

CONFIDENTIALITY OF LIBRARY RECORDS POLICY

POLICY:

The Georgetown Peabody Library maintains confidentiality concerning all library records and patron information as required by law. According to Massachusetts General Laws Annotated, Chapter 78, Section 7 which reads in part "...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...."

The policy of the Georgetown Peabody 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. No records can be made available to any inquiries, governmental 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 Georgetown Peabody 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 minor's library records (for example, when a minor's library materials have incurred fines, or the materials have been misplaced). In this case, there are procedures that will enable parents or other parties, who are financially responsible for the minor's library materials, to obtain information about the records of a minor age eight years or under. Upon statement of the above reasons, the parent or legal guardian will receive the information verbally or printed on paper. It is advised that parents encourage minors, who have library cards, to ask a staff member for his or her PIN (Personal Identification Number) at the library, so that the minor can access his/her borrowing record privately at the Library or at home.