

Omaha Public Library (OPL) Security Camera Policy

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of video security cameras and establish guidelines on how to access and retrieve recorded video images. Security cameras are used to discourage violations of Code of Conduct, assist library staff in preventing and following up on Code of Conduct violations, and, when necessary, provide law enforcement assistance in prosecuting criminal activity.

DEFINITIONS:

Designated staff is defined as branch managers, persons-in-charge (PICs), security staff, library administration, and information technology staff.

POLICY:

OPL values patron privacy and is committed to maintaining appropriate confidentiality of its patrons while protecting the public through cooperation with law enforcement when life is at risk. This policy should be interpreted with the understanding that a person or library image is not protected. Anything that identifies the content of a library user's account is protected and held private.

Exigent circumstances apply if anyone is in immediate physical danger on or off library property. Law enforcement will be provided immediate access to security video footage without a subpoena to create a safe environment for library staff, library patrons, and the public.

- Signs will be posted at library entrances informing the public that security cameras are in use.
- Security cameras may be placed in both indoor and outdoor areas where security staff and designated library staff may randomly or regularly monitor activity. Designated staff may have access to real-time monitors. Staff access to footage in pursuit of documented incidents of criminal activity or violation of the Library's Code of Conduct is restricted to designated staff.
- Patron access to video footage is not allowed without a lawful order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Technology and administrative staff will refer all non-city requests for video footage to the city law department.
- Police access is allowed when, pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or otherwise required by law, and in exigent situations as stated above. Designated staff will decide if immediate access is necessary in emergency situations.
- Production of video copies for distribution is limited to designated technology and administrative staff.
- In situations involving banned-and-barred patrons, stored still images may be shared with staff system-wide.
- Because security cameras are not constantly monitored, staff and public should take appropriate precautions for their safety and security of personal property. Neither OPL nor the City of Omaha is responsible for loss of property or personal injury.
- Cameras may be installed in public spaces where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy. Examples include common areas of the library such as entrances, book stacks, public seating areas, hallways, stairways, delivery areas, and parking lots.
- 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.

- Cameras will not be installed in areas of the library where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms.
- Images will be stored for a length of time based on available storage, but no longer than 30 days, unless a retention is specifically requested by the city law or police departments or for images used in ban and bar documentation. As new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted. The length of storage time varies depending on the camera's memory and recording length.

IMPLEMENTATION:

OPL and security personnel are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
of the Omaha Public Library, August 20, 2025