



**Policy Category:** Public Space

**Policy Title:** Video Surveillance Policy

**Need for Policy:** Select areas of Cortland Free Library are equipped with security cameras for the safety and security of the Library building, staff, and patrons. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of video security cameras, as well as the access and retrieval of recorded digital video images at Cortland Free Library.

**Policy:**

**1. Security Camera Locations**

The Library understands that privacy is important to patrons and staff. This policy is in place 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.

Reasonable efforts are made to safeguard the privacy of Library patrons and staff. Cameras are positioned to record high-traffic areas, and will complement other measures to help maintain a safe and secure environment in compliance with Library policies. Signs informing the public that security cameras are in use are posted on external library doors. Camera locations will not be changed or added without permission of the Director. No audio will be recorded. Cameras will not be installed in locations where staff and patrons would have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms; nor are they positioned for the purpose of identifying a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities in the Library.

**2. Access to Digital Video/Images**

- a. Live video:** Live footage will only be viewed in cases where Library staff cannot actively monitor the area(s) being recorded. Because cameras will not be continuously monitored, the public and staff should take appropriate precautions for their safety and for the security of their personal property. Cortland Free

Library is not responsible for loss of property or personal injury. Live camera footage will not be available to the public for viewing at any time.

- i. **Recorded video:** Only the Director and Assistant to the Director are authorized to access recorded digital video images in pursuit of pre-defined incidents of criminal activity or violation of the Code of Conduct. However, if the Director is involved in an incident, the Board President may access the digital recordings and release the recording to law enforcement under the conditions outlined in section 3 below.

### **3. Retrieval & Disclosure of Digital Video/Images**

#### **a. Internal retrieval and disclosure of security camera footage and/or still photographs:**

- i. Video records and still photographs may be used by authorized individuals to identify person(s) responsible for policy violations, criminal activity on Library property, or actions considered disruptive to normal operations.
- ii. Video records and still records may be shared with authorized library employees when appropriate or, upon approval by the Director, other library staff to identify those suspended from library property and to help maintain a safe, secure and policy-compliant environment.
- iii. Under certain circumstances, individuals authorized under this policy may use a still photograph or selected portions of recorded data to request law enforcement review for assessing the security risk of a specific individual or for investigating a crime on library property.

#### **b. External retrieval and/or disclosure of security camera footage and/or still photographs:**

- i. Video records and photos obtained through the video monitoring system will be released as necessary and in accordance with applicable laws, such as in response to search warrants, court orders, requests by the police for an active investigation, or to forestall the imminent escape of a suspect or destruction of evidence.
- ii. External requests for retrieval and/or disclosure of security camera footage or still photographs will be referred to the Library Director.
  1. Requests from law enforcement
    - a. The Library will comply with any valid request from law enforcement. In the event of a search warrant, which is executable immediately, library administration will comply with the search warrant and consult with legal counsel. Upon receipt of a subpoena or other court order, library

administration shall consult with legal counsel to determine if the document is in proper form and that good cause for its issuance in a court of proper jurisdiction is demonstrated. If not, library administration shall insist any defect be remedied before releasing records which contain patron information.

**2. Requests from others**

- a.** In no event, unless required by an enforceable legal process, shall any video records be released to the media, patrons, or other persons. Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the public from viewing security camera footage that contains personally identifying information about library users. If library staff receive a request for the public to inspect security camera footage, staff will advise the requestor to file a police complaint.

Violations of these policies and rules by Library employees are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

**Approved: 3/20/2024**