



## Library Statement on the USA Patriot Act and Confidentiality of Patron Records

The Beverly Public Library has had a long-standing policy prohibiting the disclosure of information about patrons, or the materials they borrow, to any third party. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Sec. 7, which deals with access to public records, exempts library patron and circulation records from being considered as "public records", thus protecting their privacy.

The 2002 USA Patriot Act allows Federal authorities to apply for warrants to seize records of all types, including those from libraries. Library officials are prohibited from disclosing to any person that such records have been requested. The Federal law supersedes both library policy and Massachusetts state law. Therefore, if requested by Federal authorities, this Library must release a patron's record to those authorities. The Beverly Public Library will continue to protect the confidentiality of patron records to the extent allowed by law.

If you have further questions, please speak with the Library Director.

Approved by the Board of Trustees January 27, 2004

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