

Confidentiality

Transaction logs, electronic mail, and other information that could link users with specific materials or subject matter are considered by the Library to be confidential and will not be divulged to anyone other than the user.

(Massachusetts General Laws 78:7) All users are advised that such records shall not be made available to any agency of state, federal or local government except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized under the authority of, and pursuant to, federal, state, or local law relating to criminal, civil, or administrative discovery procedures or legislative investigatory power.

The Library resists the issuance or enforcement of any such process, order or subpoena until such time as a proper showing of good cause has been made in a court of competent jurisdiction.

The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 (P.L. 107- 56) supercedes state law and expands the federal government's authority for access to library records and documents to protect against international terrorism and clandestine intelligence activities. It also expands federal law enforcements' authorization to track telephone and electronic communication, including any dialing, routing, addressing, or signaling information and the actual content of the communication. This law prohibits library workers from informing you if federal agents have obtained records about you.

Privacy

The Worcester Public Library facilitates access to information and ideas by providing resources in a variety of forms both in the library and remotely via its website and email. It supports an environment that is respectful of the privacy of all users and adheres to the Massachusetts privacy laws.

The Worcester Public Library will collect no personal information about users when they visit its website unless the user chooses to provide that information. However, some information is collected and stored automatically when people browse the website remotely, read pages, or download information. The library uses this information to make its website more useful and to learn about the number of users to its site and the types of technology they use. The library does not track or record information about individuals and their visits. The following information is collected and it does not identify the users personally:

1. The Internet domain, for example, "xcompany.com" if you use a private Internet access account, or "your school.edu" if you connect from a university.
2. The IP address from which you access our web site. An IP address is a number that uniquely identifies one computer to other computers connected to the Internet so they can communicate.

3. The type of browser and operating system used to access our site.
4. The date and time you access our site.
5. The pages you visit.
6. If you linked to the Worcester Public Library web site from another web site, the address of that web site.

If you use the library's "Ask a Librarian" email reference service, the library needs some personal information to respond to your questions. Some demographic information such as state and zip code is used in the aggregate for statistical reporting, but no personal identifying information is kept.

Worcester Public Library users may check their records and reserve materials online using their personal identification numbers. The Library may electronically transmit notices about materials and library announcements of a general nature. Worcester Public Library does not collect information for commercial marketing.

The library's website has links to many federal, state, and private organizations. Once you link to another site, you are subject to the privacy policy of the new site.

When people use computers in the library, the library employs traditional and software methods to equalize access by monitoring computer time to provide access for as many people as possible. The library does not retain identifiable personal information. Data is gathered in the aggregate for statistical reporting, analysis and planning purposes. Data is purged on a regular basis.

To comment on this policy and to obtain additional information, please contact the Worcester Public Library's webmaster or the Head Librarian, Penelope B. Johnson, at 508.799.1690.