

Why Require a Birthdate



new location: <https://support.keepntrack.com/knowledge-base/why-require-a-birthdate/>

You've probably noticed by now that the kiosks ask for a birthdate when people sign in using their name. Isn't that just an unnecessary complication to sign in? Wouldn't it be easier to get rid of that step altogether?

Sure it would. In fact, it would be easier if people didn't have to sign in at all! But let's assume we aren't going to extremes. There are a few good reasons to require birthdates for sign-in.

- **Names aren't unique.** If Johnny Smith signs in with only his name, and there is more than one Johnny Smiths in your system, what happens? At a Self-Service kiosk, the person can't sign in and must check with the front desk. At the Attended kiosk, your operator will be presented with a list of people to choose from. Let's hope they pick the right Johnny Smith!
- **Anyone could sign in as anyone.** My name isn't Johnny Smith, but what's preventing me from signing in as him? Not much. However, unless I know Johnny's birthday, this requirement will do a lot to dissuade my sinister ways.
- **Birthdates are required for Sex Offender checks.** You can't run SOR checks without a birthdate; it's just not practical. No one wants to be matched to 50 Sex Offender records because they're also named John Smith. So if you are running Sex Offender checks on Visitors, you must have a birthdate!

So, when might you really not need birthdates?

- **When you use key cards or key fobs.** If your staff and volunteers all have their 'person ID on a stick', they will always be able to sign in easily and quickly with Person ID, then they don't really need a birthdate, do they?
- **With students.** You might have some problems with students who share the same name, but you also can't expect a 6-year-old to type in their birthdate, can you?
- **With lots and lots of people at big events.** It's true—requiring the birthdate means an extra step, because sign-in goes from taking like 5 seconds to taking like 10. When you have a crowd of 200 people wanting to sign in for the barn dance, that is a groan-worthy delay. Pick your battles.

KeepnTrack has preferences that allow you to choose if a birthdate is required, so let's take a look at that.

From Tools, open Preferences, then go to Enhanced Security. Here you'll see a dropdown selection for each type of visitor classification. The options are:

- **Never require a birthdate for sign-in.** The birthdate field will still be there, but it isn't required to sign in.
- **Require unless Person ID is used.** A Person ID is unique to a person, so it's just as secure as a name and birthdate. Also, the Person ID is associated with a person record that might have a birthdate anyway. If the person uses their Person ID, they don't need a birthdate. If they use their name to sign in, they need a birthdate.
- **Always require a birthdate for sign-in.** NO MATTER WHAT. Even if you enter your Person ID. Overkill? Maybe. But it's necessary if you want to be sure you're running checks!

Read more about [Enhanced Security](#).