

Hanson Public Library

Security Camera Policy

Purpose

The Hanson Public Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its users, staff, and property while protecting individual privacy rights. In pursuit of this objective, security cameras are placed in selected areas to discourage criminal activity and violations of Library policy, and to enhance the ability to identify and apprehend offenders.

Privacy

Cameras may be placed in indoor and outdoor areas where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as entrances, delivery areas, parking lots, public seating areas, and service desks. Cameras will not be placed in areas where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms or private offices.

Cameras are not positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities. To the extent that any recorded images include identifiable persons using Library services or borrowing Library materials, such record shall be treated as confidential to the extent allowable under Massachusetts law.

Public Notice

Signs are posted at Library entrances notifying the public and staff that security cameras are in use.

Because security cameras are not continuously monitored, the public and Library staff should take appropriate precautions for their safety and the security of their personal property. Neither the Hanson Public Library nor the Town of Hanson is responsible for loss of property or personal injury.

Data Storage & Access

Cameras record activities in real time. No audible communication shall be monitored or recorded by the security cameras. The length of time that recordings are stored varies depending on how much is recorded, but recordings are typically deleted after 30 days. When an incident occurs that may affect the safety and security of the Library and its occupants, or may be required for potential legal proceedings, the Library reserves the right to save recordings for as long as it deems necessary.

The recorders and recorded data are located in a limited access, controlled area. Only the Library Director and Assistant Director are authorized to access live and recorded footage in pursuit of incidents of criminal activity or violations of Library policy. Other staff members may be given authorization to access or view footage on a limited basis. The Director of Elder Affairs shall have access to cameras monitoring areas shared by the Library and Senior Center. Information technology staff and facilities maintenance staff may also use the Library's security cameras to aid in the operation of the Library/Senior Center facility and ensure proper operation of the system.

Authorized individuals may use recorded data to identify those responsible for Library policy violations, criminal activity on Library property, or actions considered disruptive to normal Library operations. Authorized individuals may also request law enforcement review a still image or selected portion of recorded data for assessing the security risk of a specific individual or for investigation of a crime on Library property.

Recorded data may be shared with Library staff to identify those suspended from Library property and to maintain a safe, secure, and policy-compliant environment. Still images may remain posted in staff areas for the duration of the suspension period.

Law Enforcement Access

All requests for the viewing of live or recorded images by law enforcement must be presented to the Library Director. Recorded data will be accorded the same level of confidentiality and protection provided to library users by Massachusetts law, the Library's policies, and the American Library Association's policies on confidentiality and privacy.

Access is also allowed by law enforcement when pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or when otherwise required by law. The Library and the Board of Library Trustees reserve the right to consult legal counsel in matters involving warrants or subpoenas seeking access to security footage. Upon approval by the Library Director, recorded images may be shared voluntarily with law enforcement, unless the images are protected by Massachusetts law.

In the event of an emergency situation at the Library, Hanson Police, or other appropriate public safety/law enforcement authorities, will be granted temporary access to the Library's live camera feed in order to coordinate the emergency response. This access must be terminated once the situation is under control and the immediate danger to public safety has passed.

Information obtained from camera footage will be used exclusively for security and law enforcement purposes. The Library Director may authorize the review or release of camera footage for legitimate purposes, including the protection of Library patrons, staff, and property, and to protect the Town from lawsuits.

Requests from the General Public

Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains patron information. Members of the general public requesting to inspect security camera footage will be advised to file a police report or public records request, subject to applicable exemptions and protections.

Unauthorized Access and/or Disclosure

All Library staff will be made aware of their obligations under federal and state law regarding protection of privacy. Failure to comply with 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 immediately inform the Library Director of the breach.

Disclaimer

The Library disclaims any liability for use of the video 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 by the Board of Library Trustees
August 13, 2019

Amended April 25, 2023