

New Ulm Public Library Security Camera Policy

The New Ulm Public Library invites and inspires learning, imagination, discovery, and connection. To complete this mission, the library must offer a welcoming, open atmosphere and provide a quiet, comfortable, and safe environment where people can use library facilities and collections for intended purposes to the maximum extent possible.

Purpose of Security Cameras

The purpose of the security system is to enhance the safety and security of library users, staff, and property. This policy is in force to deter public endangerment, vandalism, and theft in unsupervised areas and to identify those individuals involved in such activity for law enforcement purposes, while adhering to the applicable federal, state and local law concerning the confidentiality of library records, the disclosure of public records, and the protection of individual privacy.

The library's security camera system will be used only for the protection and safety of library visitors, employees, assets, and property, and to identify persons breaking the law or violating the Library Behavior Policy. Staff and visitor safety is the first priority in any threatening situation. The protection of library property is of secondary importance.

Public Notice: Signage

Signage will be posted at the library entrances at all times, informing the public that security cameras are in use.

Security Camera Locations

Cameras may be installed in locations where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy. Examples include common areas of the library such as entrances, library exterior and parking lot, near book and media collections, public seating areas, public computers, and areas prone to theft or misconduct.

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 the 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 or private offices. Nor are they positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities in the library.

Camera locations will not be changed without permission from the Library Director.

Security

The library has no obligation to monitor the cameras in real time. As the cameras are not constantly monitored, library staff and the public should continue to take appropriate precautions

for their safety and for the safety of their personal property. The library is not responsible for the loss of property or personal injury.

Data Storage

Video records and still photographs may be used by authorized individuals to identify those responsible for library policy violations, criminal activity on library property or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations as delineated in the Library Behavior Policy.

Access to the archival footage in pursuit of documented incidents of injury, criminal activity or violation of the Library Behavior Policy is restricted to the Library Director, Assistant Library Director, and City of New Ulm Information Technology Department staff. Live footage from security cameras is not monitored. However, circumstances including reports of policy violations, suspected criminal activity, and destruction or theft of library resources may require such monitoring to occur. Recorded data is confidential and secured in a controlled area. Recordings will typically be stored for no more than 30 days, unless required as part of an ongoing investigation. As new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted. In the event of a suspected crime or incident, still shots or selected portions of the recorded data will be maintained until resolution of the specific incident.

Access to Archived Footage

Access to the archived footage in pursuit of documented incidents of criminal activity or violation of the Library's Code of Conduct is restricted to designated staff: the Library Director, Assistant Library Director, and City of New Ulm Information Technology staff. Such authorized staff shall log all instances of access to or use of video surveillance data. The log shall include the date/time, name of the person or persons making the request, and description of the request and is to be retained pursuant to the City's records retention policy.

For investigations initiated by law enforcement agencies, recorded data will be made available to law enforcement upon presentation of a valid court order or subpoena establishing probable cause to review the data.

However, in emergency situations that present imminent danger of physical harm, law enforcement may gain access without a court order. In such imminent danger emergencies where law enforcement calls for a waiver of the court order, the requesting officer is required to provide his/her name, agency, badge number, the nature of the emergency, and the extent of data requested. The Library Director, Assistant Library Director, or City of New Ulm Information Technology Department staff will assist the requesting officer and may be called to the library during off-duty hours to handle such a request.

In situations involving banned patrons, stored still images may be shared with library staff. Shared images may remain posted in restricted staff areas for the duration of the banning period.

General Public Requesting Access to Security Camera Footage

Confidentiality and privacy issues prevent the library from allowing the public to view security camera footage. If the library receives a request from the general public to view recorded camera footage, the public will be advised to file a police report.

Audio Recording

At no time shall the New Ulm Public Library, including any person or contracted service, intentionally use library surveillance cameras that have audio monitoring or audio recording capabilities.

Privacy

In all other respects, recorded data will be accorded the same level of confidentiality and protection provided to library users by the applicable laws and regulations governing electronic surveillance and monitoring, including the United States Code of Federal Regulations, 18 U.S.C. § 2511(2)(d), and Minnesota Statute § 626A.02, subdivision 2(d), New Ulm Public Library policies, and the American Library Association policies on confidentiality. Video surveillance data may be nonpublic or private “security information” as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37, subd. 1(a) or private personnel pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13.43, subd. 4, which may be accessed, used, and disclosed only as consistent with those laws and any other applicable law under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

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.

Recordings shall not be used or disclosed other than as specifically authorized by this policy. Library staff who misuse this data will be subject to disciplinary action.

Approved June 13, 2024

Log of Access Requests for Security Camera Footage

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