a commitment to serving its patrons and the Health Sciences Center community. People sometimes lose items in and around the library. The Service Point maintains a Lost and Found. Library employees stationed at the Service Point will attempt to match found items with their owners while maintaining the owner’s confidentiality. In addition, these employees will inform people who ask about lost items about other campus Lost and Found locations.

To maximize convenience for the primary users of the Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center, and to comply with University of New Mexico policy, found items are stored in the Service Point or in the combination safe for a reasonable period of time before they are taken to the Campus Police Lost and Found. Because of space limitations, most items can only be held for a maximum of one week, with some items being held for a period of three days.

Procedure:

Handling Found Items

Employees stationed at the Service Point attach a note to the item saying when and where it was found.

If the item has a name and or other contact information, or if an employee recognizes the item as belonging to a patron, attempts will be made to contact the owner. Contact attempts will be recorded, including the date, time, type of contact (email, telephone) and HSLIC employee initials.

Items containing Protected Health Information (PHI) should be turned over immediately to the Privacy Officer.

Following are some general categories of lost items, grouped by the maximum time held in the Library after being turned in to the Lost and Found. The RUSS Operations Manager arranges for sending unclaimed items to Campus Police following the guidelines below.
Items held for three days:
Water Bottles and Coffee Mugs: Drinking utensils such as water bottles and coffee mugs will be emptied of all contents and held in the Lost & Found drawer for three days, after which time, if still unclaimed, they will be taken to Campus Police Lost & Found or discarded.

Items held for one week:
Books: Books not claimed after one week, and not considered potentially valuable collectors’ items, are taken to the Resource, Access and Delivery department to consider for inclusion in the HSLIC collection; if added to the collection, the Innopac item record will record the date and that the book is from the HSLIC lost and found. Books that may be valuable to collectors are taken to the Campus Police Lost and Found.

Clothing: If an unclaimed item of clothing has an offensive odor, it is discarded. An item of clothing in the Lost and Found for a week is donated to a local charity or taken to the Campus Police Lost & Found.

Electronics: cell phones, notepads, laptops, etc.: Any electronic item remaining unclaimed for approximately one week is taken to the Campus Police Lost & Found. This includes any item with retrievable contact information, if the owner was notified and has not replied for one week.

Jewelry: Jewelry which remains unclaimed for one week is taken to the University of New Mexico Campus Police Lost & Found.

Wallets, IDs etc.: An item such as an identification card, credit card, wallet, money, etc. is kept in the combination safe. All attempts are made to contact the person identified. The contact attempts are documented. If the owner cannot be identified, the item is taken to the University of New Mexico Campus Police Lost & Found. If, after being notified, the owner does not come to claim the item for one week, it is taken to the Campus Police Lost & Found.

Memory devices, diskettes, CDs and flash/zip drives, etc.: An unclaimed CD in the Lost and Found, without contact information, is destroyed during the semester break following the semester in which it is found. It is not reused for data storage. An unclaimed USB flash drive without contact information is kept in the Lost and Found for one week, after which it is taken to the Campus Police Lost & Found.

The RUSS Manager of Library Operations, with the approval of the RUSS Coordinator, may adapt these procedures to a specific item. For example, an item might be kept in the combination safe for a longer period of time if the owner is delayed in retrieving it.

Items held until a semester break:
Print/Copy Cards: If identifying information is on the Copicard, the owner will be contacted. Found Copicards are put in the Copicard storage box with alphabetized
separators, at the Information Desk. Unidentified, unclaimed Copicards are used for patron emergencies.

Lost Item Claims
University of New Mexico Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center does not keep a record of lost items. If a patron wishes to have the loss recorded, that person will be directed to the University of New Mexico Campus Police Lost and Found.

Informing Patrons
Signs are posted reminding patrons of the Lost and Found, as determined by the Reference and User Support Services Managers of Library Operations and approved by the Coordinator of Reference and User Support Services.

Service Point employees attempt to inform patrons of other nearby places to search:
- Campus Police Lost and Found 277-0081
- University Hospital Security Lost and Found 272-1757
- Family Practice Clinic Front Desk 272-1722
- HSC Privacy Officer 272-1493

References:
- University of New Mexico Campus Police and Security: https://police.unm.edu/
- University of New Mexico Pathfinder http://pathfinder.unm.edu/
- University of New Mexico General Library (elibrary): Services and Assistance http://library.unm.edu/help/docs/services-for-community-users.pdf