

**BETHEL PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COMPUTER USE AND THE USA PATRIOT ACT**

**U.S.A. P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act, 2001 – What does it mean? USA PATRIOT is an acronym meaning:**

Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism

Among other provisions, the USA PATRIOT Act:

1. Authorizes the FBI, or any police department deputized by the FBI, to compel immediate production of records from a library (or any business), including circulation, borrower registration, and Internet usage records, without probable cause.
2. Prohibits a library employee who receives such a request/demand for records under this law from talking with anyone, except an attorney, about the request.
3. Prohibits notification to a suspect/patron that his/her records have been requested.
4. Preempts and overrides all state laws declaring library records to be confidential.

**What the Bethel Public Library is doing:**

Though we cannot guarantee complete privacy, the Bethel Public Library uses several measures to maintain the privacy of our patrons according to library policies.

1. The library does not keep any records relating to patrons that contain personally identifiable information, which are unnecessary to the efficient operation of the library.
2. Borrowing, lending, and interlibrary loan records are maintained only long enough to ensure the safe return of materials.
3. The Library keeps no records of Internet usage, other than for the brief period that a computer is checked out on one's library card during one's usage. Internet search history and the Location Bar are cleared with each reboot, no less than once each day.
4. The Horizon software used by our library system will not save your online catalog searches.

**What the Bethel Library is unable to do:**

1. The Library's automated catalog search system and its circulation records are connected to an offsite vendor system, making them beyond the Library's control to keep anonymous. Eradication of all patron information at these offsite locations cannot be guaranteed.
2. The Library has no control over any data that a library computer user sends to another computer server during an Internet session.
3. Though transactions are erased regularly, data can remain on the hard drive of a computer, allowing sophisticated software to later locate the data.
4. National security systems or computer hackers may possibly monitor computer searches.

If you have any concerns regarding the USA PATRIOT Act, please contact your representative(s).
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