NORTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
L.G. & MILDRED BALFOUR MEMORIAL

68 E. Main St.
Norton, MA 02766
508-286-2695
nortonlibrary.org

Reciprocal Borrowing Policy

Philosophy of Reciprocal Borrowing

Norton Public Library is committed to connecting our community with the broadest possible range of resources. Cooperative lending among public libraries strengthens what any single library can offer its patrons, and we are proud to participate in resource-sharing that makes this possible. The goal of mutual benefit works best when every library contributes equitably — which is why certification standards matter.

MBLC Certification and Reciprocal Borrowing

As a participant in the State Aid to Public Libraries Program, the Norton Public Library complies with requirements regarding the use of its collection as specified in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 19A, and further defined in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (605 CMR 4.00). These requirements are administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

In Massachusetts, a library's certification status reflects whether it meets minimum standards for collection development, staffing, and hours of service. When a library falls below those standards, it is decertified by the MBLC and becomes ineligible for state aid funding. Because its reliance on other libraries becomes disproportionately great while its contribution diminishes, Massachusetts General Law (605 CMR 4.01) specifies that certified libraries are not required to extend borrowing privileges to residents of municipalities with decertified public libraries.

Policy on Lending to Decertified Libraries

In the interest of protecting Norton taxpayers' investment in our library and maintaining the integrity of our shared lending network, the Norton Public Library does not extend borrowing privileges, including interlibrary loan services, to Massachusetts residents whose home public library is not certified by the MBLC. Residents of municipalities whose libraries hold an MBLC waiver are considered certified and are welcome to borrow materials.

Exceptions may be made when a library's decertification results from circumstances beyond the community's control, such as fire or natural disaster.

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Residents of a decertified municipality who provide proof that they own property, work, or attend school in Norton retain full borrowing privileges at the Norton Public Library.

Out-of-state visitors are welcome to obtain a library card for an annual fee, at a rate set by the SAILS Library Network, as specified in the Circulation Policy.

Access for All Massachusetts Residents

Norton Public Library warmly welcomes residents of all Massachusetts communities. Regardless of their home library's certification status, all Massachusetts residents are welcome to use our public computers and browse our collections in the library.