Security Camera Policy

Purpose

The Sioux Center Public Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its patrons and staff and protect its assets and property. For this reason, video security cameras have been placed at selected locations in order to observe and record visible activities of persons within the library and on the library grounds. While it is recognized that video surveillance will not prevent all incidents, its potential deterrent effect and resource as a means of identifying and prosecuting offenders is considered worthwhile.

Public Notice

Signs informing the public of video surveillance are posted at library entrances. Conversations or other audible communication shall not be monitored or recorded by the security cameras.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Camera placement shall be determined by the library director or his/her designee. Cameras shall not be placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as bathrooms.

To the extent that any recorded images include identifiable persons requesting information or checking out an item, such record shall be treated as confidential as provided in Iowa Code §22.7 (13) and the Confidentiality of Records section of the Circulation Policy.

Data Storage

Cameras will record activities in real time and images will be saved to the camera server's hard drive. The capacity of the storage system allows for images to be stored for at least 14 days. Current software deletes images automatically as the capacity of the hard drive is reached. The library is not obligated to store images past the 14-day limit, unless required as part of an ongoing investigation or litigation. However, video recordings of incidents can be retained and reviewed as long as considered necessary by the Library Director.

Cameras will not be monitored continuously by library staff. Authorization to view stored images may be granted by the library director or his/her designee(s).

Authority to Access Recorded Data

The library director holds the authority to designate library staff members who may access video in real time or recorded formats. Generally, authority may be delegated to the administrative assistant, network systems coordinator, support staff, and public service desk staff including librarian and library assistant staff during hours of operation.

Circumstances under which designated staff may access images in real time include, but are not limited to, observation of areas beyond view from designated work stations for assurance of safety and security.

Access to real time or recorded imagery is also authorized to designated staff upon report of suspicious behavior, including policy violations, criminal activity, destruction or theft of library property or assets, or other activity that may be disruptive to library operations.

Confidentiality/privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains patron information.

Law Enforcement

All requests for the viewing of real time or recorded imagery by law enforcement officials must be presented to the library director. If the library director is unavailable, such requests shall be presented to the administrative or supervisory staff designated by the library director to hold such authority.

Law enforcement may view recorded images unless such images include records protected by Iowa Code §22.7 (13), in which case such records would be released only pursuant to valid court order.

> 22.7 (13). The records of a library which, by themselves or when examined with other public records, would reveal the identity of the library patron checking out or requesting an item or information from the library. The records shall be released to a criminal or juvenile justice agency only pursuant to an investigation of a particular person or organization suspected of committing a known crime. The records shall be released only upon a judicial determination that a rational connection exists between the requested release of information and a legitimate end and that the need for the information is cogent and compelling.

Information obtained through video monitoring will be used exclusively for security and law enforcement purposes. The library director may authorize the review or release of video monitoring recordings for legitimate purposes, including the protection of library patrons, staff and property and to protect the city from lawsuits.

General Public Requesting Access to Security Camera Footage

Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains patron information. If the library receives a request from the general public to inspect security camera footage which contains patron information, the general public will be advised to file a police complaint.

Breach of Privacy or Policy

A breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action. Any library employee who becomes aware of any unauthorized disclosure of a video record and/or a potential privacy breach has a responsibility to ensure that the Director is immediately informed of the breach.

If a privacy breach has occurred (loss, theft, or inadvertent disclosure of personal information) immediate action will be taken to control the situation and notify affected individuals. The objectives of investigation should include a review of the circumstances surrounding the event as well as the adequacy of existing policies, procedures, and technology for protecting personal information.

Approved 11/2018; Reapproved 6/2020; Reapproved 6/2021; Reapproved 6/2022; Reapproved 6/2023; Amended and reapproved 6/2024; Reapproved 6/2025; Reapproved 6/2026