

Security Camera Policy

Security cameras are used to enhance the safety and security of library users and staff by discouraging violations of the library's Patron Conduct policy, to assist library staff in preventing such violations, and when necessary, to assist law enforcement in prosecuting criminal activity.

SECURITY CAMERA PURPOSE AND PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Video recording cameras are operated in public spaces of the library locations to discourage criminal activity and violations of the library's Patron Conduct policy. Recordings are restricted under the Electronic Communication Privacy Act. (MCA 45-8-213- Privacy in Communications.)
2. Cameras may be installed in outdoor and indoor locations where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy. Examples include public common areas of the library such as the parking lots, entrances, seating areas, service desks, and areas prone to theft or misconduct, or areas where money is stored or handled.
3. No Cameras are installed in areas of the library where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms or private offices.
4. Signs will be posted at all entrances informing the public and staff that security cameras are in use.
5. Cameras are not continuously monitored in real time. Members of the public and staff should take appropriate precautions for their own safety and for the security of their personal property. Neither Flathead County Library nor Flathead County is responsible for loss of property or personal injury.
6. Recorded data is confidential and secured in a controlled area. Video recordings will typically be stored for no more than 14 days. As new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted, unless they are required for an incident investigation or legal dispute, in which case they may be retained for a longer period of time as required by local and state laws.
7. Regarding the placement and use of security cameras, staff and patron safety is the first priority; protection of library property is of secondary importance.
8. Cameras are not used for the purpose of staff performance evaluation. Cameras may be installed in areas that could assist law enforcement in documenting traffic accidents or other incidents unrelated to the library that take place on the public streets and surrounding properties within camera view. Examples include cameras on the exterior of a library building that not only document activity on library property but also the sidewalk, public streets, and surrounding properties.

USE/DISCLOSURE OF VIDEO RECORDS

1. Access to the archived footage in pursuit of documented incidents of injury, criminal activity or violation of the library's Patron Conduct policy is restricted to designated managers; including the Library Director, Public Services Librarian, IT Coordinator and Branch Managers. The Library Director holds the authority to designate library staff members or contractors who may access security camera imagery. Designated staff may use live surveillance, still shots, or selected portions of recorded data to assess the security risk of a specific individual, to investigate a crime or injury on library property, to consult with law enforcement officials, to validate policy violations, to alert staff to trespassed or disruptive individuals, or to address internal

security, safety, or operational concerns. In the discharge of such duties, designated staff members are permitted to connect the recorded digital images with identification data available on the library's user database.

2. Those designated managers may have access to real-time images, viewable on desktop monitors located in secure areas to ensure private access. The frequency of viewing and the amount of video viewed will be limited to the minimum needed to ensure that the system is working or to ascertain if footage is available relative to a specific incident.
3. Access is also allowed by law enforcement pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or when required by law.
4. Video images will not be maintained, provided no criminal activity or policy violation has occurred or is being investigated.
5. Video records and still photographs may be used by authorized individuals to identify those responsible for library policy violations, criminal activity or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations as delineated in the library Patron Conduct policy.
6. In situations involving trespassed patrons, stored still images may be shared with staff system-wide. Such images may remain posted in restricted staff areas for the duration of the trespass period. After the trespass period ends, such images will be archived in administrative common drive.
7. A log will be maintained with name, date, time, duration and reason for all viewing access to security camera data by anyone for any purpose.

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS AND/OR DISCLOSURE

1. Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains personally identifying information about any individuals. Members of the general public who feel that they have been unjustly denied access to security camera footage are advised to file a police complaint.
2. A breach of the above confidentiality and privacy provisions may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any library employee who becomes aware of any unauthorized disclosure of a video recording and/or potential privacy breach must immediately inform the Library Director of the breach.

DISCLAIMER OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. A copy of this policy may be shared with any patron or staff member upon request. The policy is also posted on Flathead County Library's official website.
2. Questions from the public may be directed to the Library Director.
3. The library disclaims any liability for use of security camera data in accordance with the terms of this policy, given that the library is a public facility, and the security cameras shall be limited to those areas where patrons and/or staff have no reasonable expectation of privacy.

Adopted: 7/27/2023, Reaffirmed 2/26/26

**David Ingram, Chair
Library Board of Trustees**