

NORWELL PUBLIC LIBRARY
Policy on the Privacy of Library Records

Policy Statement: The policy of the Norwell Public Library is not to reveal the borrowing records, reserve or fine records to any person other than the owner of the library card to which they are assigned. The library recognizes that all circulation records, records identifying names of users with specific materials and all library registration files identifying names, addresses, and telephones with a library-assigned registration number, are confidential. All staff members must support this policy of confidentiality.

Regulation: No records can be made available to any inquiries, government or otherwise, unless a subpoena has been served by a court of competent jurisdiction and the library administration has consulted with legal counsel to determine if it is proper to release the requested information. This prohibition applies to the release of information to the parents or guardians of minors who have their own cards. However, the Norwell Library recognizes that instances may arise when it may be necessary for a parent or legal guardian to be provided with information about his or her child's library records (for example, when a child's library materials have incurred fines, or the materials have been misplaced).

Procedure:

1. Parents or legal guardians who are responsible for a child's library materials may obtain information about the records of a minor child age fourteen years or under.
2. Parent or legal guardian will receive the information verbally or mailed to their household.
3. Patrons, including children may obtain a PIN (Personal Identification Number) for their own privacy.

This policy is based on recommendations of the American Library Association and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, Section 7 which states, *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 public record as defined by clause Twenty-sixth of section seven of chapter four.*

Approved 11/19/03
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