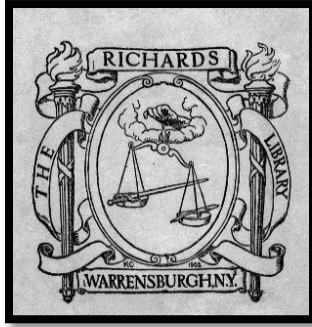


# The Richards Library



## Security Camera Policy

In order to provide a safe and secure environment for patrons, Staff and the Library's assets, The Richards Library Board of Trustees has established the following policy in regard to the use of security cameras at The Richards Library. This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to ensure it reflects best practices in privacy and equity. This policy applies equally to all library patrons, regardless of age, race, national origin, immigration status, gender identity, housing status, or other characteristics. All individuals are entitled to privacy and equitable treatment while using the Library.

### **Purpose:**

Since Library Staff are unable to provide direct supervision over all areas within the Library and its grounds, the security cameras are placed at select locations in order to observe and record visible activities of persons within the Library and its property. Observation of activity, whether in real time or from digital records storage, shall be limited to activities that are specific to Library operations and those that may affect the safety and security of Library patrons, Staff and Library assets. A real-time monitor is placed at the Circulation Desk for use by the Director and Staff.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality:**

Camera placement is determined by the Director or their designee. The placement of cameras is for the safety of the Staff and patrons, which is the first priority; protection of Library property is of secondary importance. Cameras shall not be placed in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.

To the extent that any recorded images include identifiable persons requesting information or images of patrons that may be linked to identifiable usage of Library services, such record shall be treated as confidential as interpreted by NYS Civil Practice Law and Rules, CVP§4509-Library Records, and as accepted by NYLA, and reads as:

***“Library records, which contain names or other personally identifying details regarding the users of public, free association, school, college and university libraries and library systems of this state, including but not limited to records related to the circulation of library materials, computer database searches, interlibrary loan transactions, reference queries, requests for photocopies of library materials, title reserve requests, or the use of audio-visual materials, films or records, shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except that such records may be disclosed to the extent necessary for the proper operation of such library and shall be disclosed***

***upon request or consent of the user or pursuant to subpoena, court order or where otherwise required by statute.”***

Library Staff may view cameras in real time. Protected information shall be held in confidence by Library Staff under the Library’s *Code of Ethics*, as found on the Library’s website under *Policies*.

### **Public Notice:**

Signage shall be conspicuously displayed at the Library advising the recording of video images. Conversations or other audible communications are not monitored or recorded by the security cameras.

### **Data Storage and Access:**

Cameras record activities in real time and images will be saved to the camera server’s hard drive, accessible only to authorized staff. The capacity of the storage system allows for images to be stored for a period of 14 days. Current software deletes images automatically as the capacity of the hard drive is reached. The Library is not obligated to store images past the 14-day limit. Cameras will not be monitored continuously by Library Staff.

The Director may archive footage to an external flash drive, pursuant to the purpose of this policy, and store it in a controlled area. Access to the archived footage is restricted to designated Staff: Library Director and their designee. Archived footage involved in litigation will be kept as long as it is needed. All other archived footage will be kept up to a year before deletion.

Security camera footage will not be released to law enforcement or other third parties without a valid court order or subpoena reviewed by legal counsel. Staff are not authorized to share footage without the express direction of the Library Director. In such cases, the Board President and SALS Director will be notified by the Library Director or their designee. Law Enforcement officials may be given copies of recorded material if the Library is initiating criminal proceedings against person/persons who have committed damage to Library property, assaulted a Staff member, or other serious, related offenses.

Confidentiality and privacy issues prohibit the general public from viewing security camera footage that contains personally identifying information about patrons or footage that is archived and to be used in a criminal case commenced by the Library. If the Library receives a request from a member of the general public to inspect security camera footage, they will be advised to obtain legal standing via an attorney or Law Enforcement official.

Security camera recordings that are not considered confidential library user records (external recordings not depicting access to the Library) will be shared with a third party at the discretion of the Library Director or their designee.

**Approved and adopted by The Richards Library Board of Trustees April 19, 2018.**

**Reviewed and approved on October 6, 2020.**

**Revised, reviewed, and approved on November 12, 2024.**

**Revised, reviewed, and approved on August 5, 2025.**

*Permission was obtained from the Aurora Public Library, Aurora, IL, The Warren County Library, Belvidere, NJ and the Elizabeth Public Library, Elizabeth, NJ, to use, alter and/or adapt excerpts from each of their library policies to formulate this current policy on April 17, 2018. Permission was obtained from Saratoga Springs Public Library, Saratoga Springs NY, to use excerpts from their library policy to formulate this current policy on November 8, 2024.*