



Newburyport Public Library Video Surveillance Policy

The Newburyport Public Library (NPL) strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for staff and community members who use the Library, and to protect library materials and property. In pursuit of these objectives, selected public areas of the library premises are under continuous video surveillance and recording. Video surveillance complements other measures used to protect the safety of library visitors, employees, assets, property, and to identify persons breaking the law or violating the library's Patron Policy. A notice is displayed at the main entrance informing the public that security cameras are in use.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of digital video cameras, as well as the access and retrieval of recorded digital video images at the NPL. Video monitoring and recording will be conducted in a manner consistent with all applicable laws and ordinances.

Security Camera Locations

The library understands that privacy is important to library visitors and staff. Cameras will not be installed in locations where staff and library visitors would have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms; nor are they positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities in the NPL. This policy is in force to deter public endangerment, vandalism, theft, and mischief and to identify those individuals involved in such activity for law enforcement purposes, while adhering to the Protection of Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act. Changes or additions to cameras, camera locations or to monitoring software may not be made without permission of the Head Librarian.

Access to Digital Images and Recordings

Only the Head Librarian, Assistant Head Librarian, and designated staff and law enforcement officials are authorized to access the recorded archival data to gather information that may be used to prosecute, or investigate instances of theft, vandalism, public endangerment, or violations of the NPL's policies. Authorized individuals, with notice to the Head Librarian, may ask other staff to review recorded data to ascertain security concerns related to a specific incident.

Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public or media from viewing security camera footage unless required by an enforceable legal process.

Retention of Digital Images and Recordings

Video images from the library surveillance system are stored digitally on library equipment. It is the intent of the NPL to retain all recorded video images for a minimum of 14 days. Images are automatically deleted by the system after 14 days, or as soon as their purpose is served, subject to any applicable laws. Video recordings will be regarded as confidential library records. Video images and recordings of incidents may be retained and reviewed as long as considered necessary by the Head Librarian.

Use of Digital Images and Recordings

Video images and recordings may be used by authorized individuals to identify the person or persons responsible for or involved in the violation of NPL policies and procedures, illegal activity on NPL property, or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations.

Video images and recordings may be used to assist law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Only the Head Librarian or their designee is authorized to release any video images and recordings to law enforcement.

In the unlikely event that any law enforcement officer or agency should seize surveillance material or equipment, The Head Librarian will be notified immediately and the staff member will request a receipt for the items taken. For investigations initiated by law enforcement agencies, recorded data will be made available upon presentation of a valid court order establishing probable cause to review the data.

Video images and recordings will not be used or disclosed other than as specifically authorized in this policy.

When there is a credible likelihood of imminent danger to persons or property, any staff member may request the Head Librarian, Assistant Head Librarian, or staff designee to use the surveillance system as needed to thwart or document any such action.

The surveillance system may also be used as a tool to determine things such as the amount of business at service desks, traffic flow, that no person(s) are still within the building after closing, and other routine checks of conditions affecting the safety and operation of the building and grounds. If, in the use of the system in this manner, it becomes evident that there are likely policy violations as

demonstrated by the behavior of staff or library visitors, then the staff procedure listed below will be instituted.

Staff Procedure for Use of Digital Images and Recordings

- A staff person will submit a written Incident Report to the Head Librarian, giving a brief description of the need to check video recordings.
- The Head Librarian approves the review of the video recordings and signs the request.
- The Head Librarian or designee will attempt to locate the necessary recorded or live data or provide one-time access to the recordings to allow the staff designee to make necessary observations as previously approved.
- If video recording provides sufficient proof of malfeasance, the Head Librarian may approve disciplinary or other corrective action.

NPL : approved by NPL Board of Directors, January 18, 2023