

Charlton Public Library Security Camera Policy

The Charlton Public Library strives to maintain a safe and secure environment for its patrons and staff. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of digital video cameras, as well as the access and retrieval of recorded digital video images at the Charlton Public Library.

Security Camera Locations

Reasonable efforts are made to safeguard the privacy of customers and employees. Digital video security cameras are placed in both indoor and outdoor areas. Cameras are not installed in areas where staff and public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms; nor are they positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing or listening activities in the Library. Library staff may periodically monitor activity. However, because cameras are not constantly monitored, staff and patrons should take appropriate precautions for their safety and for the security of personal property.

Access to Digital Images

Library staff, in the course of their normal duties, may monitor the live video security system. A live feed is also available at the Charlton Police Department. Images from the Library surveillance system are stored digitally on hardware on the Town server. The Town retains all recorded images for a minimum of one month, or until image capacity of the system is reached. Only the Director and Assistant Director are authorized to access the recorded archival data in pursuit of incidents of criminal activity, litigation, or to ascertain information related to actions considered disruptive to normal Library operations.

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. Video records may be shared with authorized library employees, upon approval by the Director, to identify those suspended from Library property and to maintain a safe, secure and policy-compliant environment.

Confidentiality/privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage. If the Library receives a request from the general public to inspect security camera footage they will be advised to file a police complaint.

Confidentiality of Patron Information

Video records may contain personally identifiable information about an individual who has used any Library service or borrowed any Library materials (“patron information”), and will be accorded the same level of confidentiality and protection provided to Library users by Massachusetts General Law and Charlton Public Library policy on confidentiality and privacy. 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.

Approved by the Board of Library Trustees on April 18, 2013

Amended by the Board of Library Trustees on November 20, 2014

Reviewed and approved by the Board of Library Trustees on April 20, 2023