Policy language

To ensure the safety and integrity of library premises, MPL uses surveillance cameras to monitor the outside of the library building and the surrounding streets and sidewalks.  MPL will cooperate with requests for surveillance recordings if there is demonstrable need to do so or when presented with proper documentation about an open investigation.  MPL reserves the right to review surveillance prior to release and withhold surveillance footage in accordance with the Libraries Records Confidentiality Act.

Procedural Guidance

Missoula Public Library maintains eleven security cameras that monitor:

        The Jefferson book drop (2 views)

        The parking garage (5 views)

        The parking lot (3 views)

        The café deck (1 view)

These cameras were installed to ensure unstaffed areas of the property are safe and clean.  Live and recorded camera footage is accessible by Library Management, Facilities personnel, and Safety Specialists.

MPL does not monitor patron use of library services.  Staff does not assist outside parties in locating or identifying library users or determining if and/or when someone may have been on library property.

MPL’s security cameras are not intended to monitor patron use of library services.  However, the Montana Constitution does not guarantee or ensure an expectation of privacy in public spaces, including the outside of the library building and city streets and sidewalks.  The Montana Library Records Confidentiality Act (MCA § [22-1-1102(2)](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0220/chapter_0010/part_0110/section_0020/0220-0010-0110-0020.html)) covers library records that can identify the names or other personal identifiers of library users.  Video that captures the street and the footage from the parking garage does not fit under this definition.

MPL may be asked by the public, law enforcement representatives, and emergency services personnel to access camera recordings or answer questions about library users’ presence in the building.

MPL staff do not assist these parties with locating, identifying, or reporting on users of library services.

Staff may assist emergency services personnel with locating and identifying library users on the premises and video surveillance recordings may be released if:

        Officers indicate there is an urgent need for library cooperation due to an official active or ongoing investigation or disturbance

        An officer presents a police report related to an open investigation

        An officer appears with a subpoena directing the library to provide specific video surveillance recordings

For video surveillance recordings, officers should provide MPL staff with the date, time and location of recordings requested.  MPL will prepare a video file and give it to the requesting officer.  Officers may not access our surveillance system themselves.  They may not watch live streams of surveillance cameras or review recordings.  Only library staff access security camera streams and footage. Staff may request legal review prior to release if they believe footage implicates the Libraries Records Confidentiality Act and/or privacy concerns.