

Canvassing Policy

The Framingham Public Library supports citizen participation in the democratic process, and is proud to make available space for canvassers in both the main library and the McAuliffe branch library. Canvassing is the solicitation of signatures, typically for one of the following purposes:

- Qualifying a candidate for federal, state, or local office to be included on a preliminary, primary or general election ballot.
- Qualifying a ballot question for inclusion on an election ballot.
- Collecting signatures for a petition to be presented to a public official or government body.

In order to maintain the quiet atmosphere patrons expect in the library, and to provide fair access for those who wish to conduct canvassing, the following rules apply:

1. **Canvassing inside the Framingham Public Library is limited to the Lexington Street lobby of the main library, and to the café area of the McAuliffe branch;** canvassing activity in other interior areas of the main library and the McAuliffe branch is prohibited due to safety and noise concerns.
2. Canvassing in the library may only be conducted during normal library hours (see section 9). A table and chairs suitable for seating up to three canvassers will be provided by the library; a maximum of three canvassers may staff the table at any given time, and they must remain at the table while canvassing.
3. Canvassing activity may not impede operations of the library, may not obstruct patrons' passage through the main library lobby, and may not obstruct entrance to and egress from the main library or the McAuliffe branch. Additionally, canvassing activity should not interfere with normal use by patrons of the McAuliffe or main library café areas (canvassing is not permitted in the main library café, but the table provided for canvassers is located close to the doors that lead to the café area). Library visitors may choose to stop or not stop, and may not be approached, harassed, threatened or detained by those persons seeking signatures.

If library visitors are required to observe certain health and safety precautions (for example, wearing a mask that covers the nose and mouth to help prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus), persons conducting canvassing must observe the same precautions.

4. Notwithstanding section #2, canvassing activity in the main library lobby must cease once a program or event in the Costin Room begins, due to noise issues.

5. Solicitation of monetary assistance (including the presence of receptacles for such donations) or other personal assistance is not permitted.
6. The signature sheets and any related materials, such as (but not limited to) signs, buttons, and pamphlets, must be attended to/monitored at all times, and must be removed by the canvassers when they leave.
7. Persons who violate these rules may be subject to suspension from the library (see addendum 1).
8. Persons/organizations wishing to conduct canvassing shall:
 - Make a reservation no more than fifteen business days in advance of, and no later than one business day prior to, the date they would like to canvass (business days include Monday through Friday, and exclude Saturday, Sunday, and holidays).
 - Check in at the circulation desk upon arrival, prior to the beginning of canvassing. Checking in includes filling out an information sheet, on which they provide their names and signatures (see addendum 2). All persons involved in the canvassing must sign the information sheet. As stated in section #2, a maximum of three canvassers may staff the provided table at any given time. All canvassers in any given time slot must represent the same campaign or organization.
9. To request a canvassing time, use the same contact information for requesting a meeting room (<https://framinghamlibrary.org/services/meeting-rooms>). The library will use the meeting room calendar system to track reserved canvassing times. In keeping with section #4 of this policy, when a reservation is requested for the main library lobby, the requestor will be alerted if the desired time conflicts with that of a Costin Room event. Canvassing time may be requested in two-hour blocks. The library operating hours are shown below. If the operating hours are changed, this document will be updated as soon as possible.

Regular Hours

Main Library*

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:00am-9:00pm
Friday, Saturday	9:00am-5:00pm
Sunday	1:00pm-5:00pm

McAuliffe Branch

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:30am-9:00pm
Friday, Saturday	9:30am-5:00pm
Sunday	12:00pm-4:00pm

Summer Hours (July and August)

Main Library*

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:00am-9:00pm
Friday, Saturday	9:00am-5:00pm

McAuliffe Branch

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:30am-9:00pm
Friday, Saturday	9:30am-5:00pm

**For the main library, please take note of section #4.*

To ensure adequate availability for all, canvassers may request a maximum of two two-hour blocks per week between the hours of 5:00pm – 9:00pm on Monday through Thursday, plus two additional two-hour blocks outside of those hours, **at each location**. For example, canvassers for Candidate X could request 5pm-7pm on Monday, 7pm-9pm on Thursday, 3pm-5pm on Friday, and 1pm-3pm on Saturday at the main library, and the same hours at the McAuliffe branch.

If the time slot *following* one that canvassers are using remains unused, the canvassers may continue their activities into that unused time slot (exception: see section #4). However, please check with library staff.

Canvassers may collect signatures for more than one candidate, ballot question, and/or petition at a time. Canvassing for each individual candidate, ballot question, and petition is still limited to the number of two-hour blocks per week indicated in the paragraph above.

Canvassing hours and the number of two-hour blocks per week that may be requested for a particular candidate, ballot question, or petition may change if regular library operating hours change.

10. Scheduling of canvassing time will be done on a best-efforts basis. In the event of a problem, such as accidental double booking, the staff member in charge of the building will resolve the issue to the best of his or her ability, and that decision is final.
11. Use of library property by canvassers does not represent endorsement of or opposition to a particular candidate or issue by the library.

Addendum 1: Library Suspension Notice.

Addendum 2: Canvassing Check-in Sheet.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, May 10, 2021.

Updated by the Board of Trustees, May 9, 2022.