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Patron Privacy Policy

The Framingham Public Library (FPL) is committed to user privacy and confidentiality. The confidentiality of library records is a core part of library ethics and the Framingham Public Library follows the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association. As a member of the Minuteman Library Network the Framingham Public Library adheres to the network's privacy policy regarding the privacy of patron records.

Confidentiality and your library records

Under the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 7 “That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record...”

Confidentiality extends to information sought or received, and materials consulted or borrowed, and includes database search records, reference interviews, circulation records, interlibrary loan transactions, registration records, and all other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities, or services.

Circulation, registration information, and information retrieval records may not be disclosed except to:

- The cardholder (with card or other proper ID). NOTE: In accordance with Massachusetts State Law, this is regardless of age or relationship. For example, parents cannot be told what materials a child has checked out without the child’s consent.
- Staff of Minuteman Library Network member libraries acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library system and in facilitating interlibrary loans.
- Representatives of any local, state, or federal government, pursuant to subpoena or search warrant authorized under the authority of federal, state, or local law relating to civil, criminal, or investigative power. Upon receipt of any such subpoena or search warrant, the Library Director will consult with legal counsel to determine if the subpoena or search warrant is in proper form and if there is a valid basis for its issuance before providing confidential information.

If a patron initiates a reference inquiry or subscribes to the Library's newsletter, this information is considered as part of the borrower account and protected as outlined above.

Online suggestions and other general email to the library which do not apply to borrowing or intellectual pursuits may be considered public records as per Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 66, Section 10.

Confidentiality in online settings

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When patrons visit the Framingham Public Library website, the library collects and stores only aggregate information to measure the number of visitors to different areas of the site to assist in making the site more useful to you.

Website data is separate from individual library account data. The Library cannot look up patron library records to determine what websites were visited. FPL also offers a wireless network that allows patrons to connect to the Internet.

Please be aware that data accessed and sent over FPL's wireless network is not encrypted.

Patrons are encouraged to protect their privacy when participating in online social media forums and third-party content platforms. While FPL is committed to maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of patron records, this protection does not extend to social media forums or third-party platforms where patrons may identify themselves as FPL patrons. By posting on such platforms, patrons acknowledge that they may forfeit any expectation of privacy regarding their patron status.

Please note that each third-party platform has its own terms of service and privacy policies, which may include the collection and sharing of personally identifiable information by the platform host. These practices are beyond the Library's control and may not be subject to the state, federal, or local laws that govern the Library. Patrons are encouraged to review the terms of service and privacy policies of any social media platform or third-party site before participating.

Confidentiality and cameras

The Framingham Public Library utilizes security cameras (without audio) on its property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of staff and patrons; to protect Library property; to discourage theft, vandalism, other criminal activity, and violations of Library policy; to safeguard buildings, grounds, and equipment; and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on Library property.

- Video recording cameras will be used in indoor and outdoor public spaces where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy and in areas prone to theft or misconduct. Examples include public areas such as parking lots, entrances/lobby areas and public spaces within the library that are outside of staff's direct line of sight.
- Cameras will not be installed in areas of the Library where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms and private offices. Cameras will not be positioned in a way that allows patrons' viewing, listening, or personal account information to be easily monitored.

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- Signs will be posted at all entrances informing the public and staff that security cameras are in use.
- Cameras will not be continuously monitored. The public and staff should take appropriate precautions for their safety and the security of their personal property. The Framingham Public Library is not responsible for loss of property or personal injury.
- The Library is not responsible for loss of property or personal injury, and assumes no duty by placing these security cameras.
- All video recordings used for security purposes in the Library and/or on Library property shall solely be the property of the City of Framingham and is subject to the City's Archive Policies. Recorded data may be shared with Library staff to identify those suspended from Library property and to maintain a safe, secure, and policy-compliant environment
- Removal, damage, alteration or attempted alteration, disabling and / or attempting to disable any camera at the Library or on its property is prohibited.

Programs coordinated by outside groups using the library as a meeting place may have their own privacy policies. The Framingham Public Library is not responsible for confidentiality during programming organized by such groups.

Please contact the library director at: ddellasanta@minlib.net or 508-532-5570 ext. 4640 with any questions or concerns regarding this policy.