

Security Camera Policy

Adoption Date: June 26, 2025

Approved By: Library Board of Trustees

1. Purpose and Scope

The Grand Marais Public Library is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for its patrons, staff, and visitors while maintaining the public's right to privacy. To support this commitment, the library uses video security cameras for the legitimate business purpose to enhance safety, deter criminal activity, and identify violations of library policies. This policy outlines the purpose, use, and limitations of the library's security camera system and its adherence to applicable federal, state and local law concerning the confidentiality of library records, the disclosure of public records, and the protection of individual privacy.

2. Public Notice: Signage

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

3. Security Camera Locations

The library values the intellectual freedom and personal privacy of all individuals using its facilities. While security cameras are used as a tool to enhance the safety of the library's premises, their use is strictly limited to achieving legitimate public safety and operational objectives. The library strives to balance the need for security with respect for individuals' reasonable expectations of privacy.

Cameras will not be placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in the restrooms or private offices. Nor are they positioned to identify a person's reading, viewing, or listening activities in the library.

4. 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.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent reporting real-time observations of conduct that appears to constitute criminal activity to law enforcement or identify safety concerns.

5. Audio Recording

At no time shall the Grand Marais Library, including any person or contracted service, intentionally use library surveillance cameras that have audio recording capabilities enabled.

6. Use of Security Camera Footage

Security camera footage is monitored and reviewed by authorized library personnel or city officials only when reasonably necessary, such as when there is a reported or observed incident. The footage may be used for:

- Verifying staff or law enforcement can enter or exit the building safely.
- Investigating suspected criminal activity, library policy violations or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations.
- Assisting law enforcement in the event of an incident.
- Assessing safety and operational concerns.

Under no circumstances will security camera footage be used for purposes unrelated to the safety, security, or operations of the library.

7. Retention and Storage

Video footage is stored on a secure, limited-access system and is retained for a temporary period only, typically no longer than 30 days, unless required for an active investigation, legal proceeding or otherwise required under the law. After this period, footage is automatically overwritten or securely deleted.

8. Access to Archived Footage and Legal Compliance

Security camera recordings are considered confidential and are not considered public records. Requests for access to recorded video footage, including from members of the public or law enforcement, must be directed to the City Administrator in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, including the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and Freedom of Information Act and relevant data privacy statutes.

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 office is required to

provide their name, agency, badge number, the nature of the emergency, and the extent of data requested.

Access to footage will only be granted under the following conditions:

- A valid court order or subpoena is presented.
- A lawful request is made through the appropriate legal channels.

The library and city administration will comply with all legal obligations concerning the disclosure and protection of video data.

9. 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. (s) 2511(2)(d), and Minnesota Statutes (s) 626A.02, subdivision 2(d), Grand Marais 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. (s) 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 specifically authorized by this policy. Employees who violate any provision of this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment, or criminal prosecution.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a five-year basis and updated as necessary to remain compliant with changing laws, technologies, and operational needs.