

## **Lower Merion Library System Security Camera Policy**

The Lower Merion Library System provides unlimited opportunities for information, education, inspiration and imagination. To further its mission the LMLS must offer a welcoming, open atmosphere and provide a quiet, comfortable and safe environment for all its patrons. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the placement and use of video security cameras and establish guidelines for accessing and retrieving recorded video images at LMLS.

This policy should be read with the understanding that the image of a person on LMLS property is not protected, but anything that would identify the content of a library user's account is protected and held confidential.

### **I. PURPOSE OF SECURITY CAMERAS**

The LMLS security system is to enhance the safety and security of library patrons, staff and property. The purpose of the cameras is to deter public endangerment, vandalism, theft and potential unsafe behavior in unsupervised areas and to identify those people involved in such activity for law enforcement purposes, while adhering to applicable federal, state and local law concerning the confidentiality of library records, the disclosure of public records, and the protection of individual privacy.

The LMLS security camera system is to be used only for the protection and safety of library visitors, employees and property, and to identify people breaking the law or violating the LMLS policies. Staff and patron safety is the first priority in any threatening or dangerous situation. The protection of LMLS property is always secondary.

### **II. PUBLIC NOTICE: SIGNAGE**

Signs should be posted at all entrances to each of the six branch libraries at all times, informing the public that security cameras are in use.

### **III. SECURITY CAMERA LOCATIONS AND USE**

Cameras will be installed in locations where individuals lack a reasonable expectation of privacy. For example, the common areas of the libraries, such as entrances, public computers, public seating areas and book and media collections are areas where cameras may be installed.

Cameras installed and owned by LMLS will record only images, not audio.

### **IV. LIMIT OF LIABILITY**

LMLS has no obligation to monitor the cameras in real time. Since the cameras will not be constantly monitored, library staff and the public should continue to take appropriate precautions for their safety and that of their personal property. LMLS is not responsible for the loss of property or personal injury.

## V. DATA STORAGE

Camera footage and still photographs may be used by authorized individuals only to identify those responsible for library policy violations, criminal activity on any LMLS branch library property or actions considered disruptive to normal library operations.

Cameras will not generally be continuously monitored. However they may be monitored as needed in cases of reports of LMLS policy violations, suspected criminal activity, and/or destruction or theft of library resources.

Recorded data is confidential LMLS property and will be kept in a secure location. Recordings will typically be kept for no more than 30 days unless required as part of an ongoing investigation. In general, as new images are recorded, the oldest images will be automatically deleted.

## VI. ACCESS TO ARCHIVED FOOTAGE

Access to camera footage in pursuit of documented incidents of injury, potential criminal activity or violation of LMLS policies is restricted to the Head Librarians, Director of Libraries, Technology Librarian or their designees.

Recorded data will be made available only to law enforcement personnel upon presentation of a valid court order, warrant or subpoena to the Director of Libraries or his or her designee, unless the involvement of law enforcement personnel is made at the request of the LMLS Director of Libraries or a Head Librarian.

Exigent circumstances apply if someone is in immediate physical danger on or off LMLS property. In such cases, law enforcement personnel may gain access to footage without an order, warrant or subpoena. In such instances the requesting law enforcement personnel must provide their name, agency, badge number, the nature of the emergency and the extent of the data requested.

If a patron has been banned from the LMLS, stored still images of the person may be shared with library staff. Shared images may remain posted in restricted staff areas for the duration of the ban.

Only IT and/or administrative staff designated by the Director of Libraries may produce copies as needed.

## VII. PRIVACY

Except as indicated above regarding law enforcement and/or LMLS staff, recorded data will be accorded the same level of protection provided to other information held by the LMLS pursuant to Pennsylvania state law, LMLS policies and American Library Association policies.

The LMLS disclaims any liability for use of the video data in accordance with the terms of this policy, since the libraries are public facilities and the security cameras are limited to those areas where patrons and staff have no reasonable expectation of privacy.

ADOPTED by the Lower Merion Library System Board on 9/13/2022.