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## Security Camera Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of security cameras, as well as the access and retrieval of recorded video images at the Merrimack Public Library.

### Purpose

- Merrimack Public Library uses security cameras to enhance the safety and security of library users and staff by discouraging violations of the Library's Patron Behavior Policy, to assist library staff in preventing the occurrence of any violations, and when necessary, to provide law enforcement assistance in prosecuting criminal activity.
- Patron and staff safety is the highest priority in any situation. The protection of library property is of secondary importance.
- Cameras are not installed nor will they be used for the purpose of routine staff performance evaluations.
- Security cameras are not constantly monitored so staff and public should take appropriate precautions for their safety and for the security of personal property. Neither the Merrimack Public Library nor the Town of Merrimack is responsible for loss of property or personal injury.
- The Merrimack Public Library Board of Trustees may modify, amend, or supplement this policy as it deems necessary and appropriate.
- This policy shall not impose any responsibility on the library, its Board of Trustees, or its employees to protect against or prevent personal injury or loss of property.

### Privacy and Confidentiality

- Cameras are installed in outdoor and indoor places where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy such as parking lots, common entrances and exits, seating areas, service desks, library stacks, and areas prone to theft or misconduct. Cameras are not placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms or private offices.
- Merrimack Public Library abides by the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association that acknowledges the paramount importance of library patron privacy:

#### *ALA Code of Ethics*

"We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted."

- In addition, Merrimack Public Library adheres to New Hampshire laws regarding the confidentiality of library records:

#### *Title XVI, 201-D:11 Library User Records; Confidentiality*

I. Library records which contain the names or other personal identifying information regarding the users of public or other than public libraries shall be confidential and shall

not be disclosed except as provided in paragraph II. Such records include, but are not limited to, library, information system, and archival records related to the circulation and use of library materials or services, including records of materials that have been viewed or stored in electronic form.

### **Public Notice**

- A sign will be posted at the Library entrance informing the public that security cameras are in use. Conversations shall not be monitored or recorded by the security cameras.
- A copy of this policy may be shared with any patron or staff member upon request. The policy is also posted on the Merrimack Public Library's official website.

### **Data Storage**

- Images are stored for a period of 21 days. As new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted.

### **Authority to Access Data**

- Access to recorded data is restricted to authorized staff: Library Director, Department Heads and other staff who may be designated by the Director. Authorized staff also have access to real-time monitors.
- Video surveillance records are not to be used directly or indirectly to identify the activities of individual Library patrons except as viewed in relation to a specific event or suspected criminal activity, suspected violation of Library policy, or incidents where there is reasonable basis to believe a claim may be made against the Library for civil liability. Authorized Library staff may use a still shot 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.
- In situations involving suspicious activity or banned-and-barred patrons, stored video and still images may be shared with staff system-wide. Shared images may remain posted in restricted staff areas for the duration of the banning period.

### **Law Enforcement**

- All requests for recorded imagery by law enforcement officials must be presented to the Library Director or supervisory staff designated by the Director to hold such authority. 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 these situations when law enforcement waives the court order, the requesting officer is required to provide their name, agency, badge number, the nature of the emergency, and the extent of data requested.

### **Public Disclosure**

- Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage. Requests from the general public to inspect security camera footage must be made through the Merrimack Police Department and include a valid court order, case reference number or subpoena (see above).